

GUIDELINES FOR RIDEOUTS

Harley Owners Group - 1066 Chapter

To Be Read By All New Chapter Members.

Compiled By The Committee Of 1066 Chapter In The Interests Of Safe Riding

Remember The Ride-Out Rules

Rule 1. If you join the rideout, stick to the rules.

Rule 2: Ride no closer than 2 seconds from the bike in front of you in your column.

Rule 3: Only a fool breaks the two-second rule.

Rule 4: See And Be Seen: All bikes shall have their front and rear lights on at all times when moving.

Rule 5: Do not break rank except by pre-arrangement, or in case of emergency or difficulty.

Rule 6: If it ain't safe - don't do it!

Er - What's A Rideout?

A rideout is an organised motorcycle trip where we ride together as a *group*. This may be simply for the pleasure of riding in company, or because we are visiting, say, a dealership or a venue, or we are participating in a larger HOG event. In all cases, we want everybody to

- Have fun and enjoy the ride and each other's company;
- Arrive safely, with no problems *en route*, and preferably all together.

A safe and successful rideout requires discipline, control, restraint, concentration and constant alertness from everybody, so we've set out some simple rules in this document. Rule 1 is:

Rule 1. If you join the rideout, stick to the rules.

If you can accept and observe the rules, a good rideout can be a very rewarding and enjoyable experience. There are few spectacles as impressive as Harleys moving *en masse*, and the only sound that's better than a Harley engine is *lots* of Harley engines!

If you don't like the rules, it is better not to join the rideout; you don't have to and it doesn't suit everybody. If you will be happier riding separately on your own or with friends, then by all means do so and meet the rest of us there.

Who Organises Rideouts?

Chapter rideouts are organised under the auspices of the Chapter committee and marshalled by one or more Road Captains.

What Is A 'Road Captain', And What Is the Role Of A Safety Officer?

A 'Road Captain' is a Chapter Member selected and appointed by the Chapter Committee, on the basis of maturity and experience, as fit to lead and marshal rideouts, and is identified by a 'Road Captain' rocker on

his/her riding apparel. If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact the Safety Officer. The Safety Officer is a Road Captain who has a co-ordination role as well. The Safety Officer has a special brief:

- ✓ To require that Chapter motorcycle riding activities are conducted safely for both Chapter Members and the general public, particularly where travel on public roads is concerned.
- ✓ Promoting improved motorcycle riding safety standards and skills within the Chapter.

Starting The Ride-Out

Assembly

Make sure you are roadworthy (awake, sober, fed, watered but with low bladder pressure, and properly clad), your bike is roadworthy (tyres, brakes, indicators, lights, steering, suspension, oil) and fuelled! Check the weather forecast beforehand and be prepared. Everybody participating in the rideout should try to get there, at the latest, 15 minutes prior to the stated departure time. We are not a military outfit and leaving a couple of minutes late is not a Court Martial offence, but some major rideouts can be quite tightly scheduled, and it's only courteous to others to arrive in plenty of time. Don't arrive at the last minute, or you may miss: -

The Ride-Out Briefing

This is important for ALL rideouts and increasingly important with increasing size/distance of the rideout. The briefing is conducted by the 'Lead' Road Captain and should cover:

- Responsibilities. 'Lead' will identify him/herself as leading the rideout and indicate the other Road Captains (or co-opted Chapter members), and their bikes, who will be marshalling, in particular the rider who will be riding as 'Tail' (see below). 'Lead' may designate an auxiliary Road Captain to ride as second 'Tail' or 'Sweeper' to take care of stragglers, breakdowns or other problems as directed by 'Tail'. All Road Captains should be wearing fluorescent jackets or vests (yellow or orange); to avoid confusion no other participants in the rideout should wear fluorescent jackets or vests. *As far as possible* 'Lead' and 'Tail' (and Sweeper if appropriate) will remain the same throughout.
- Where we are going and the approximate distance and travelling time.
- The route we are going to take, mentioning the major roads we will be using and any known hazards *en route*.
- Planned stops and/or rendezvous points so that any members who get lost or detached can link up again.
- Experience: the 'Lead' will ask if there are any riders who are not familiar with our formation riding and 'second man drop-off' procedures. If so 'Lead' will explain these procedures (see below). If you are an inexperienced rider, ride at the back of the column initially so you are not involved in 2nd-man duties without having seen it working first.

If in doubt, don't be afraid to ask!

- Ride-out rules and procedures.
- Any questions.

You should not be low on fuel, but if you are, tell 'Lead' **NOW** so that we can make an early fuel stop.

Remember, in a rideout, we are in constant traffic of our own making. Endanger yourself and you endanger others. Sticking to the rideout rules and guidelines will make rideouts satisfying, fun and safe for everybody.

Preparing To Depart

When the briefing is complete, we get kitted up, start engines and assemble in loose formation with 'Lead', 'Tail' and other Road Captains in position. 'Lead' will not move off until everybody is in position and ready to roll. If you want to ride near your partner/friend, then please position yourself before the rideout sets off. There should

be no unnecessary overtaking of each other in order to be near someone specifically, and if we are using '2nd Man Drop Off' - see below - this can't be guaranteed for the full trip anyway.

Riding In Formation

To keep the length of the column as short as possible we ride in staggered formation where it is safe and space and road type allow. Staggered formation is achieved by riding in a column of two files of bikes in:

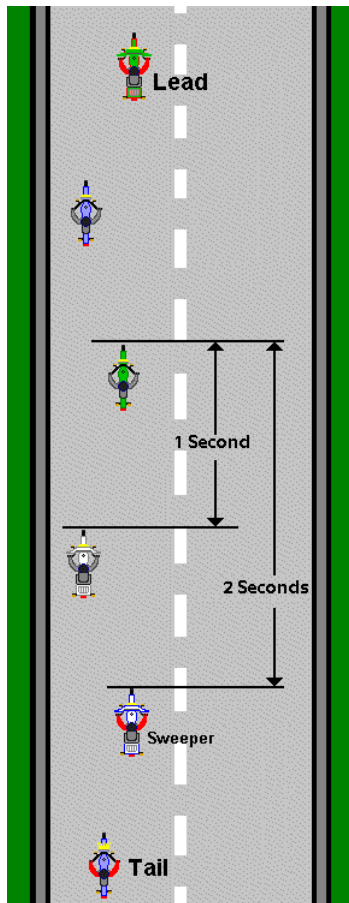
- Our half of a single-carriageway road (if wide enough) or
- One lane of a dual carriageway or motorway (not spread across the whole carriageway as a pack).

Adjacent riders in the two files do NOT ride side-by-side but alternately and evenly spaced at a safe distance apart. The recognised safe distance apart (thinking and braking distance) in fine weather is two seconds minimum; four seconds minimum in the wet or at night, between you and the bike immediately in front of you in your file. To maintain the two-second gap, it's obvious that the faster we are riding, the greater the actual gap between successive bikes must be. So, Rules 2 and 3 are:

Rule 2: Ride no closer than 2 seconds from the bike in front of you in your file.

Rule 3: Only a fool breaks the two-second rule.

In staggered formation, the bike in front in your file will be 2 seconds ahead while that in the adjacent file will be 1 second ahead. The staggered formation effectively reduces the length of the column by about half compared to riding in single file. Riding in this way requires discipline and restraint. **Remember Rule 1!** Good Observation is required at all times. You should be able to observe all adjacent riders in the column both in front and to the rear of you and you should also be visible to them. A properly assembled column will then look like this (only bigger, hopefully!):-



Please try to avoid being in anyone's blind spot. Hence Rule 4:

Rule 4: See And Be Seen: All bikes shall have their front and rear lights on at all times when moving.

If you are the '2nd Rider', position yourself behind and to the near side of 'Lead'. This is important, see '2nd Man Drop Off Procedure'.

If you are in trouble and need to stop, let the other riders know by raising your LEFT arm, indicating, moving to the near side of the road and stopping. Signal other riders to overtake you by waving them on so that they can overtake safely. Stop in a safe place and the 'Tail' or another Road Captain will come to your assistance if necessary/possible. *This may not be possible on a Motorway.* A Road Captain will, if available and possible, notify 'Lead' of the situation.

If you wish to leave the formation to take a different route or ride independently, you should ideally notify 'Lead' and 'Tail' in advance. Let the others know by raising your left arm and moving to the near side of the road and allow the rest of the rideout to overtake. You must leave from the rear of the formation. No other riders should be behind the 'Tail' (except during 2nd man drop-offs, see below), otherwise 'Tail' can no longer do that job. Otherwise, abide by rule 5: -

Rule 5: Do not break rank except by pre-arrangement, or in case of emergency or difficulty.

In large rideouts, Road Captains may be dispersed throughout the column, or may be riding at front and/or rear. Occasionally they may rove up and down the column for marshalling or message purposes. This does not mean you can do the same – and remember: watch your mirrors and make room for Road

Captains to pass, or let them back into the column, adjusting formation position as necessary.

Speed

'Lead' should regulate the speed of the rideout so as to be under the prevailing speed limit at all times – typically 10 mph less on fast roads, 5 mph less on other roads. This is because the dynamics of riding in a column mean that those behind have to ride harder and faster to keep up. If you are unhappy about the speed of the rideout tell 'Lead' or a Road Captain. In particular:-

1. **Never** pass the lead Road Captain or Lead rider and
2. **Never** pass another rider whose motorcycle is in motion participating in the group ride.

Don't worry if you lose sight of those in front, there is no need to rush and tear to catch up. The 'second man' drop-off procedure described below really does work – as long as everybody obeys the rules!

Please Try To Keep Up – But Safely

Remember that if you dawdle then the people behind you will have to as well, this causes the column to stretch, maybe get dispersed, and those in front disappear serenely into the sunset... Try to keep up, but don't break speed limits, your neck, or anything else to do so, particularly during '2nd man drop-off', as 2nd man will wait for 'Tail' to appear before moving off.

Overtaking On Single-Carriageway Road

Normal overtaking on single carriageway road is instigated by the 'Lead', whereby each successive bike takes up a proper position to overtake i.e. comes out of the staggered formation and executes the manoeuvre. Before pulling out, check your mirror, signal, and always do a 'life-saver'. If there is time for more than one bike to overtake together, then do so in single file, NOT in formation. Once past, maintain overtaking speed for a while to gain a lead on the overtaken vehicle. This will provide room behind you for successive bikes to pull in without cutting up the overtaken vehicle. Remember, the more bikes still to overtake, the more room you must provide. Pull back in and reform staggered formation or single file as appropriate.

It's your life so use your own judgement as to whether it is safe to overtake or not. Don't take unnecessary risks because you are worried about losing contact with the group. Do NOT rely on signals from any rider who has already overtaken that the road is clear for you to overtake.

Multi-Lane (Motorway Or Dual Carriageway) Overtaking

Normal overtaking on motorway or dual carriageway road is similar to the procedure above. Overtaking is instigated by the 'Lead' and every rider overtakes as an individual. The emphasis now is on making sure that no traffic is coming up on your off-side, so always check your mirror, signal, and do a 'life-saver' before moving into the overtaking lane. The column does NOT overtake as a column – this requires the whole column to occupy the overtaking lane and can result in impatient drivers coming up on the inside and dangerously forcing their way into the column. Road Captains should maintain overtaking speed sufficient to gain a lead on the overtaken vehicle(s) to provide room for you and successive bikes to pull in without cutting up the overtaken vehicle.

...which brings us to-

Rule 6: If it ain't safe - don't do it!

Important Overtaking Notes

- When overtaking, get it done quickly and safely. On a motorway, just chugging past at a few miles per hour faster blocks the overtaking lane and we become a menace and hazard to other road users.
- Do not move from lane to lane on any other member's command but 'Lead'. Yes, we do want you to move but please do your own safety procedure and CHECK first...

Mirror, Signal, Life-Saver and Manoeuvre.

Second Man Drop-Off Procedure

The term 'Second Man' covers lady riders too! 'The procedure is used to navigate the column along the correct route. It is well proven and works very effectively even for large groups and in difficult urban and rural driving conditions. It also provides added interest and involvement of other riders (and sometimes a bit of excitement). This is how it should be done. (It looks complicated but really its very simple once you see it working).

- 1) 'Lead' will signal a change of direction in good time using turn indicators and take up an appropriate road position.
- 2) 'Lead' will indicate, with left arm extended at approximately 45° downward, that 2nd rider should drop-off, i.e. stop, to act as a marker.
- 3) If you are 2nd rider:
 - A. **Be alert** for 'Lead's signal and obey it. The whole procedure breaks down if you do not!
 - B. Indicate that you are pulling over to the nearside, and wave other riders on. If you can, start your hazard warning lights. Watch behind you for 'Tail' to appear (do not gaze wistfully after the disappearing group), and stay there until point 'G' below.
 - C. Stop in a safe but **visible** place.
 - D. If it is a left turn:
 - Stop a few yards before the turn if it is blind (e.g. high hedgerow in a country lane, or a vehicle, building or street furniture obscures view) and point to the left with your left arm.
 - Otherwise, stop a few yards round the turn where you will be visible.
 - Do NOT stop on the corner itself, on a pedestrian crossing, or where there are traffic lights, or where you will be a hazard to other road users.
 - E. If it is a right turn:
 - Stop a few yards from the corner where you will be visible.
 - **Indicate A Right Turn as follows:** Left arm straight out with forearm and hand pointing up. Back of hand to rear. Fingers together and straight up. See illustration below.
 - F. If it is roundabout:
 - Stop a few yards into the exit from the roundabout where you will be visible.
 - Do NOT stop ON the roundabout, especially a mini-roundabout.
 - G. **STAY IN POSITION AND WAIT FOR 'TAIL'**. If 'Tail' signals you to move off, indicate, then move off safely and quickly. If 'Tail' is unable to let you move off in front, wait for a safe opportunity and then move off. When you catch up, pass 'Tail' and take up your correct position in formation or single file as appropriate at the back of the column.
- 4) If you are 3rd rider, mirror, signal, and move to the nearside and take up 2nd rider position behind 'Lead'.
- 5) All other riders: where appropriate, mirror, signal and manoeuvre to maintain the correct staggered formation behind the new 2nd rider. Be alert for changes of direction, and watch out for 2nd rider! Do NOT turn at junctions or exit roundabouts until you see 2nd rider!



Riding In Foreign Countries

These recommendations apply equally well in foreign countries. Obviously, if they drive on the right, then read 'left' for 'right' and vice versa in the above recommendations, 'Near-side' and 'Off-side' have the same meanings but are of course 'right side' and 'left side' respectively. You should also remember that other countries have different speed limits and traffic regulations and you need to acquaint yourselves with them before entering the country.

Disclaimer

It is stressed that these are recommendations only and not enforceable instructions. 1066 HOG Committee members and HOG in general can take no responsibility for damage or injury to persons or their machines caused in the use or misuse of these recommendations. When on rideouts, each of us has a duty of care to every other rider. Any action taken by you, when on a rideout, as a result of an encouragement or request from a Road Captain or other member is done of your own free will and at your discretion. If you consider any such request to be rash, unsafe or unlawful, do not comply, you are free to leave the rideout. You bear ultimate responsibility for your bike, yourself, and your passenger.