

*This document is a guide for challengers who have, or who are planning to, sign up to a challenge cycling event. It is designed to help you stay safe and enjoy your challenge, if you have any specific concerns we will be glad to help. Contact us at [mail@adventure-cafe.com](mailto:mail@adventure-cafe.com).*

*Please follow our recommended training plan to ensure you are at the recommended fitness level for your challenge. Being properly prepared for your challenge will not only make your challenge experience more enjoyable, it also improves safety.*

### **Communication**

The most important factor to safe riding when near other riders is communication. Make sure you pass any verbal or hand signals to riders behind you if you are slowing down, turning, or if there is a hazard ahead on the road. Give riders a shout if you are going to overtake or come alongside making them aware of your intentions

### **Space apart from other riders**

The most common cause of accidents is riding into hazards or other riders. **DO NOT** rely on someone in front to tell you if they're slowing down / stopping or if they see a hazard. **You MUST** ensure that you give yourself enough time and space from the rider in front. When riding two abreast there is a serious danger of locking handlebars. Ensure that you have enough space.

### **Ride consistently**

Your movements will affect those cycling close to you. Try to hold a straight line and when braking try not to brake harshly. Your legs should be moving at a consistent speed, free wheeling in a group can be dangerous, and results in expending more energy having to accelerate back to the group.

### **Single file**

Please stay single file unless on a very open quiet road; **never double-up on descents or on twisty roads. Stay single file and tucked into the correct side of the road.**

Never ever cross the lines in the middle of the road. Always stay tucked in to the left in England or to the right on the continent. We DO NOT recommend riding two abreast, most especially when there are high hedges and you can't clearly see when traffic is approaching. A head on crash or glancing blow can have very serious consequences, so stay in to your side of the road and stay as far away from oncoming traffic as possible.

### **Allow spaces, not one very long chain**

If you are riding as a long chain then allow spaces to develop at regular intervals as overtaking cars may need to squeeze back in if a car comes the opposite way. You don't want to get pushed into the hedge when this happens.

### **Half wheeling**

Do not half wheel the rider in front. Half wheeling means overlapping your front wheel with a riders back wheel. Doing this will often increase the pace of a ride as the lead rider will increase speed to ensure his rear wheel is not being overlapped. There is also a danger of the front rider pulling out for a pothole or other hazard which would result in a collision. It is especially dangerous to half wheel your leader as they will regularly pull out to look behind at the progress of the group. Please stay in single file, or if appropriate to ride two abreast make sure you are parallel with one another.



### **Narrow country lanes**

Be careful in narrow lanes with lots of blind corners. You **MUST** ride single file as oncoming traffic is difficult to see and you also don't have any where to go when flanked by dry stone walls or solid hedges. Remember in the UK it is illegal to cycle two abreast on any public road less than 4 metres wide.

### **Obey the rules of the road**

We will be riding on roads open to traffic, always stay on the correct side of the road and respect junctions. If you need to pull in, make sure it is safe to do so and **once stopped get yourself and your bike off the road**. Be courteous to other road users; do not get entangled in road rage incidents. Your leader will brief you on any specific in-country road regulations if abroad.

### **Responsibility**

It is your responsibility to ride safely and to be mindful of other road users. Remember to keep hydrated and eat well whilst riding as this will help you to maintain your concentration. Be aware in some countries e.g., Czech Republic, you can be fined should you cause an accident. We recommend all participants have sports travel insurance

### **No alcohol during the day! Sensible evening drinking**

Please wait for beer until you reach the end of the day's riding. Drinking during the ride not only puts yourself and others at an increased risk of an accident, it is also illegal to cycle while intoxicated and can carry the same punishment as being caught driving intoxicated. If a ride leader sees riders consuming alcohol during the day, then they will strongly recommend that you join the support vehicle to get to the day's finish point!

We can all enjoy a beer or two in the evening, but please do not go over the top the night before a riding day. If you appear intoxicated you will be asked to go in the support vehicle. Other participants will be prioritised over anyone asked to go in the support vehicle due to alcohol. If there is no space in the vehicle due to other passengers you will be expected to take a taxi at your own expense.

### **Be aware - keep eyes up and looking forward**

Stay relaxed in a group but constantly look around, don't just follow those in front. Make sure you can see past riders in front to see what is ahead. This will also help you look out for bad road surfaces. There are increased hazards in urban areas so being alert in these areas is especially important.

### **Bright clothing / rear light**

We recommend fitting front and rear lights to your bike and wearing bright clothing. This draws drivers' attention to you on the road, making sure that they see you. We never intend to cycle at night unless on a 24 hour event, but there is always the chance of a situation arising causing a delay and an amount of cycling in the dark. It is always good to have lights on even during the day, especially in poor visibility (rain, mist, forested roads). Worried about weight? You can always leave your lights and high viz clothing in your grab bag until they are needed.

### **Safe descending**

Before a major descent you should check your brakes and tyres. If you have any doubts, ask your leader or support driver to take a look. Always give plenty of space between you and the rider in front. Feather the brakes, and do not build up too much speed; it is not a race! Gently brake well before any corners and look at the exit as you enter a bend. No overtaking manoeuvres should be done whilst descending and especially not on corners. Check your tyres are in good condition and pumped up to the correct psi, if you are unsure just ask. Always stay on your side of the road, especially through bends. Remember that drivers sometimes cut corners too, especially on Alpine roads, and cyclists will always come off worst.



### **Keep your hands on the handlebars at all times**

Remove your hands from your handlebars and you are much more likely to lose balance and fall off your bike. Please do not remove any clothing items whilst cycling, you should always stop to do this. **DO NOT** put yourself and others around you at risk of crashing.

### **No headphones**

Please do not wear headphones whilst cycling at any time. This seriously detracts from your ability to be aware of what is going on around you and you may miss important instructions given by the leader.

### **Bike Checking**

Please have your bike professionally serviced before your challenge. At the least you should check your brakes, quick releases, wheels and tyres every morning. If unsure about any aspect of your bike, then approach one of our staff team who will be happy to help and inspect or mend your bike, if needed.

### **Hot and sunny conditions**

If good weather is forecast for your challenge then we recommend to bring not only your regular cycling gear, but also sunscreen, hydration tablets, sunglasses and UV sleeves. Getting either too hot or can seriously impair your judgement and ability to ride safely. We recommend that you bring two water bottles. Although we will provide extra water along the route, it is always best to carry plenty with you.

### **Wet and cold conditions**

If wet and/or cold conditions are forecast for your challenge, we recommend to bring not only your regular cycling gear, but also a waterproof jacket, overshoes, and an extra under-layer. You should slow down and modify your riding behaviour to suit the conditions. Please carry an extra layer if the weather forecast is mixed. Bring clear or transitional eye protection to protect your eyes from surface spray, stones and those pesky flies.

### **Personal protective equipment**

Helmets are compulsory on all of our rides. We also insist on eye protection (sunglasses), we recommend either clear or transitional lenses too. Even on a bright day it can be hard to see the road surface accurately on roads in shaded areas when wearing sunglasses.

### **Footwear**

If riding in cleats you should be confident and proficient in clipping and unclipping. If you have doubts then we recommend riding on flat pedals. If riding in road style cleats we recommend removing footwear when not on the bike or using cleat covers to ensure walking is safe. You do not want a slip in cycling shoes to bring an early to end your challenge. **Use extreme caution when walking in cycling shoes.**

### **Stay aware of road surface conditions**

Look out for wetness, potholes, or grit; all are potential hazards. Be especially careful if you cycle into shaded woodland where it may be difficult to see what is happening at ground level if you have dark glasses on and the ground is often damp, even on sunny days. Where safe to do so point out any surface hazards to riders behind you.

### **Anticipate other road users**

When dealing with other road users you should always expect the worst; i.e. anticipate the worst consequences possible, especially at road junctions when a car is about to pull out, or when passing through built up areas. Be alert and prepared, with your fingers hovering over your brakes.



### **Check-in with your Adventure Cafe Team**

In order that Adventure Cafe can keep a close eye on how our riders are getting on it helps us massively if you talk to us. Especially if you need to make a quick toilet break or have a mechanical issue; we are here to help you! We also insist you to check-in with your ride leader at all feed stations and finish locations. We can then make sure that everyone has arrived safely fit to continue riding or begin the celebrations.

### **Training**

We recommend following one of our training guides. These are available from our website or can be requested via email. The more training you do the more enjoyable and safer your ride will be. Please follow our safe cycling guideline during your training as well as during your challenge. Where possible it is best to ride with someone else. You should always carry a mobile phone for emergencies and make sure someone knows where you are going and what time you expect to return.

### **Getting Lost**

Occasionally participants go slightly off track. Do not cycle ahead of your ride leader, they are setting an appropriate pace for the group and may need to take turnings. Your ride leader may occasionally say it is fine to go ahead - listen to their instructions and make sure you stop where they ask you to. On group rides each person has their own pace up hills. We ask riders to regroup at the top of a climb, where safe to do so.

### **Charge your phone**

You should always cycle with a charged mobile phone in a waterproof bag or case with emergency numbers programmed. You will also be issued with an In Case of Emergency Card which will have emergency contact details and a guide as to what to do.

- 1. If you think you are lost STOP!**
- 2. Contact your leadership team**
- 3. Follow their instructions** (*Your leader will either direct you back on course or come to collect you*).

Before contacting your leaders find a landmark so they can pin-point your location. Road names and towns are great, even better if you can find a church, or other obvious landmark to direct our team to.

### **In Case Of An Accident or Medical Emergency**

Your Adventure Cafe team will respond as soon as possible. There may be times your leader or support vehicle may not be in immediate range, if this is the case then please follow these steps:

- 1. Ensure casualty is safe.** *Stop traffic if casualty is in the road / near road—Keep them warm, dry and comfortable—DO NOT MOVE IF NECK / BACK INJURY SUSPECTED (unless breathing is being prevented!).*
- 2. Administer first aid if required.**
- 3. If incident is serious call 112 in Europe or 999 in UK** (follow instructions given to you).
- 4. Contact your Adventure Cafe Support Team.**

**Be sure your phone is charged and you have the emergency number programmed**

