

# HOW TO FACILITATE GROUP RIDES

**Group rides build community cohesion by providing a low stress opportunity to experience bicycling within a community. They are fun, grow visibility and are accessible to the general public.**

## Group Rides:

- Offer an opportunity to partner with local elected officials by hosting a group ride such as a Mayor's Bike Ride.
- Are an excellent way to introduce beginner riders to bicycling in your community.
- Can be flexible, both in terms of length and how strenuous the ride is and whether the group wishes to bicycle on or off-road.
- Improve fitness and may lead to individuals regularly bicycling on their own.
- Are easy to promote and organize through websites and social media.
- Often end at local shops or restaurants with food or beverages, supporting local businesses.
- Are usually free and can be either one-off or regular events.

## Tips for planning a group ride:



(Source : latimes.com)



(Source: vcstar.com)

### 1 Focus on encouragement:

Group rides are more successful when designed for new riders and families. Routes should be short and include mostly quiet, side streets.

### 2 Reinforce bicycle safety education:

Direct participants to use hand signals, obey traffic laws, announce hazards, and verify that participants are equipped with proper gear (helmets, bike lights, etc.). Instruct riders with mechanical issues to leave the roadway prior to fixing them.

### 3 Use new infrastructure:

It can be fun to organize rides along new bicycle infrastructure to experience how the street has changed and learn how to use the new infrastructure.

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[Source: octa.net]

### 4 Choose a destination and/or event:

Visiting local destinations encourages riding for errands, which is just as important as riding for work. This also supports local businesses and builds community. Also consider connecting group rides with existing events, such as open street events, sporting events or arts festivals.

### 5 Planning your route:

Think about what length is appropriate to make the ride accessible to new riders and children, typically 3 to 5 miles. For children, 1 mile can be lengthy. The longer the ride is, the more planning, preparation and logistics are needed. Consider turning movements at intersections. Always ride your route prior to the event to make sure it is appropriate for your audience.

### 6 Think about the time of day:

Weekend rides are common as participation is highest when people are off work and traffic is light. Be careful not to schedule rides at the hottest part of the day. Evening rides where participants decorate their bikes with lights, glow-in-the-dark accessories and reflective gear can be fun, especially during the holidays.



[Source : vcstar.com]

### 7 Partner with, or get advice from your local bicycle coalition:

For novice group ride organizers, local bicycle coalitions may have expertise and experience in organizing and leading group rides.

## Marshalling Recommendations

- Leaders should be interspersed throughout the group and prepared to assist riders if needed.
- Ride in single- or double-file. Take the lane if it is not wide enough to permit a car to pass your group safely.
- If the group becomes separated at a stop, have at least one leader wait for the rest of the group. The last two people in the group should ride together as a pair, helping each other out if needed.
- Be prepared with flat tire and first aid kits, and make sure group leaders know how to use them.

## Technical Considerations

### Insurance Requirements

Some group rides should consider having participants sign a waiver of liability. Although unlikely, some venues may require single-day, special event insurance.

### Helmet Requirements

Many states have helmet laws. In California, bicyclists and bike passengers under age 18 must wear a helmet while riding.

### Permit Requests

For larger rides (100 people or more), permits may be required. Check your city's requirements.