

TIPS, TRICKS & REALLY GOOD ADVICE



ABOUT THE OCW.....

The Orange County Wheelmen (OCW) is a group of recreational, racing and touring cyclists whose purpose is enjoyment, advancement and healthful activities related to bicycling. We achieve these goals by organizing rides, social gatherings and publicizing the advantages of cycling. We also support other cycling-friendly organizations and educate the community about bicycling.

If you would like to learn more about OCW, come to a ride that catches your interest, join us at the General Meeting, or check us out on our website at: <http://www.ocw.org>. If you don't have internet, you can contact us at the OCW Hotline at 714.956.BIKE.



BE PREPARED FOR THE RIDE

For You & Your Family

Wear a helmet. Helmets are required for all riders on OCW rides. We welcome anyone with a helmet to ride with us! Helmets should fit properly. Clip the buckle and adjust the strap to fit snug. Position the strap clips just under your ears. A good bike shop can help you.

A longtime member's statement reflects how strongly OCW feels about wearing a helmet. "Wear your helmet or stay home. Do not make other riders take on the responsibility of telling your loved ones that your brains are on the ground, because you didn't want to wear a helmet."

For Your Bike

Your bike should be kept maintained. The chain, tires and tubes should be in good condition. Always carry:

- At least one spare tube, tire boot (for covering a moderate sized hole), and a patch kit
- Tire levers for changing a flat
- Tire pump or CO2 cartridge

For Your Safety

- Money or cell phone to make an emergency telephone call.
- Personal identification: include your name, address, emergency contact numbers and medical insurance information. Riders under the age of 18 should carry signed waivers from their parents allowing emergency medical care.



For Your Health

- Fluids – 1 oz of fluid per mile in warm weather; little bit less in cooler weather and more in hot weather. An electrolyte replacer is most important in warm and hot weather but good anytime.
- Food – new riders require more food during a ride than experienced riders. A bike ride is not a good time to restrict eating for weight loss. You must eat to maintain energy stores to keep riding.

Grip Trick:

When holding on to the handlebars, have a relaxed grip (not too relaxed).

To make sure that your hands do not get thrown from the handlebars, make a circle around the handlebar with one finger and your thumb. This way if you hit a bump, you won't lose your grip.

SAFE RIDING TIPS

Hold Your Line

Motorists and other cyclists in your group rely on you to move forward in a relatively straight line at a consistent pace. New riders are rarely good at this. Even some experienced riders would benefit from a refresher course. If someone has reminded you to hold your line, be grateful. They are helping you make the ride safer and more pleasant for everyone.

Practice Holding Your Line

Practicing is simple. A bike trail with a line in the center is the best, but a wide street with a striped bike lane or even a large parking lot will do.

Start riding so that your front tire is just to the right of the line. Take a quick look over your left shoulder then return to looking ahead. Are you still just to the right of the line? Most people will find themselves on the other side of the line. As you get better, take longer looks and increase your speed.

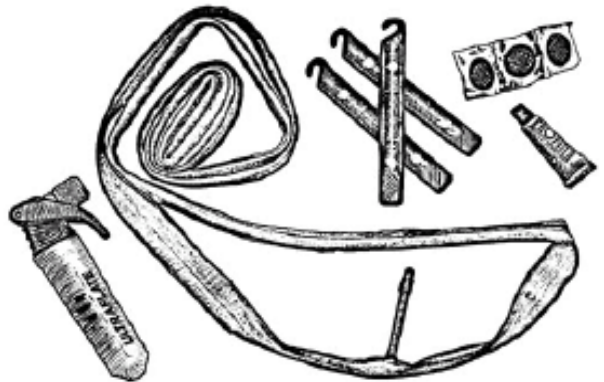
With practice, you'll learn to keep your upper body still, letting your legs do the work. This not only helps you hold your line, but also saves energy you'll need for the rest of the ride. Keep your elbows bent a bit and your shoulders and arms relaxed.

Where to Look

A common mistake (most new riders do this) is watching the road just in front of your front tire. When you do that, you'll tend to make drastic evasive maneuvers for each bit of debris. The best place to look is 25 feet ahead, scanning the road in front of you and to the sides. Listen for the sounds of traffic and the warnings called out by other cyclists. If you see a small hazard and you are hemmed in by other riders or traffic, hold your line and your speed and take the hit.

Where to Be

The best place to ride is down the middle of the bike lane. Do not ride in the gutter. Riding in the gutter puts you too close to the curb. Your right pedal can hit the curb, throwing you down fast and hard.



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How to Pass

The first rule of passing: *do not pass riders who are faster than you.* It is safer and more courteous to slow down to stay behind a rider who is faster than you.

The next rule of passing: *pass on the left and use your voice!* "**On your left**" is the most common way to make other riders aware of your presence. Just like driving your car, passing on the right is really bad form. If passing on the right is unavoidable, use your voice! "**On your right,**" wait for a response before you pass.

When someone behind you calls out "**On your left**" move to the right if it's safe to do so. If there isn't room to move, acknowledge the rider passing you so that they know it's safe to proceed.

Keep Pedaling

In a group "pedal, pedal, pedal, coast" does not work. Coasting works if you're riding a beach cruiser on a beach trail. On the street with other riders and cars around you, be consistent and predictable, only a consistent pedal stroke works. Pedaling combined with coasting will cause your speed to fluctuate and make you dangerous to ride behind.

Learning to ride with an easy, consistent pedal stroke will also help you find the rhythm that will save your legs and your ride when you get tired.



Ask Yourself "What if?"

What if the car in the oncoming left turn lane turns left in front of me? What if the car to my left wants to make a right turn in front of me? What if the car in that driveway backs out in front of me? What if on a fast downhill that green light turns red before I get to the intersection? What if the rider in front of me goes down?

Be alert to what might happen so you can plan your escape route. If a car turns right in front of you, you turn right too. This should help you avoid being hit by the car. If the rider in front of you can't hold their line, don't ride so close. Give yourself some maneuvering room.

Those Darn Pedals

Leaning to clip in and out of your pedals takes time. Until you get it, when you are starting from an intersection put your free foot on the pedal and get rolling through the intersection. Do not look down at your foot in the middle of the intersection! Once you are out of traffic you can take time to clip in.

Speak Up!

Communicate with the riders around you, but keep it simple; "ROCK!", "HOLE!", "STICK!" Riders behind you are listening for one word not a descriptive sentence. When you see debris, call it out and point to it.

If you're the rider in front, call out when you're stopping. "LIGHT UP!" or "STOPPING!" Call out when you're rolling through the yellow so the people behind you know to roll with you. "ROLLING!" Call out when there are people around you that you want the riders behind you to know about. "RUNNER RIGHT!", "WALKER LEFT!", "CAR BACK!" Always remember to signal your turns.

Be Courteous

- Come to the ride on time and prepared.
- Be predictable and consistent when you ride. Ride in a straight line. Unexpected moves can cause an accident.
- Avoid spitting or blowing your nose while in front or in the middle of the group. Move to the back of the group for this.
- Acknowledge other riders with a wave or a nod.
- Riding is a social experience, most people like to talk but some don't.

NUTRITION TIPS

Eating and Drinking

The new rider must pay special attention to eating and drinking. It is frequently hard to convince new riders that eating and drinking regularly on a ride is essential. Feel free to cut back calories on your days off the bike, but on riding days, eat! New riders will always have to eat more to get to the finish than the experienced cyclists. As your body becomes more efficient, less food is required.

The two rules that apply to every cyclist and



most especially to the long distance rider:

- 1.) You must take in some form of nourishment in small amounts on a regular basis throughout the ride. In the course of your training, you may discover that you're unable to eat comfortably. You can

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experiment with Cliff Shot (lower glycemic index) or GU (high glycemic carb). There are opposing theories about protein intake during exercise. Realistically, you should stick with whatever works for you. If you normally eat a low glycemic index/higher protein diet, a long ride is not the time to drastically change this. You may want to modify this type of diet somewhat for the ride, as protein is harder to digest than carbs. Experiment with Endurox or a similar product. It contains electrolytes, carbs and a small amount of protein and should be easier to digest.

2.) You must stay hydrated. It is important to drink an electrolyte replacement drink throughout the ride. It's even more important to find a drink mix you are willing to drink all day long. Some good electrolyte replacers are: Hydra Fuel, Cytomax and Revenge Sport. Experiment until you find one you like. On any long distance ride, an ounce of fluid intake per mile is a good rule of thumb. When it's hot, you'll find that more is necessary. Thirst is a response to dehydration, so start the rides hydrated, and stay hydrated.

Your motto should be: Eat before you're hungry and drink before you're thirsty. If you wait until you're thirsty or hungry, you're too late.

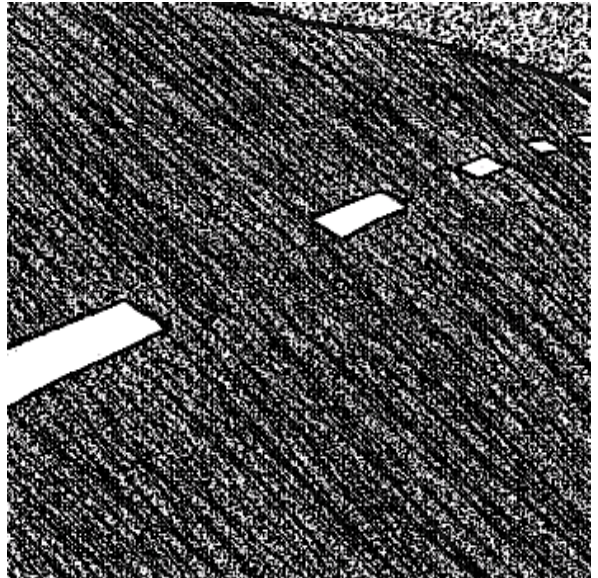
Within these rules there is lots of room for

individuality. There is no single eating or drinking plan that works for everyone.

It's a good idea to carry the food that works for you. Remember that the popular advice to eat/drink plenty of carbs does NOT work for everyone, so make the effort to figure out if it does work for you.

For the most part, if you have worked out a system of healthy eating and drinking, there is no real need to depart from your normal routine. If you haven't started an eating and drinking program designed to aid your riding, now is a great time!

ADVANCED TECHNIQUES



SEE YOU ON THE ROAD!

Paceline (As you gain experience)

Paceline riding, although fun, is for the rider who has acquired more than basic bike handling skills. After you have ridden with us for awhile and have learned to use hand and voice signals, and are feeling very comfortable on your bike, learning to ride safely in a paceline will increase your enjoyment of the sport.

A *Paceline* is a group of riders drafting each



other in close formation. The lead rider maintains a constant speed and pedals consistently.

Drafting is following close behind the rider in front of you to take advantage of the wind pocket formed by the rider/s in front of you. Drafting allows you to conserve energy.

To gain the best draft you will want to be *on the wheel* of the bike in front of you. As a paceline beginner, it's better to stay back a foot or two. You'll still have the benefit of the draft, but will have time to make adjustments and avoid collisions. Never overlap your wheels with another bike.

In a direct headwind the best place to ride is

directly behind the rider in front of you. In crosswinds, you will want to '*echelon right or left.*' This means being off either the right or left side of the wheel in front of you. Of course you have already learned that if you are to either side of the rider in front of you, he/she must be told you're there. Finding the pocket of wind where drafting is the most efficient becomes a matter of riding in the quietest spot. If you can find that one spot where the wind noise is reduced you'll know you're in the pocket!

When you're on the front, keep your head

up, call out the junk and watch the lights. You are responsible for the safety of the riders behind you. Go easy off the lights so the riders in the back don't get dropped. When it's time for you to fall off the front, move to your left and maintain your pace as the group moves past you on the right. Fall back in line at the back. This may be the only time where passing on the right is acceptable. Otherwise: Never pass on the right unless you're absolutely certain there is plenty of room and the rider in front of you is completely aware that you are coming up because you have yelled: **"On your right"** and you've waited for a visible reaction.

Hold your line and ride consistently.

Don't be a gatekeeper. If you don't feel strong

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enough to pull through and take your turn at the front of the paceline, stay out of the middle.

The draft may be the best in the middle, but if you can't or won't take your turn up front, then you need to get out of the way of the movement of the line. The courteous place to be is at the end. When the rider in front pulls off, back up and let him/her back in line in front of you while you maintain your position at the end.

We hope to see you on the road, and wish you many safe and enjoyable miles of bicycle riding.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to all the Club members who contributed to the creation of this pamphlet!
