



Alberta Road Riders Association

Group Riding Safety Guide

DISCLAIMER



This manual is based on the Alberta Riders Guide shown to the left, Chapter 9 – Riding in a Group, as published in 2019.

This safety manual is for informational purposes only and should not be considered a guarantee of safety or liability.

ARRA does not assume any liability for any damages or injuries resulting from the use or reliance on the information in this manual.

Riders are responsible for ensuring that they properly interpret and apply the information in this manual to their specific situation and for adhering to all applicable laws and regulations.

Basics

ARRA has officially adopted the recommendations included in this manual for Group Rides. While some members may be aware of differing recommendations and riding habits, it is paramount that all riders within the riding groups “sing from the same song sheet” to maximize the safety and enjoyment of all.

When riding in a group, there are rules to follow to help everyone travel safely. Each member of the group is responsible for his or her own safety, as well as not putting the other members of the group in danger.

Make sure your vehicle is in good operating condition. Attend the pre-ride meeting where the Ride Coordinator (RC) should provide the following information: route, planned stops, ending destination, hand signals, ride level, and other pertinent information.

Riding groups should have no more than five riders. A larger number makes it more likely that riders will be separated from the group in an urban area. Larger groups also make highway riding riskier when passing and when being passed.

The riding pace should be comfortable for all riders. Each rider should use the rear-view mirrors to keep an eye on the riders behind.

Planning ahead is necessary. Everyone in the group should know the route. As well, everyone should understand the signals for fuelling, lane changes, stopping, rest periods, road hazards and emergencies.

Certain situations may require the riders to stop riding as a group, until riding conditions are safer for group riding. The group can reform when it is safe to do so.



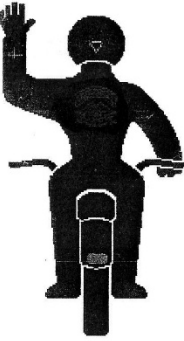
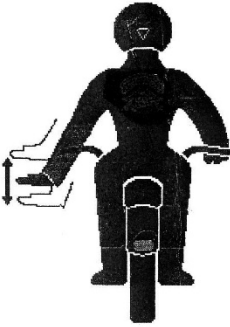
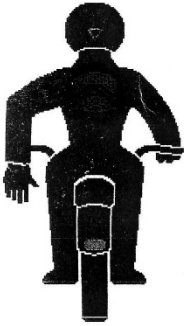
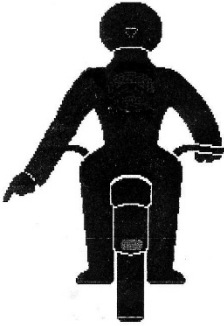
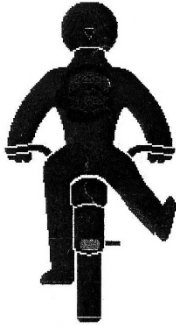
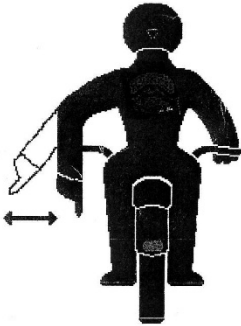
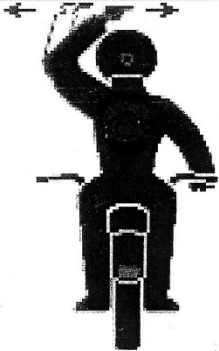
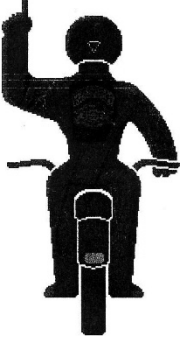
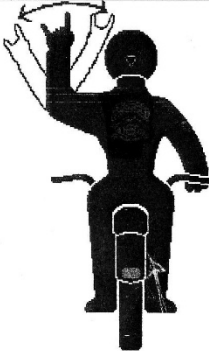
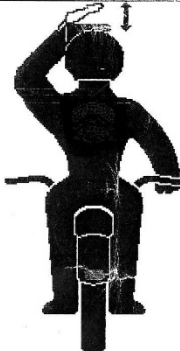
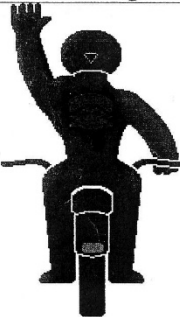
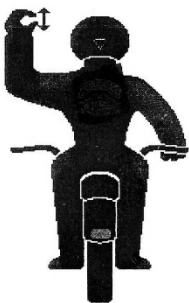
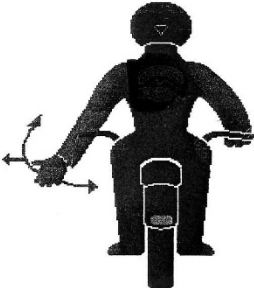
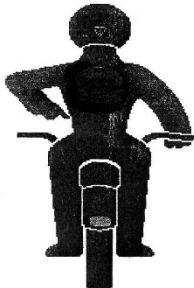


Pre-ride meeting

All riders should arrive 30 minutes prior to the departure of the ride with a full tank of fuel.

The Ride Coordinator (RC) shall be responsible for going through a pre-ride orientation with the riders, using the following points.

1. **Release Form** – non-members shall be required to sign the Liability Relief, it can be downloaded from the website and acknowledged as signed in an email or text to the RC. “I have read, acknowledge and accept the ARRA Liability Waiver.”
2. **Route** - go over basic route and stops. Have the mileage between stops handy if there are questions during the ride (as there almost always is). Update everyone at each stop during the ride as needed.
3. **Range** - check for any short-range bikes and adjust the stops accordingly. Plan routes to not have more than 250 km between gas stops wherever possible.
4. **Ride Group Size** - groups should be no more than 5 and preferably odd numbered (3 or 5), with the fast groups out front, slower groups towards the back. Ride group leaders should be the most experienced in the group, least experienced should be in position two. The second most experienced rider should be the sweep for the group. Do not assume all the trikes want to ride together or should ride together. Check in at the first stop to see if everyone is riding a comfortable speed and rearrange if needed.
5. **Ride Group Leaders** – new leaders can be appointed throughout the day or trip, but riding groups should be fully informed as to the new leader and the sweep for the group. Group Leaders should only be changed at or after breaks stops.
6. **Group positions** – maintain sufficient space between each ride group so cars can pass the ride group without having to jam into the group. We should not be an irritant to other drivers.
7. **Lane position part 1** - clarify when changing from right lane to left lane on multi-lane road, the leader moves to the right position when in the left lane, all following riders maintain a staggered formation.
8. **Lane position part 2** - in twisty sections the group lead should signal single file riding to allow riders to apex corners properly. Gaps between bikes should doubled when riding single file.
9. **Leaving the ride** - request anyone that needs to leave the ride lets someone know before they depart.
10. **AED** - if present on the ride, identify to the riders which bike is it in and where on the bike
11. **Stop time** - the time allotted for a stop should not start until the last group arrives, otherwise the slower riders will get shortened breaks. Adjust as needed depending on the group.
12. **Hand signals** - slow down, single track and staggered signals, road hazard alert

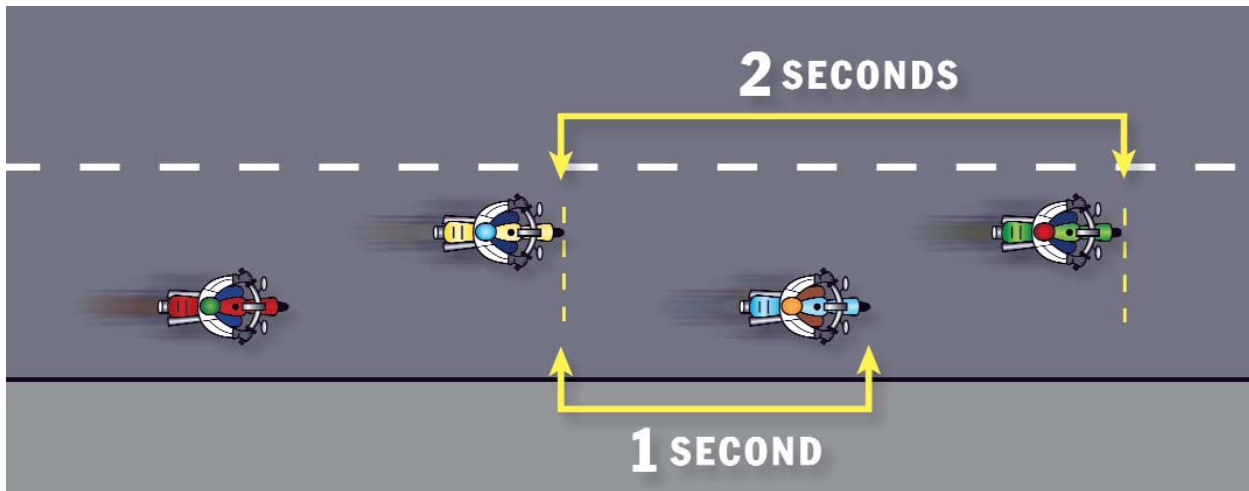
			
Start Up/Ready	Left Turn	Right Turn	Slow Down
			
Stop	Hazard on Left	Hazard on Right	Railroad/Ground Hazard
			
Pedestrian on Right	Single File	Staggered Formation	Police Ahead
			
Problem	Turn Signal On	Pass/Move Beside	Need Fuel

Hand Signals

Riding in a staggered pattern

An experienced rider should be in the lead position of each ride group. Less experienced riders should not be in the lead. The least experienced rider should be in the second position. The last rider is designated as the sweep and should be the most experienced rider next to the lead.

The lead rider has the responsibility for making decisions that help to keep the group safe. The group follows these decisions unless the situation is not safe to do so.



Recommended follow times

All riders should understand the recommended following time and distance from the other riders, and the position for each rider in the lane when in a group.

Do not use the same lane to pass another motorcycle. It is illegal to ride side by side in the same lane. Riding in separate lanes, beside another motorcycle or vehicle, is unsafe and not advised. Both of these patterns of riding may limit the rider's ability to move in an emergency. They may also block traffic travelling in the same direction at a different speed.

To keep a riding group together, and maintain an adequate space cushion, ride in a staggered pattern within the same lane. This applies to trikes and Spyders, although they are wider than two-wheelers, to the extent that the rider is comfortable, they should stagger ride when safe to do so.

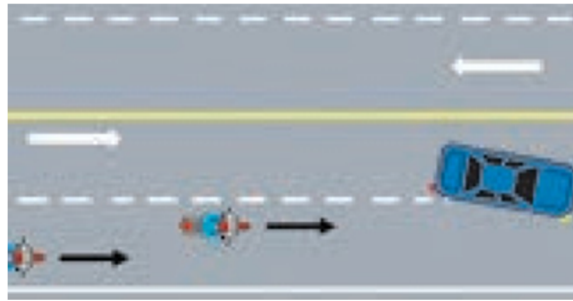
In a staggered pattern, the riders are in alternating right and left positions behind the leader. Each rider has an escape route and a space cushion from others ahead and behind in the lane.

- The second rider stays a minimum of one second behind the leader in the other portion of the same lane.
- The third rider rides a minimum of two seconds behind the leader in the same portion of the lane as the leader.
- A fourth rider would keep a minimum of two second distance behind the second rider.
- A fifth rider would ride a minimum of four seconds behind the leader and two seconds behind the third rider in the same portion of the lane.

A riding group should be an odd number. This allows the lead rider and sweep rider to communicate through hand signals and see each other more easily when riding in a staggered formation.

Lead rider in dominant position

The lead rider should always ride in the dominant portion of the lane being used by the group. The presence of a motorcycle in this position prevents another vehicle from entering the lane until safely past the lead rider. The rest of the group occupies the lane in staggered formation.



Lead rider in correct dominant position.



Lead rider not in dominant position, not protecting lane for self and others.

Two lane highway riding

Lane positioning

On a two-lane highway (one lane for travel in each direction), the leader should ride in the left portion of the lane. On this type of roadway, this is the dominant position in the lane. The lead rider's escape route is to the right portion of the lane.

The second rider stays a minimum of one second behind, in the right portion of the same lane. The third rider rides two seconds behind the leader in the left portion of the lane, and so on for other riders.

Passing

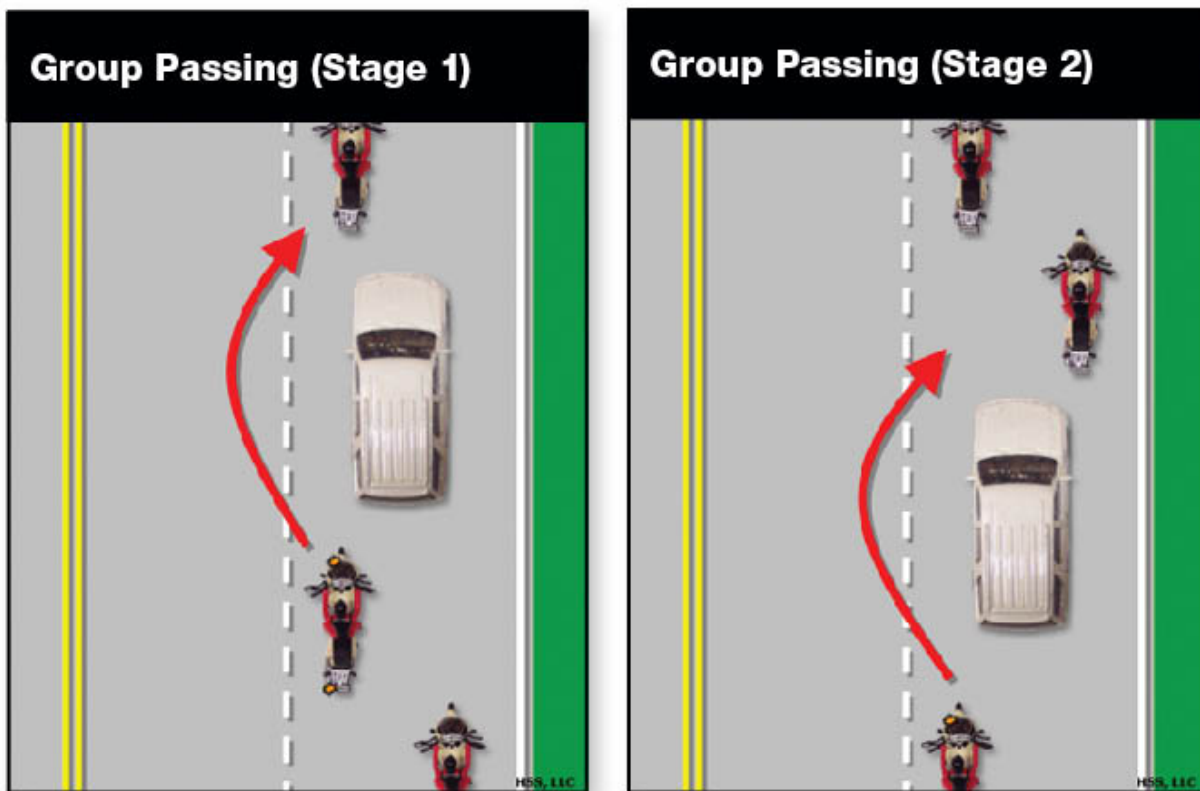
Only pass when necessary. Riding at the speed of traffic will help in the need to pass and the frequency of being passed. Riders on a two-lane highway must pass one at a time, and only when it is safe and legal.

The lead rider is the first to pass. After passing safely, the lead rider should return to the left portion of the lane and quickly establish a space cushion in front of the passed vehicle to allow room for the following riders.

ALL RIDERS IN THE GROUP ARE INDIVIDUALLY RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THERE IS ROOM FOR THE LAST RIDER IN THE GROUP TO MERGE BACK INTO SAFETY. DO NOT SLOW DOWN IMMEDIATELY AFTER PASSING, ENSURE THERE IS A SPACE CUSHION FOR THE RIDER(S) BEHIND.

After the lead rider completes the pass, the second rider should move into the left portion of the lane and wait until it is safe to pass. The rider should wait until there is enough room ahead of the vehicle being passed to fit safely in front. This is safer and less confusing than crowding together in front of the passed vehicle.

The remaining members of the group should use this method. After passing, each rider should be in the same staggered lane position held before passing.



Group Passing in Stages

Multi-lane highway riding with two lanes in the same direction

Right lane – rider position

When the riding group is travelling on a highway with a second lane for travel in the same direction, the group should ride in the travel lane to the right. The lead rider should ride in the left (dominant) portion of this right lane. In this position, the lead rider has an escape route to the right portion of the lane and another to the lane to the left if there is an emergency.

The second rider stays a minimum of one second behind the leader in the right portion of the lane. The third rider rides two seconds behind the leader in the left portion of the lane, and so on for the other riders.

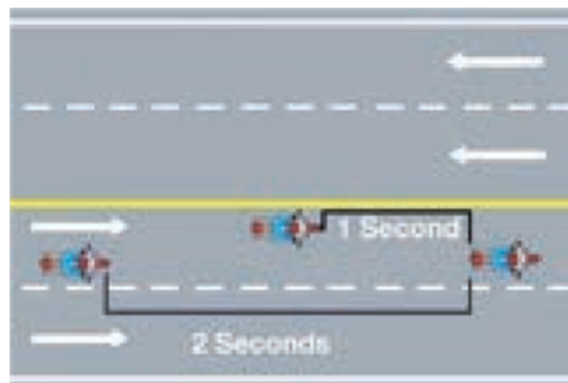


Staggered pattern for riding on a multi-lane highway when riding in the travel lane to the right.

Left lane – rider positioning

If the left lane must be used, the lead rider should ride in the right portion of the lane. In this situation, this is the dominant position to protect the lane. This position also allows the lead rider an escape route to the left portion of the lane and another to the lane to the right if there is an emergency.

The second rider stays a minimum of one second behind the leader in the left portion of the lane. The third rider rides two seconds behind the leader in the right portion of the lane, and so on for the other riders.



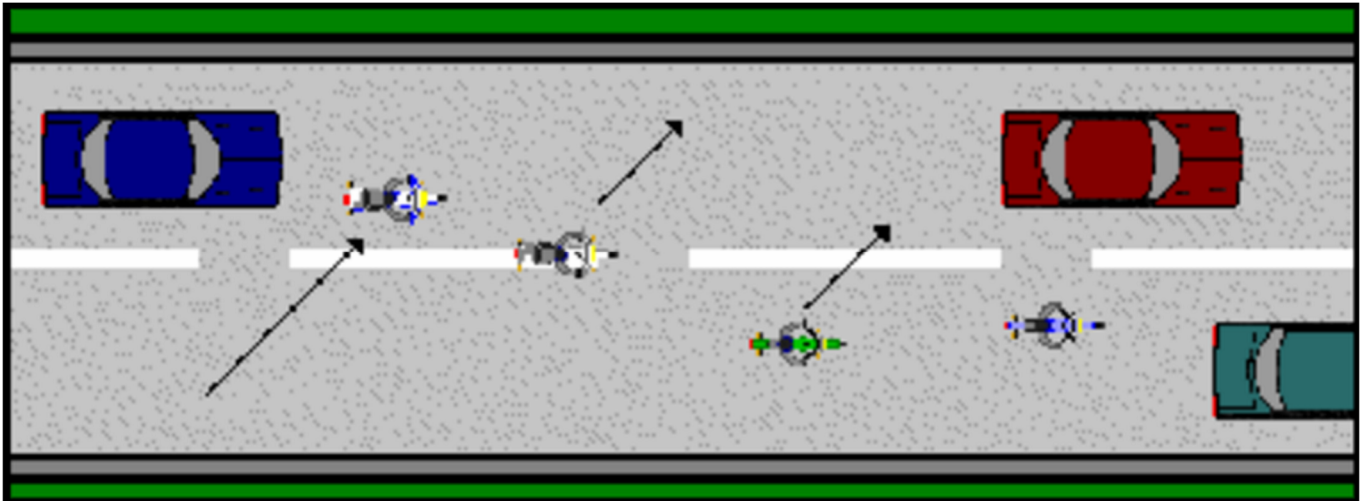
Staggered pattern for riding on a multi-lane highway if the left lane must be used.

Group lane changing

To change lanes on a multi-lane highway, the lead rider indicates the intent by signalling and using a hand signal. Each following rider then indicates the intent to change lanes by signalling.

When there is plenty of space in the next lane, **the sweep rider in the last position is the first to change lanes**. When the last rider has safely moved to the new lane, the rest of the group completes the lane change, one at a time.

The recommended order in which the remainder of the riders make the lane change, is the last rider, fourth, third, second and then the leader.



Lane changing in sequence, back to front

If the group has changed lanes to pass another vehicle, the group must wait until all riders have passed the vehicle they are overtaking before returning to their original lane. The lead rider indicates the intent to return to the original lane by signalling and using a predetermined arm signal. Each rider from the first to the last also then indicates the intent to change lanes by signalling.

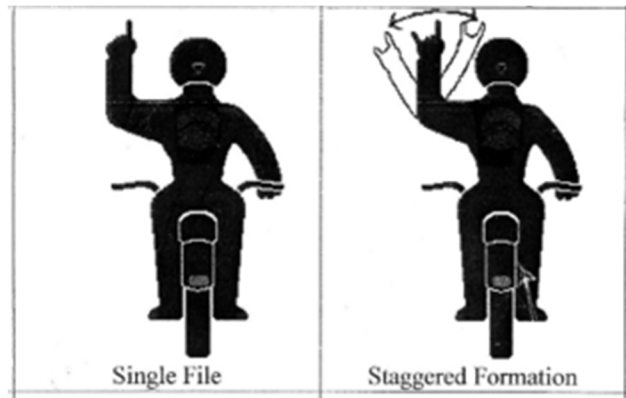
After passing the vehicle, and when there is enough space for all the motorcycles, the last rider will be the first to return to the original lane. When the rider in the last position has safely completed the lane change, the rest of the group completes the lane change one at a time. The order in which the remainder of the riders return to the original lane is the last rider, fourth, third, second and then the leader. Riders should occupy the same positions they held before the pass.

Multi-lane highway with three or more lanes in the same direction

On a multi-lane highway, usually the best choice is for the group to ride in the lane farthest to the right. The second choice is the far-left lane. If the group must ride in a lane other than these two, the leader should ride in the portion of lane that is dominant for managing that stretch of road. The rest of the group will need to adjust their staggered lane position according to the lead rider's position.

Single file formation

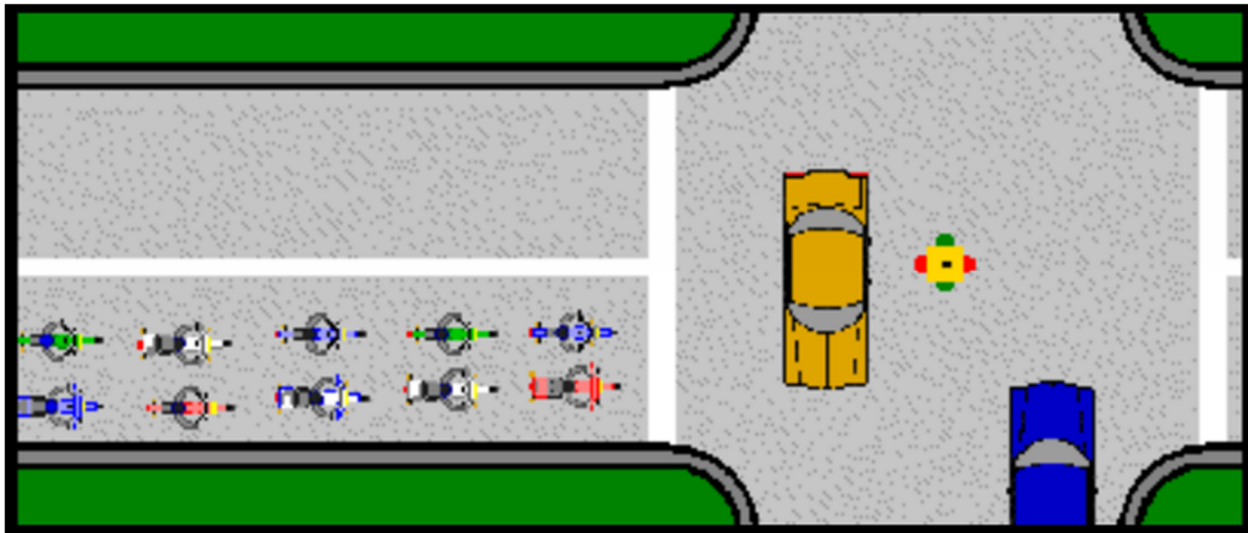
When the lead rider decides, the group shifts from group staggered position to single file upon a signal from the leader.



This will occur when riding on a twisty road, approaching sharp curves, turns, crest of hills, or narrow roadways and bridges. In single file, the following distance between the riders is a minimum of two seconds. The riders should choose the portion of the lane that allows seeing ahead and being seen. The leader will signal a change from single file back to staggered formation.

Stopping as a group at an intersection:

When stopping as a group at an intersection, break stagger formation and pull up beside the rider in the adjacent lane. This will reduce the length of the group by half. Stay in this formation until you are through the intersection. Because the group is half as long it will take half the time to clear the intersection and increase the odds of keeping the group intact.



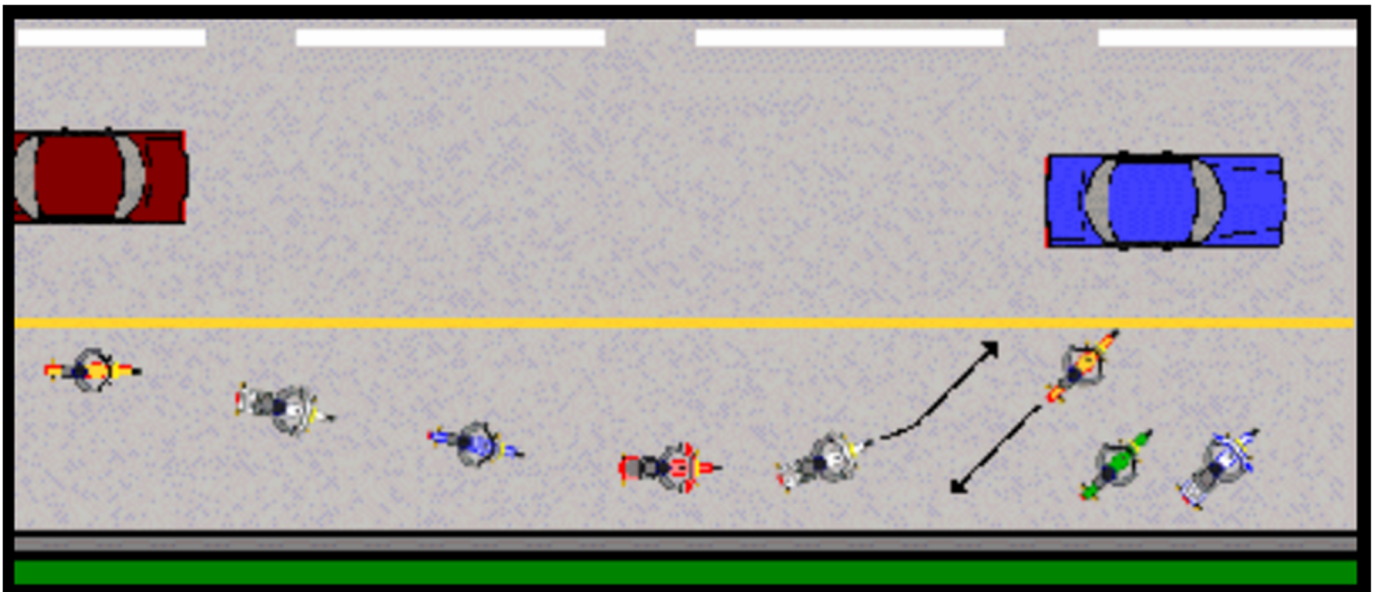
Stopping side by side at an intersection

If you cannot safely make it through the intersection with the group, STOP. Do not take a chance and run a red light. The lead RC will slow down and allow time for the separated riders to regroup. If necessary, the sweep may lead the separated riders until they can safely regroup.

Group Street Parking:

Parking in an orderly method substantially reduces the time for all to get off the road and out of traffic. There is risk of injury for the last riders that may be blocking the road in an attempt to stay with the group.

A safe way to park is for each rider to pull ahead of the intended parking place and then back up into your spot. This can occur quickly since you do not have to wait for the rider ahead of you to finish backing in all the way.



Parking Sequence

Don't forget your exhaust pipes. Everything is cool when you back up to the curb until you lean your bike over on the side stand and you bend and scratch your left pipe on the curb.

Unscheduled or Emergency Stops:

It is unsafe for a large group of riders to stop on the side of the road. If a rider needs to pull over, the remainder of the group should continue to the next planned stop. The sweep will pull over to assist the rider until they are able to regroup or until alternate arrangements are made.

