

GROUP RIDING SAFETY PRINCIPLES

HARLEY OWNERS GROUP, CHAPTER #5402

Ride and Have Fun! That's our HOG motto. And there's no better way to have fun than for all of us to arrive safely at our destination after a great ride. *"It's not the destination, it's the journey"*.

Riding in groups is fun but presents dynamic conditions unlike that of solo riding. The additional hazards require riders to follow supplemental protocols to ensure the safety of **ALL**. Our HOG chapter also has its own group ride principles that may be different from other organizations new members and guests are used to. It's therefore critical that all riders on our HOG group rides be aware of and follow our Group Riding Safety Principles. They include, but are not limited to:

- Alcohol and illegal drug use impair rider performance and are strictly prohibited, both before and during rides, **NO** exception. You may not ride with us if you have and must leave if asked. Our rides end at the destination.
- Bikes are to be in good condition, fully gassed up and ready to go by the "kickstands up" posted time. At home, follow the "T-CLOCS" Inspection Checklist on the website before leaving the house. Especially check that tire pressures, drivetrain and hand/foot controls are good to go. This will let you focus on riding instead of worrying about the condition of your bike.
- Smaller groups are generally safer than larger ones as they make it easier to stay together. The day's ride organizer will divide all the riders into smaller groups of maximum 6-7 and appoint Road Captains to be the Lead (front rider) and Sweep (last rider) of each group. Follow the directions of your assigned Road Captain Lead.
- Staggered formation is used:
 - Alignment: bikes are either in the left or right track from the lane's center, and riders should maintain this relative positioning throughout the group ride. But each rider "owns" the entire width of the lane and can use it as needed for cornering, hazard avoidance, etc.
 - Separation: maintain a **minimum** of 1 second of distance behind the rider in the adjacent track in front, 2 seconds of distance behind the rider in your track in front, and for trikes, always allow extra separation - 2 seconds of distance as a minimum.
 - As the group's speed changes, the distances between the bikes change accordingly, to follow the above minimum spacing requirements.
 - Maintain the integrity of the group, which can discourage intrusion by autos in congested traffic areas and will minimize "yo-yoing".

- No crowding of riders, no side-by-side riding or passing riders.
 - Lane changes: always signaled (blinkers and by hand) and proceed from Back to Front – the Sweep at the back makes the first move.
 - Passing: by single file of slower vehicles on 2 lane roads.
 - Hazards: Constantly watch for them! Signal by hand or foot to those behind.
 - The Lead will give a hand signal for single file formation if required (e.g. a partially blocked lane, bicyclers, lateral hazards, narrow lanes). Watch for the signal and pass it back! The Lead will also signal for return to staggered formation when conditions warrant.
- **Watch for the person behind you, and if you don't see them, slow down or stop until you do.** This act informs the riders ahead of you of a problem behind you. Follow the Lead's decisions.
 - "Ride your own ride" – you are responsible for your own safety and riding decisions. It is your call **EACH** time whether it is safe or not for **YOU** to proceed through an intersection, turn onto another street, ride as fast as the rider in front of you, etc. **Don't assume** just because the bike in front of you went, it is safe for you to go too. Ride within **YOUR** capability limits.
 - No horseplay or stunt riding.
 - Obey traffic laws. Stop for traffic lights even if it splits the group. Don't drive at excessive speeds to catch up with the group. Riders making it through will wait for you, and the group will reform, then proceed.
 - Leads will not make a turn or proceed through an intersection after a stop sign unless all riders are present and accounted for.
 - No cruise control or throttle locks on group rides.
 - Stay Alert and focused. Scan, Identify, Predict, Decide, Execute (SIPDE).
 - In the event of an accident, Leads and Sweeps will take control and make time-critical assignments. Speak up if uncomfortable with tasks.

Ultimately, each rider is responsible for their own safety. But whether you're a relatively new rider or a seasoned veteran having ridden thousands of solo miles a year for decades, group riding is simply different, requiring all riders in the group to adhere to the Group Riding Safety Principles for **ALL** to be safe.

Road Captains or other HOG Chapter Officers can explain the Chapter's Group Riding Safety Principles in more detail as well as answer questions on them.

RIDE SAFE!

HAND SIGNALS

Listed below are a few reminders of the most frequently used hand signals. These help you, the rider, become more visible to other riders and drivers. Please use them! Hope this is useful and ASK if you have any questions!

Basics you must know:

Arm straight out, palm forward or finger pointing out.

Prepare to turn left. Use this in combination with your cycle's electric signals.

Arm lifted out, hand straight up or pointing upward.

Prepare to turn right. Use this in combination with your cycle's electric signals.

Hand low, palm towards the back.

Slow down ahead or prepare to STOP!

Others:

Point to tank.

I need gas, stop at the next station.

Point at ground with either finger or foot.

Careful, there's something on the road. Debris, dead animal, pothole or something that the following riders need to avoid.

Hand down, rub fingers together.

Road is slippery.

Flash brake lights very rapidly.

Be prepared to stop QUICKLY

Point at sign.

Read the sign. If it's a highway sign with multiple exits listed, hold up the number of fingers corresponding to which exit you want (e.g. two fingers for the second exit listed).

Arm back, pointing rear - sweep arm forward till along side then point down.

You want the rider to your rear to come alongside you or pass you and take the next (often lead) position.

Point at a rider, then point to side of road.

Pull over now.

Arm out, palm back.

Stay behind me.

Arm out, fingers down, palm back with a fore and aft motion.

Back off, you're too close. This is mostly for tailgaters. Be careful using this as it could make the driver angry and they could start playing games with you. You don't need this!

Arm out, forward waving.

Go past me.

Waving arm in quick downward motion, with palm down and parallel to ground.

Slow down!

Thumb up

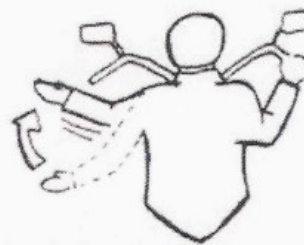
You're ready to ride! Given to the Road Captain when you're on your bike and are ready to go on the group ride.



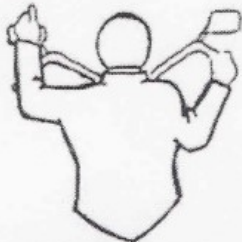
Start your engines



Stop



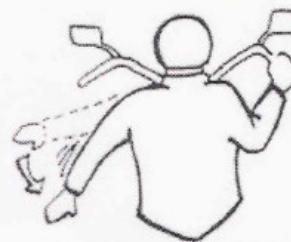
Go ahead and pass me



Bikers ready



Hazards on the road



Don't pass me



Stop your engines



Turn off your turn signals



Single riding



Left turn



Slow down



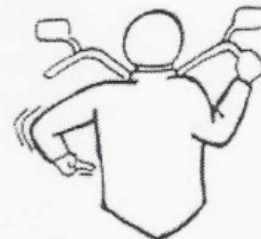
Staggered riding



Right turn



Speed up



Time for a pit stop