



Leading a ride can be a lot of fun. You get to go where you want to, and control the pace, stops etc. This could be a child friendly 10 km ride to the local park or something more extensive.

If you would like help, most people on the Rides Committee or other members would be happy to co-lead, or just support you on the trip. In fact people are always ready to tell you where to turn when leading.

Remember, you are not expected to be perfect, especially on your first ride.

### **PLANNING**

1. Pick a route. Think about your own favourite rides / places, places you want to visit, or have a chat with the Rides Coordinator, Committee Members or other experienced riders.
2. Ride (or at least drive) the proposed route, noting the distance and any hazards before advertising / leading the ride.
3. Consider your starting point carefully. Is it easily accessible by most people (ie at or near a train station)? Can it be easily located (ie near a landmark of some feature marked in a street directory)? Also consider those wanting or needing to ride to the start.
4. If possible, write a detailed route description that can be given to the designated tail-end person ('Tail-End Charlie'). At least, note down the intended destination with its contact number(s), so the group can reunite if it is separated.
5. Consult the Ride Coordinator to find the best time for your ride in the calendar. Write a short description for the Rides Calendar in the newsletter with the following details :
  - ✓ Day and Date
  - ✓ Ride Title (see past Rides Calendars for ideas).
  - ✓ Ride Distance be as accurate as possible, especially for the shorter rides intended for beginners. The difference between 30 and 40 km may be nothing for strong riders, but for newer people it may be so difficult that they may never come again!
  - ✓ Ride Grade (see any rides calendar). Once again, be as accurate as possible, especially for rides intended for beginners.
  - ✓ Start Time The general convention is that rides start around 15 mins from their advertised ride. If a ride MUST leave at a certain time, then specify an additional "SHARP" start time eg "7.45 for an 8.00am sharp start".
6. Plan for emergencies. Bring a small First Aid kit (available from Committee Members if you don't have one). Be ready for minor mechanical problems (eg punctures), and carry a few simple tools for seat adjustments etc. Be aware of emergency phone numbers for police, ambulance etc.
7. Note that if you are going anywhere that requires a booking, either specify a booking date in the Ride Description in the Rides Calendar, or at least estimate the number of riders and make a tentative booking. You may need to consult a Committee Member to help you with this estimate.
8. If you have planned a refreshment stop, it's a good idea to check ahead of the day and warn them – 20 cyclists can clean out a small café pretty quickly!

### **BEFORE STARTING THE RIDE**

1. Try to get to the start a little early.
2. Check the suitability of rides and their bikes for the event. If you feel they are not suited to the ride, have the courage to tell them. You know the route and its difficulties, so explain it to them. If their bike is unsuitable, tell them why. If they are unsuitable in terms of cycling strength, tell them so and why. If they are unsuitable in terms of cycling strength, perhaps suggest they try an easier ride, or give them a shorter version of the route.



3. Check that all riders have helmets.
4. Check all riders have lights for night rides.
5. Check everyone has enough water, especially in summer.
6. Co-opt an experienced rider to be the 'Tail End Charlie'.
7. Count the number of riders (THIS IS IMPORTANT).
8. Introduce yourself, the Tail End Charlie, other members, and welcome non-members. We were all non-members once, so encourage interaction.
9. Announce future events and encourage other members to make announcements about their events.
10. Explain the route, the intended destination, and any important points on the route. This may help riders to find the group if they become separated. An important point is that riders who think they are lost should STOP; this means the Tail-End Charlie should find them as they bring up the rear.
11. Explain that if they leave the ride, they need to inform you or the Tail End Charlie.
12. Review safety issues for group riding
  - Giving clear verbal indications of intentions eg "slowing", "stopping", "turning left" etc .
  - Using standard CTA hazard calls eg "car back", "legs front" etc
  - Taking care with traffic
  - Being considerate of other road or dual-use path users
  - Obeying road rules
  - Not riding more than two abreast, and single file when safer.
  - At each turn, making sure the rider behind you has seen the turn (in order to follow). This may require slowing down or even stopping.

### **DURING THE RIDE**

1. Ensure the pace suits the group, and monitor throughout the ride. Especially monitor non-members on EASY rides, as they may be reluctant to express their discomfort. Instead, they may simply think that CTA is too hard for them and never come back.
2. Care for the weaker riders. Talk to them and encourage them.
3. With a large group of mixed abilities, consider splitting the group in two.
4. Try to ensure all riders make each turn.
5. Take breaks. Make sure that the last person to arrive is well rested before continuing. Too often the last person struggles in to join the group, only to hear the leader shout "Okay, lets go!"
6. Give safety calls where appropriate eg "single file" where the road markings are double white lines etc.
7. If you are stopping at a venue where a bill is involved, check with management regarding outstanding payments before leaving. You (or CTA) may want to come back again.

### **AFTER THE RIDE**

1. Account for all riders.
2. Invite feedback.
3. Send a brief report to the Rides Committee on participation numbers, conditions and any comments you would like to make.