



DHBC

BUNCH RIDING ETIQUETTE

A guide to competent responsible and respected peloton cycling

www.dhbc.org.au

Established 1908

WELCOME TO DULWICH HILL BICYCLE CLUB

Dulwich hill bicycle club (DHBC) was founded in 1908. The club prides itself on developing a culture of inclusivity and safety in all riding activities. Whether it's competition, social, on the track, off road or just for fun. The culture and behaviours which DHBC promotes are in accordance with the DHBC code of conduct and the DHBC constitution.

Whatever your interest in cycling, riding safety is of the paramount importance and riding in a bunch is radically different from riding alone. This guide explains club etiquette for bunch rides. It outlines the club's expectations of you as a DHBC cyclist and your responsibilities as a bunch rider.

This guide explains:

- How to ride safely, to protect yourself, your club mates, the community, and the club's reputation.
- DHBC's bunch riding signals, phrases, and practices, which may differ from those you've experienced elsewhere.

DHBC are renowned amongst cycling clubs for our group safety. Every club member has a responsibility to uphold this reputation.

When you join a DHBC ride or wear a DHBC jersey, you represent the club and are expected to follow the code of conduct and the ride etiquette guide.

Please read, understand and practise the disciplines and etiquette described. If you have any questions or doubt, ask a DHBC senior member, ride leader or committee member who will be more than happy to help you. We look forward to riding safely with you.

THANK YOU!





CORE SKILLS FOR ALL RIDERS

All club members should have basic bike handling skills to join a club ride. This will make you a safer rider. If you can't do any of the following things, then please don't join bunch rides. Practise is key. These skills might not come naturally, so practise each of these until you can do it without thinking. Master a technique before trying it in a bunch.

If you need any help or aren't sure, contact the committee or a ride leader for more advice.

- Be comfortable riding in a straight line
- Be comfortable unclipping from your pedals on both sides
- Be able to make an emergency stop
- Be able to look behind and hold a straight line. Essential so you can check for traffic without wobbling or swerving
- Be able to ride with one hand and hold a straight line. This will allow you to indicate and make hand signals or grab your water bottle and food from your back pockets safely
- Be able to drink and eat on the bike. This is essential for longer distances

WHAT TO BRING ON ALL RIDES

Don't rely on others, you should always be self-sufficient on every ride. No matter the length of your ride, there are a few things you should always bring:

- Helmet *
- A repair kit (spare inner tubes, tyre levers, a multi-tool, a pump and/or gas cylinders)
- Mobile phone (for emergencies)
- Money for the post ride coffee
- Opal card (just in case you have a mechanical that can't be fixed)
- Water
- Food for fuel (e.g. Banana, muesli bar or energy gels)
- Physical ID and details of your emergency contact. (In case the phone breaks or is inaccessible after an accident)
- Appropriate clothes for the weather
- Sunscreen

** The Helmet should have the Australia standard sticker or the rider can be fined by police or not insured in an accident.*





FOUNDATIONS OF SAFE BUNCH RIDING

Obey the road rules

Always follow the road rules. While cyclists are allowed to ride on the road, occupy an entire lane, and ride 2 by 2, they have the same responsibilities as motorists.

Be predictable

Always indicate your intentions to avoid accidents. From changing positions in the group to following traffic rules, other riders and motorists need to be able to predict your behaviour.

Be steady and ready

Maintain a steady pace. Avoid sharp braking or quick surges. Instead, feather your brakes, indicate slowing and look where you are always going. Be alert and ready to react.

Announce hazards

Announce hazards early and loudly. Use verbal and non-verbal signals to announce your intentions and point out risks, obstacles and dangers, including changing directions or speed.

Respect other road users

Be courteous and anticipate mistakes other road users might make. This includes staying behind vehicles at lights, not rolling up the side of traffic (filtering) and riding single file when roads narrow.

Do not react to or engage with abusive motorists

If a motorist is aggressive or abusive, try to keep your emotions in check. Don't retaliate. This will only escalate the situation. If the behaviour was dangerous, consider reporting the incident to the police.

DO

- Know your limits and ride within your abilities
- Always keep handlebars level with the rider next to you
- Always be aware of who's in your bunch
- Always pass calls up and down the bunch
- Always listen to the ride leaders directions
- Make all riders feel welcome
- Take any corrections or feedback with a smile

Remember

When you wear
DHBC kit, you are
representing the club

DON'T

- ✗ Don't brake suddenly without warning
- ✗ Don't run red lights
- ✗ Don't track stand at lights
- ✗ Don't ride or train with headphones
- ✗ Don't use your phone whilst cycling
- ✗ Don't leave big gaps in the bunch
- ✗ Don't overtake on the left

ARE YOU NEW TO BUNCH RIDING?

If you are new to bunch riding, know that it is a skill that takes practice. It's a lot to learn. Take the time to learn the calls, signals, and ride etiquette.

Basics

- Introduce yourself to the Ride Leader before the ride
- Arrive 5 minutes before the noted start time to hear the pre-ride briefing
- Listen to the Ride Leaders and follow their instructions
- Take corrections and suggestions with a smile. Good bunch skills improve your safety, that's worth a smile!
- Be courteous to other road users, you are now representing DHBC

And remember...

- Maintain your bike in good order to avoid 'mechanicals'
- Ensure you have a valid AusCycling license or a 4-week trial AusCycling license
- Be courteous to all road users, and they are more likely to be courteous to you
- Get help from experienced riders. Don't be afraid to ask questions

Tip

Prepare for your ride the night before by checking your tyre pressure, that your lights are charged and working, and that you have spare tubes, enough water and food for the length of the ride.



DHBC PACE GUIDELINES

25'S

Our crusiest of bunches and the entry point for new riders. The perfect place to start if you are new to bunch riding.

Average speed 23 to 27 km/h

This is a no drop group

20km ITT

45-55 mins

Sun Waterfall

2hr 51 min – 3hr 10 min

28'S

By far our largest cohort of riders. Bunches are moderately paced, and rides tend to be social. A good level of fitness will allow you to keep up with these rides.

This is a drop group unless stated otherwise

Average speed 28km to 30 km/h

May reach speeds up to 40km/h when pace lining

20km ITT

40-45 mins

Sun Waterfall

2hr 31 min – 2hr 50 min

Middies

Not the very fastest but this group still travels along at a high pace. A solid base of riding and a high level of fitness is required.

Expect the speed to be about 31 to 35km/h

This is a drop group

20km ITT

34-40 mins

Sun Waterfall

2h 16 min – 2h 30 min

Fasties

Our fastest cyclists. Very fit and experienced riders, often racers (or ex-racers). If you are new to cycling, you will wonder how anyone not a professional can ride this fast.

Unlike other groups, the fasties won't wait for you if you get dropped so you better know the way home.

Expect the speed to be 35kmh+.

20km ITT

Sub 34 mins

Sun Waterfall

Sub 2hr 15 min

Remember

Always ride within your limit and choose rides that are within your comfort range

UNDERSTANDING PACE GUIDELINES

How to work out your average speed

In DHBC, we talk about the pace of our bunches based on the average speed of our Waterfall rides – a 76km undulating ride that takes between 2 and 3 hours.

Besides Waterfall, the pace descriptions describe the “effort” or fitness level. For example, a 50 km Eastern Hills at a C28 “pace” will have an average speed of 22 – 24 km/hr.

The average speed is based on your moving time – i.e. it does not include time stopped at traffic lights. This is what Strava calculates as your average speed.

The best way to get an idea of what pace you can ride is to join a Waterfall ride – typically a C25 or C28 ride unless you are already very experienced.

‘No drop’ rides

All beginner and most intermediate rides with DHBC are “no-drop” rides, where the bunch stays together (except for hills where the bunch regroups at the top of the hills). If the pace is too high, do not hesitate to call ‘ease up.’ Make the call as early as possible so you don’t drop off the back and can’t be heard.

No drop and pace guidelines are two different things.

For example, a ride can be 28s pace and no drop, meaning riders need to be able to ride at the 28s pace in order to join that ride.

Tip

If you keep falling off the back, try moving to second or third wheel in the bunch. You are in the draft here, saving energy and making it easier to stay with the bunch.

Pace Setting

Be conservative until you have a good sense of the people you will be riding with. It's better to join a bunch that's too slow than to find yourself struggling to keep up on a faster ride – potentially putting yourself and the other riders in danger.

Respect the pace of the ride. If it's too slow for you, don't try and force the pace. Instead, join a different bunch the next time.

Do not surge off the front, as this will string out the bunch. Typically, riders will tire after sprinting and, in turn, slow down and disrupt the pace. Be aware of the riders around you.

RIDING IN A BUNCH WITH DHBC

At DHBC, we value safety first. It is not DHBC practice to run red lights, ride erratically, pressure other riders to go faster, sprint off the front of the bunch or indulge in other behaviours which put the bunch at risk.

A fundamental principle of DHBC's ride etiquette is keeping the bunch together as a safe, predictable, cohesive, focused, and supportive group.

The rules

By law cyclists are allowed to ride 2 abreast provided they are no more than 1.5 metres apart. Motorists passing cyclists must give a minimum clearance of;

- 1m in a 60kmph or less zone or
- 1.5m when the speed limit is over 60kmph. Riding 2 abreast is often safer than riding single file.

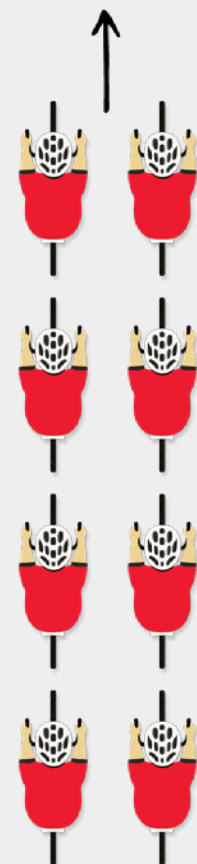
(Distance is measured from the right most part of the bike or person, to the left most part of the vehicle)

Standard DHBC Bunch formation

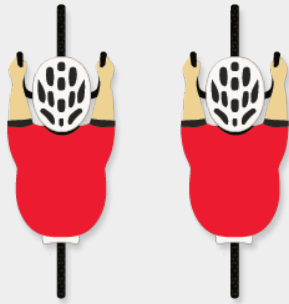
Bunches pair off in a 2 x 2 formation, and each rider maintains a gap of at least 50cm from the rear tyre of the rider in front. A longer gap of around one to one and a half metres is appropriate for newer riders and wet weather.

Ride slightly to the side of the wheel in front to get a better view down the line and more time to react to problems.

Do not watch the rear of the wheel in front of you. Instead, focus on the person in front and ahead through the line. This allows the rider to be more aware of the surroundings, increasing situational awareness, giving more time to react.

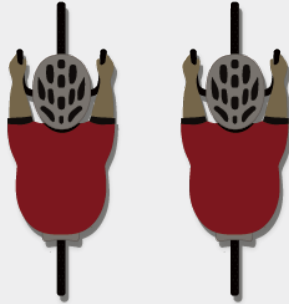


POSITIONS IN THE BUNCH



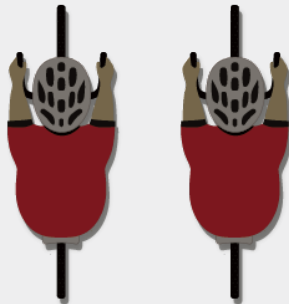
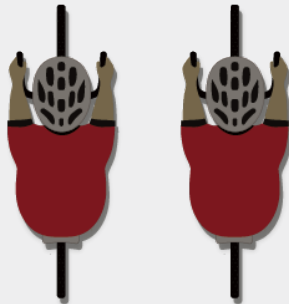
Front Riders

Responsible for making safe decisions, initiating calls and signals and maintaining a constant speed



Bunch Riders

Bunch riders pass calls and signals up and down the line



Ride Leaders

Responsible for safely getting the bunch from A to B, changing lanes and keeping the bunch together



Back Riders

Responsible for passing bunch and traffic info to the front, warning for vehicles and calling ease up



POSITION ROLES

Ride Leaders

Official beginner and most intermediate DHBC rides have volunteer ride leaders trained and accredited by AusCycling to manage and lead group rides safely. The ride leader is responsible for:

- Delivering a pre-ride briefing on what riders can expect
- Maintaining the speed guidelines of the bunch
- Managing the group to ride together considering the varying skills and fitness of the riders
- Supporting safe bunch riding practices as outlined in this guide
- Managing any incidents or emergencies

Please follow a ride leader's directions and take any suggestions or corrections with a smile. Remember, the ride leaders are volunteering their time to benefit the club and your safety.

The front riders

The front riders take responsibility for the bunch. They must set the pace, call all road obstacles, and warn the bunch of any traffic changes. For this reason, it is not the time for a social chat.

The front riders need to call consistently. Do not overcall minor or irrelevant hazards. Call early, promptly, and decisively to warn the bunch. This is a judgement call. It would be a noisy bunch in Sydney if every potential hazard were called but call out the main ones.

Front riders should scan the road ahead for obstacles and other potential risks. They must focus on what lies ahead and be aware of peripheral developments. Make calls early so that when moving around obstacles, all riders have sufficient time and space to follow



Bunch riders in the middle

Everyone in the bunch is responsible for passing calls up and down the bunch. Riders in the middle are equally responsible for the safety of the bunch and cannot get distracted talking to one another. Remember to maintain the pace and keep the front and back riders together.

Riders at the back of the bunch

The rider on the back right-hand (outside) side has a big responsibility. This person must call the bunch across lanes or warn of trucks, cars etc., that are approaching when on narrow and/or single-lane roads.

Note

In DHBC, we ride in groups of 16 or fewer riders. When the bunch exceeds 16 riders, the bunch **MUST** split into two groups. It is much safer because it is easier for the group to stay together, negotiate lane changes, hear calls and make decisions.



RIDING ON THE ROAD

How to change lanes

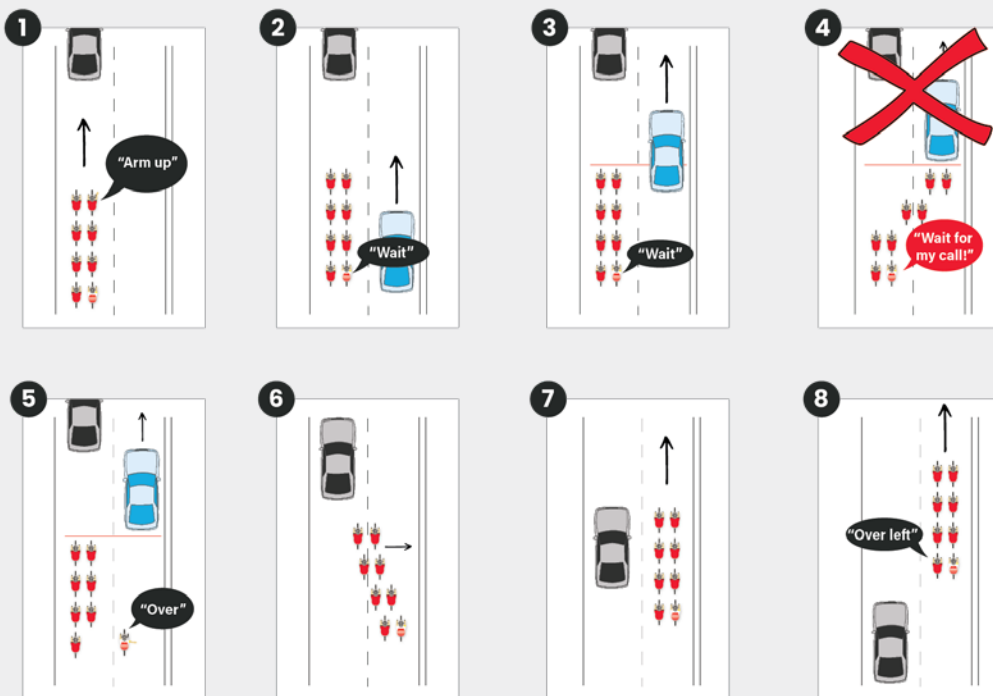
When the group needs to change lanes (e.g., pass a parked car or move across to turn right), the bunch needs to negotiate changing lanes as a cohesive group safely.

The front rider should raise an arm and call 'ARM UP!' To reinforce the hand signal, the call 'ARM UP' can be made and passed down the bunch to make sure the rider in the back right position sees the signal.

Whoever is in the back right position of the bunch makes the call when to change lanes, as they have the best view of the traffic behind. They check and wait for a clear break before calling the bunch over. The call will either be 'WAIT!' or 'OVER!'. 'WAIT' is repeated until it is clear to call 'OVER'

When it is safe, the back right rider will indicate and change lanes before the rest of the bunch. Next, the rider looks ahead. Finally, when the lane is clear for the entire length of the bunch, the rider will call 'OVER !'

Most lane changes are to the right. However, at times they are to the left. This is clarified by 'Over left!'



Note

Do not attempt to take on the responsibility of calling the bunch over if you are mid-way through the bunch. You do not have a clear view of the traffic behind, you will put the riders behind you in danger, and the bunch will likely separate and confuse motorists.

How to climb and descend

Climbing

On gentle or rolling inclines, the bunch should stay together, maintaining the speed of the front riders. When commencing an ascent, the front riders should accelerate into the hill to avoid the bunch slowing, as normally speed would reduce going into a hill. Once at the crest of the hill the front riders need to keep pedalling for another 100m to let the riders behind complete the hill at the same constant speed. If the front riders relax at the crest and slow, a “concertina effect” (where the bunch closes in and then expands repeatedly) will result with the following riders having to slow or even brake on an uphill section.

Descending

Riders at the front need to keep pedalling when going downhill. The bunch behind will have the advantage of “slip stream” and can travel faster with less effort. To avoid the “concertina effect” the front riders should always pedal downhill and upon reaching the bottom of the hill, pedal faster to maintain the same speed for 100m. This allows the following cyclists to maintain a constant speed down into the flat, avoiding the need to brake. When descending, increase the distance between you and the bike in front to a couple of lengths and continue pedalling.

Regrouping at the top of hills

On hills that are steeper or longer (and all no drop rides), riders may agree to climb at their own pace. If agreed, the bunch will break up for the climb. DHBC waits for the last rider at the top of a hill. After the top of the hill, the lead riders will nominate a safe area to stop and wait for the group to re-bunch. If you want to overtake on the climb, safely move to the right and call ‘passing’.

Half wheeling – Don't do it!

Half Wheeling on the front

This is when one rider at the front of the bunch is always half a wheel ahead and constantly pushing the pace.

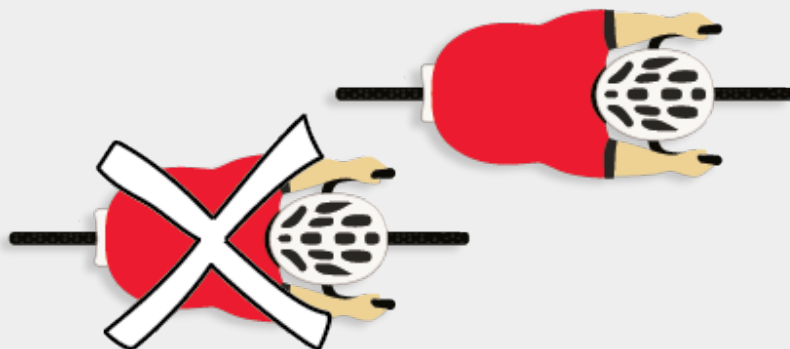
The rider next to them speeds up to draw level but the half-wheeler speeds up again to stay ahead. It continues like this until either one of the riders 'blows up' or the bunch does. It is possibly the most annoying thing you can do while riding in a bunch and staggers the bunch behind you. Appropriate responses are "Please stop half wheeling" or "You've got a long bike!"

Overlapping wheels in the bunch

When riding in a bunch, the golden rule is DO NO OVERLAP WHEELS

Ride shoulder-to-shoulder and axle-to-axle rather than overlapping wheels – a practice known as "half-wheeling".

If you half wheel, you are putting yourself and the riders behind you in danger. you will be positioned within the front rider's blind spot and any sideways movement or braking by that rider could result in clipping wheels and a fall involving you and likely several other riders.



How to rotate the lead

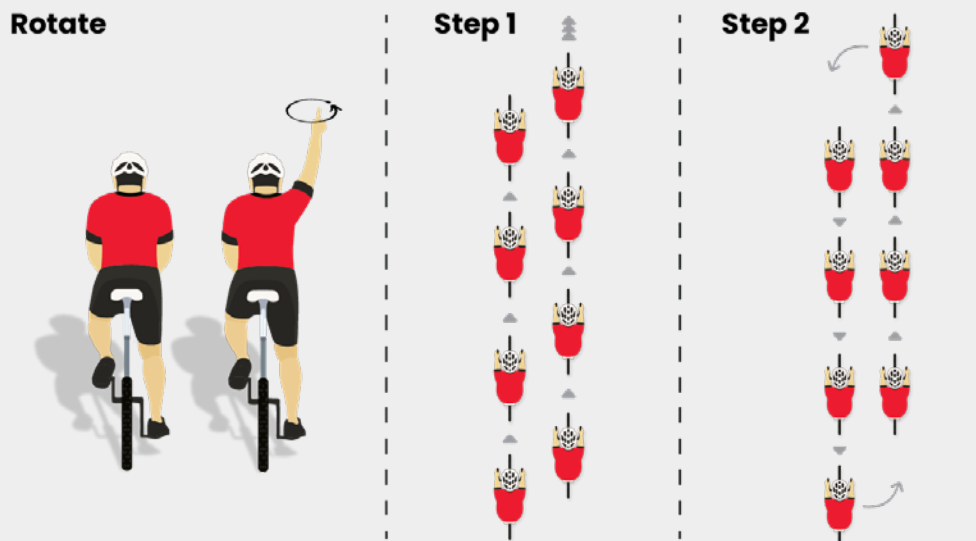
Rotating the lead riders means that everyone shares the work of breaking the wind. This helps the group ride faster and for longer. Lead riders should stay on the front for short intervals. Fatigue can set in otherwise.

DHBC bunch rotates counter-clockwise when the right front rider signals 'Rolling on the right'. The front rider on the right moves ahead slightly. The left front rider calls "CLEAR" when the rider is clear to come across to the left position. The right-side riders move up one spot and the left side back one spot.

At the rear of the bunch, the rider on the left moves across to the right side of the bunch.

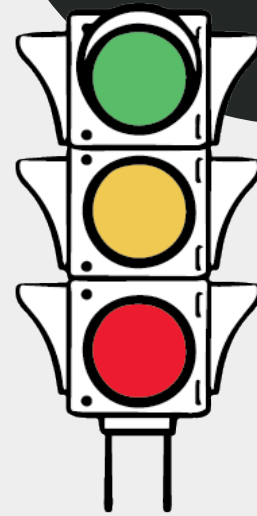
It is group courtesy to spend some time on the front. If you are fatigued or don't feel confident doing this, simply spend a moment there and indicate you would like to roll. As a courtesy to other riders, lead riders should not rotate off just before the commencement of a hill. Instead, a rotation of the lead should always occur on the flat.

Aim to rotate the front riders often (5-10 minutes) to maintain speed, but also when riders are tired. Tired riders can make mistakes or miss things.



Tip

On long training rides (e.g., plus 100km), 10km or 20-minute intervals are a guide before rotating off the front.



Amber Lights

The way traffic behaves when the lights turn amber is often not according to the road rules. An amber light DOES NOT mean speed up and see if you can get through the intersection before the light turns red. An amber light means you MUST STOP if it is SAFE to do so.

[Traffic lights | NSW Government](#)

When approaching a set of traffic lights turning amber, the lead riders have responsibility for every rider in the bunch and must make the appropriate call. Do not speed up and sprint through.

When the traffic light changes from green to amber with enough distance for the bunch to safely stop, front riders will call "Lights.... Stopping". The call will be accompanied by signalling, when safe, by holding up a hand. Be aware of the riders behind you. They need time to stop safely. If you are behind the front riders, do not overrule the 'stopping' call.

When it is not safe to stop and it is safe to roll through, the front riders call "Rolling".

Things can happen, and after a 'rolling call', it may not be safe for the whole group to roll through. When this happens, the riders in the middle or rear of the bunch will call "stopping". Do not overrule the stopping call. The bunch will split and regroup after the lights.

When pushing off from the lights, the front riders should go slower than they would if riding alone to avoid gapping the bunch behind them. The bunch is like an elastic band. A surge on the front is a full-on sprint at the back.

Slow Traffic

When in slow-moving traffic, the bunch does not ride between lanes and move past vehicles. This technique is known as filtering and is not DHBC ride etiquette. The reason for this is that it is hard for the driver to see cyclists, can annoy them and create uncertainty as to what the riders may or may not do next. It also splits the bunch with cyclists positioned between different vehicles.

When traffic is stopped at intersections, we stop behind the last stationary vehicle as you would in a car. A DHBC bunch will cover a greater length than most other vehicles and should move like other vehicles.

How to paceline

Pace lining allows you to ride faster with less effort, by taking advantage of drafting and shorter time on the front. It is mostly used in racing or team time trials. Pace lining seems straightforward but to do it well requires practice and concentration, so we only do it when the road is smooth, flat and clear of traffic, junctions and traffic lights. We usually practise pace lining coming back from Waterfall.

The standard rolling paceline occurs when riders rotate in a circular fashion. One line of riders moves forward (the advancing line – on the right) while the other line drifts backwards (the receding line – on the left).

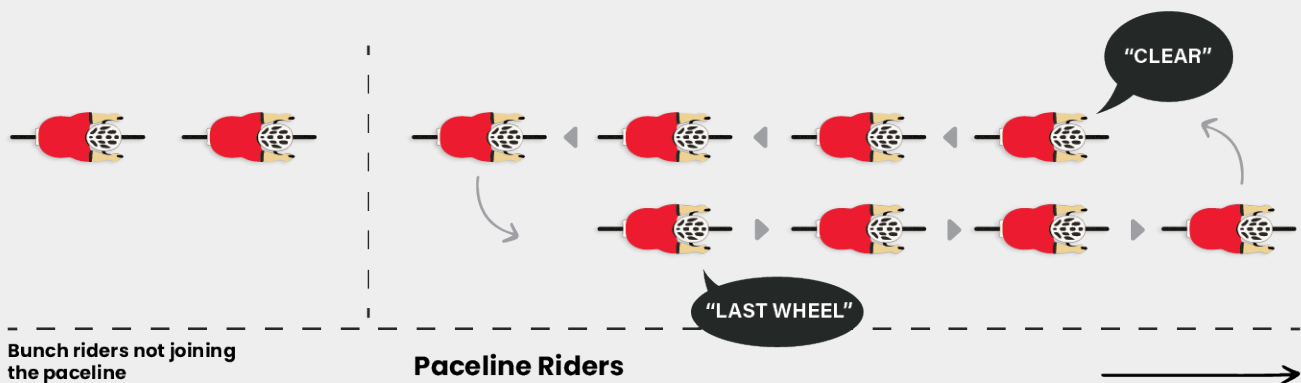
When at the back of the receding line, move over to the right to join the back of the advancing line. The last rider of the advancing line should call out 'LAST WHEEL' as they pass you. Always check before moving over to make sure it is safe to do so.

Call out LAST when you are beside the last person in the receding line. That tells them to get ready to move over into the advancing line. If you don't call out, they will often need to accelerate to catch your wheel, which we don't want to do – smooth is fast.

When you are at the front of the advancing line – move over left to the receding line as soon as you pass the front wheel of the first receding line rider. Call 'clear' when the rider on your right can move safely in front of you

- Keep the speed constant
- Do not stop pedalling as you roll off
- Do not coast in a paceline. If need be, soft pedal.
- If it is your first time, stay at the back and observe
- When practicing with new people or groups that haven't ridden together go a little slower
- Communication is vital to keep a paceline going. Every rider should maintain the calls

The focus when pace lining is on smooth, consistent riding. Although the speed is fast, no actions are fast. Instead, they are fluid and at the same speed. Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast.





STANDARD DHBC CALLS

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DH
DH

Standard DBHC Bunch Calls

All riders play an essential part in bunch riding. All calls must be passed down the line, and clear communication is paramount. Front riders can give the best signals and relay their intentions, but substantial risks can remain unless the calls are passed down the line.

Always look up the road and anticipate obstacles early.

Calls should always be:

- Clear
- Deliberate
- Not panicked or screamed
- Consistent
- Pleasant in tone

Good Neighbours

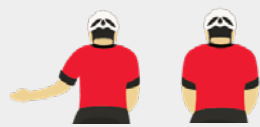
Bunches have to make calls about traffic signals, road surfaces and changes in speed, for our own safety. Our neighbours don't know or understand this unless they are cyclists, it's a requirement unique to our sport.

As a club we would like to lead the way towards establishing better community relationships by implementing the following "good neighbours" policy in our bunches:

Use hand signals to point out minor road surface irregularities and bumps. Constant loud calls highlighting every road blemish or car passing, not only annoys neighbours but can ruin a tranquil ride. However, if there is an immediate danger then a call will be quicker than a hand signal and allows the bunch to react quickly to avoid an accident. Please use your common sense and choose appropriately.

Remember

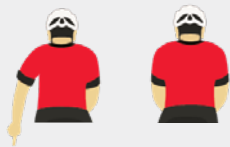
It can be difficult to hear instructions with the wind and traffic noise, so its important that each member repeats each call, so everyone hears. EVERYONE must pass down the call to ensure the group's safety.



Turning Left



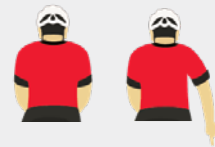
Turning Right



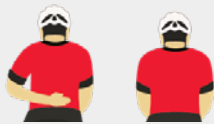
Hole Left



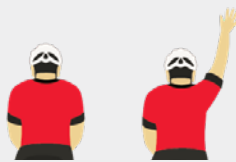
Hole Middle



Hole Right



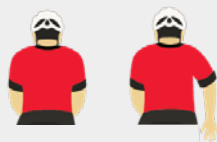
Obstacle Ahead



Arm up
(call to change lanes)



Single file



Slowing



Arm up
(call to change lanes)

DHBC Calls

The Call	Meaning
'arm up'	Request to change lanes by front ride leader right. See 'Changing Lanes' for further information.
'wait'	It is not safe to change lanes. Wait for further instruction.
'over'	It is safe to change lanes as all vehicles have passed all riders at the front of the bunch. The rider calling over must be safely in the lane being changed into before they call the bunch 'over.'
'hold the lane'	When the bunch needs to stay in the lane they are in and not move left.
'single'	The bunch needs to change from 2 abreast to single file. The lead riders accelerate to create gaps to ensure a quick transition to single file. The left-side rider then maintains speed, and the right-side rider eases off momentarily while moving over left into line behind the rider on the left.
'pair up'	It is safe for the bunch to move back to 2 abreast riding.
'stopping'	When you want to let riders know that you are stopping. Also used to warn the bunch to stop at an oncoming red light or other obstacles. <i>If you don't feel comfortable negotiating the hand movement and braking, then just make the verbal call.</i>
'slowing'	Call indicating the group is slowing down or coming to a stop.
'rolling'	Used when traffic lights change to amber and the call is made that the entire bunch can make it through safely. Also used to indicate to start riding and/or continue riding.
'clear' 'clear left' 'clear right'	Made at a traffic junction or roundabout to signal it is clear and safe to ride.
'hole' - 'left, middle, right'	Warning of a dangerous hole in the road that should be avoided. Made by the first rider and passed through the bunch by all riders. This call is not for all small bumps.
'Regroup at the top'	On a climb, everyone will ride up the hill at their own pace and the first rider will find a safe place to stop and wait for all members to finish the climb.

The Call	Meaning
'rubbish'	Approaching a dangerous obstruction on the road.
'walker up' 'runner up' 'car up'	The bunch is approaching and passing an object you may need to move off your line to avoid, e.g., a parked car or a person. Made by the first rider and passed through the bunch
'car back'	A car is behind the bunch wanting to pass or is overtaking the bunch very close.
'Door'	Bunch is approaching a car with an occupant opening a door or about to open a door.
'riders right'	Warning a faster bunch is passing on the right. Also used by the bunch passing on the right to inform the bunch being passed.
'turning left'	Bunch will be turning right if the road is clear. Don't presume everyone knows the route.
'turning right'	Bunch will be turning right if the road is clear. Don't presume everyone knows the route.
'ease up'	Used when a rider or number of riders are being dropped from the bunch. The front riders reduce speed so that those dropping/dropped can regroup.
'All on?'	Made from the front riders to ask if the bunch has regrouped. Rear riders answer 'Yes!' or 'No!'
'All on!'	A call made from the back to advise bunch that it is back together.
'mechanical'	A rider has a bike problem, so the group must stop safely as soon as possible. Used for all mechanicals, including punctures.
'rolling on the right'	When the rider/s at the front of the bunch indicate to rotate rider/s on the front. The front right rider moves left, and the front left moves back x 1 down the line. Be careful to maintain an even pace.
'Bunch up'	Used to get riders to be a tighter group near a quick changing set of lights or when the bunch becomes straggled in formation.
'changing'	Warning 'lights are about to go green, so get ready to move off.'
'split'	The bunch has been split – typically at traffic lights.



HOW TO SURVIVE ROAD HAZARDS

Always ride with your head up and keep an eye on the road ahead. Early calls will save a lot of accidents, money, and your well-being.

Remember to focus, chat only when safe, and do not daydream. And most importantly, keep your bike in top mechanical condition. Repair or replace faulty parts sooner rather than later. Your first line of defence against the challenges of the real world is a bike with all parts in good working order.

Punctures

To avoid punctures, choose your line with care. Steer around broken glass, road rubble, gravel, and potholes. If you must ride through something, inspect the tread afterwards to ensure nothing got stuck in the wheel.

Replace tyres before they become too thin, and check inflation pressure every couple of days. Soft tyres slow you down, corner poorly, wear fast, and don't protect your rims against metal-bending impacts.

Potholes

Hitting potholes can bend your rims beyond repair. They can also send you flying over the handlebars. Note where potholes lurk on your regular routes. Plan your line in advance to avoid them and call them as early as possible when riding in a bunch.

Treat potholes like glass. Ride around them, first checking behind for traffic.

Additional slick spots

Painted lines. These can be slippery, especially the zebra crossing with wider markings. In addition, the paint fills in the asphalt's texture, producing a surface that is uncertain when dry and deadly when wet.

Dry oil spots. These may be invisible, but you can spot them as darker streaks on grey pavement. Be especially careful in corners.

Wet oil spots. If it rains, a small oily patch can grow until it covers the whole lane. Be on the lookout for tell-tale multi-coloured water

Wet metal. If it's been raining, and you come upon anything metal in the road (manhole cover, steel-deck bridge, road repair plate), it's as dangerous as riding on ice. Cross it with the bike upright and walk if needed.

Wet leaves. Be careful in autumn, or you will fall. Even if the road is dry, moisture can be trapped between leaves littering the pavement.

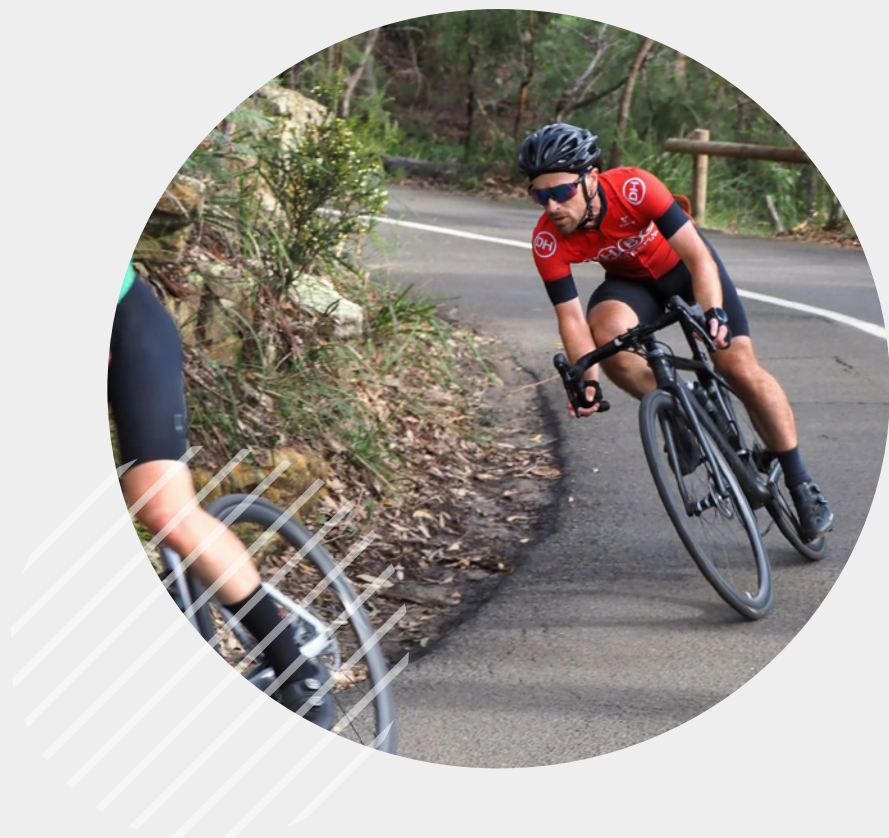
Sewer grates and drains. Some have bars parallel to the road and wide enough to let a bike wheel fall through. If this happens, you can look forward to expensive and lengthy surgeries, so avoid them.

WHAT TO DO IF THERE'S A MECHANICAL PROBLEM

If there is a mechanical problem (puncture, dropped chain etc) everyone in the bunch should call "mechanical." The whole bunch should pull over when safe to do so. The first thing a ride leader should do is make sure everyone is off the road and safe.

They then have two options.

- Get everyone to wait until the problem is fixed
- If it's a big issue you can leave one or two people to help and let the rest of the bunch continue with the ride. Only do this if the people are comfortable finding their way back or if they have arranged to be picked up.





WET WEATHER

Wet weather provides many challenges and additional hazards. Visibility is reduced for both the rider and driver. Road surfaces can become slippery, incidents of flat tyres can increase, and riders need to be even more alert.

The club will announce if a ride is 'cancelled' on the DHBC Facebook Members Page. This call will be made on the morning of the ride, so please check before heading out your front door. If you do head out, think of packing a raincoat.

To reduce the likelihood of accidents in the wet:

- Increase the gap between riders to 3 – 4 metres
- Brakes and wheel rims will be wet. Allow for a much longer braking distance and time to slow or stop
- Avoid braking mid-turn, especially in the wet
- Slow your acceleration to avoid skidding
- Slow down. Do not ride as fast, especially when cornering.
- Be wary of materials that are slippery in the wet. e.g., metal plates, grills. Pay extra attention to white paint or road paint (crossings, lane markings)
- Turn your lights on in wet weather
- Think of wearing bright or light clothing in darker conditions to help motorists see you

