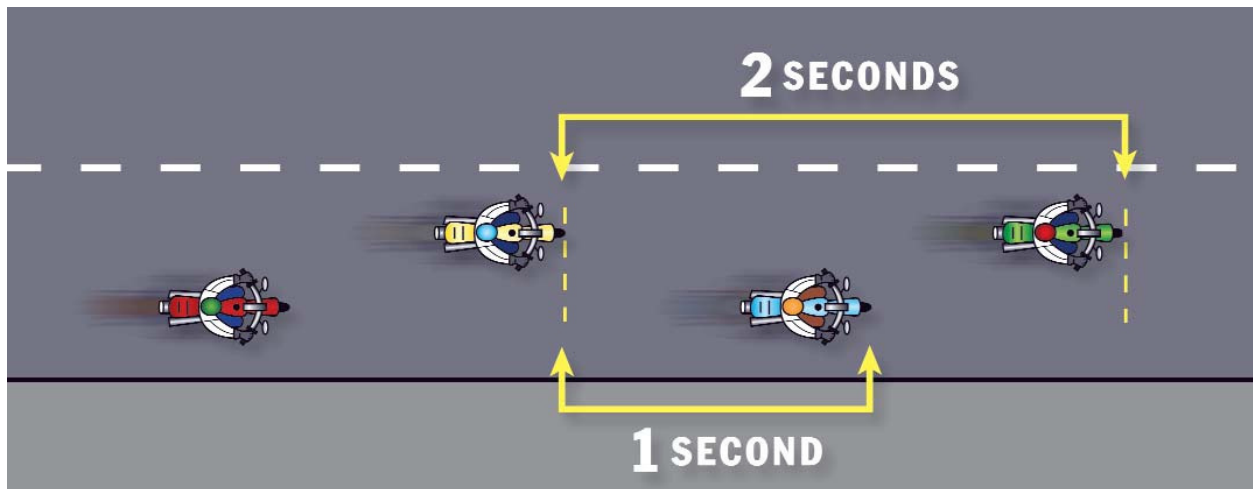




# DURHAM H.O.G.® RIDE SAFETY GUIDE



## Group Motorcycle Riding

- Great experience when common sense, respect for other riders, and safety will prevail.
- Please review these riding rules and tips for your personal and group riding safety.
- Do not mix alcohol and motorcycle riding.
- No attitudes while with the group.
- The guidelines for riding in a group are not gospel. There are situations in which they don't apply. Some organizations may have different terms for these concepts, as well. These guidelines have been tested for many miles and they have sound safety rationales to support them.
- Riders who choose to ride in a group must do just that, ride with the group.
- If a navigational mistake is made (e.g., missed turn or exit), continue with the group until the error can be safely corrected.
- It is recommended to have Ride Captain(s) travel the route prior to a run, thus, avoiding navigation mistakes.
- Maintain approximately two bike lengths between bikes; weather and road conditions permitting.
- If a vehicle wants to break through the group on a multi-lane road, give them space to safely do so.
- Close formation once the vehicle exits the lane.
- If the vehicle does not move, cautiously and carefully pass to reform.
- Bikers do not own the road. Be considerate of other vehicles. Give them space.
- The Ride Captain(s) or those who have ridden the route should ride up front.
- Know hand signals, and pay attention to them.
- Signals are passed back by every rider so that everyone is informed. Be certain it is a real signal and not a wave to a passing motorcycle.
- Maintain a steady pace with as few (dramatic) speed changes or sudden moves as possible.
- Changing lanes on a freeway should be done from the rear then moving forward to the clear lane.
- Ride as if your motorcycle were as long as the entire group.
- If two groups merge, let the lead group lead.
- If you like to ride slow or are new to group riding get up front. Those who like to ride fast should ride in the back. New riders may think they want to ride in the back, but the reality is just the opposite, they need to be near the front.
- Spread out a little around tight corners. Most will need a little extra space. We don't want anyone riding off into the ditch.
- No wheelies, endo's, etc. People should also not slow way down from the group, then zoom back up to the group. While it may be fun to goof around with your bike when you're alone, it can create problems with the safety of the group

## Riding Formation

- Staggered formation: a formation of motorcyclists in a group in which the Lead Bike rides in the left track of a lane, the next bike in the right track(slot), and the next bike in the left track, and so on. Bikes in a group generally maintain a minimum interval of two seconds travel time between bikes in the same track, and one second travel time between each bike in the group. In a staggered formation, a rider still commands and may ride in the entire width of his lane as needed. The Sweep may ride in the left or right track depending on the number of bikes in the group. It is preferable for the Sweep Bike to ride in the left track, so as to have the same visibility line as the Lead Bike.
- Single file: a formation in which all the motorcycles in a group ride in one track of a lane.
- Rubber-Band (“Yo-yo”) Effect Reaction time for a motorcyclist when confronted with an unexpected threat is, on average, about one second. If the need to react is anticipated (such as when a turn has been announced), then riders can usually react within about half a second after the bike ahead begins to react. When a group of riders change speeds very gradually, however, it usually takes two or three seconds for a rider to recognize this and begin to change his speed to maintain his position in the group.

## Top-off your gas tank before

- Bikes with small gas tanks have to stop more often.
- Decide before you begin when and where you will stop.
- Inform everyone of designated stops.
- Do a personal and bike safety check before beginning a ride.
- Bikes should be in good running condition before riding (anytime).
- Riders should wear eye protection, riding gear and a DOT certified helmet.

## Ride Within Your Skills

- Riding a motorcycle is a skill, and like all skills, it’s something that you need to develop.
- While you may be fine to go on an easy cruise around town, it takes time to grow the skills you need to be an expert rider.
- To stay safe, make sure that you always ride within your skill level.
- Take the time to build your skills and only ride in situations where you know your skills are up to the job.

## Educate Your Passengers

- Part of the fun of having a bike is having someone on the back.
- Your passenger has a part to play in keeping both of you safe.
- Make sure anyone you carry on your bike has the right gear. You should also practice having a passenger, in a safe place, like a parking lot. That will get you used to having the extra weight on the bike and the passenger used to how the bike feels, and how they need to move with you in various maneuvers. Make sure your passenger knows now to distract you, and what things like stopping and turning on a bike feel like, so they won't panic.

## Stopping/Starting

- When a single file signal is given, the bike on the left proceeds (in front of) the bike on the right.
- At a traffic light the motorcycle on the left proceeds first.

## Twisties

- On mountain type roadways and curvy roads, ride single file and each rider use the "line" that is most comfortable. Allow the bike in front of you a little more room, but remain as a group. Resume the staggered formation, when the road straightens out. Do not try to out ride your riding skills. In any group of riders there will always be a varying degree of riding skills. If you are new at group riding, ask someone who has been riding behind you how you have been doing. Hopefully, you'll get an honest answer. Like anything else it takes practice to watch the motorcycle in front of you, the one in front of him, the one behind you and the one behind that one. You will soon get so that you are watching every bike, from the Road Captain to Sweep.
- When not familiar with the road, slow down. Speed is still the #1 cause for motorcycle collisions as is drivers' error.
- You should know about counter steering.

## Weather and Road Conditions

- Inclement weather can be disruptive and discomforting.
- If the weather is too severe, take shelter.
- Be extra cautious when rain first begins to fall.
- The road is slickest at that time. Avoid riding on the "glossy" (oil stained) area of the road at all times, but especially during or after a rain.
- Stones on the road are dangerous...be careful.
- Gravel behaves like ball bearings on a hard surface.
- Avoid potholes when you can safely do so. Potholes can damage bike rims and cause accidents. Signal others with a finger pointing down of road hazards.
- Mechanical/electrical breakdowns can happen to any motorcycle.

## Night Riding

- It's no surprise that the challenges motorcyclists face multiply when the sun goes down and night prevails. Your field of vision is reduced to the distance of your motorcycle headlight, and other motorists are even LESS likely to recognize a motorcycle at night than they are during daylight hours.
- Making yourself visible is always important, but especially so after dark when it's more difficult for others to see you. Improve your visibility by wearing "retro-reflective" clothing and accessories that reflect projected light back to its source.
- There are many varieties of these available on the market today including "BLACK" retro-reflective stickers that are not easily seen during the day.
- Wild animals tend to be more active at night and are a serious hazard to motorists. Constantly SCAN the sides of the roadway for the reflection of your headlight off their eyes and use your horn if necessary.
- Avoid overriding your headlights by riding at a speed that allows you to stop within the distance illuminated by it. You can also use the light cast by the headlights of vehicles in front of you to see further down the road.
- Make sure the eye protection you choose is suitable for use after dark. Any tinting (including yellow) will lessen the light that reaches your eyes and make it harder to see.
- Be sure your eye protection is clean and free of scratches.

## Accidents

- In the event of an accident, the motorcycles in front of the accident will pull over at a safe area ahead and the motorcycles behind the accident will stay in formation and wait for instructions from the Road Captain or designated person.
- A designated person will relay message from the accident scene to where the rest of the group is parked.
- Do not panic, or rush to the scene, this may cause more problems.
- Do not move an injured person or remove their helmet.
- The Road Captain/Sweep/ and or Safety Officer will assist and instruct others what to do.

## CB Chatter

- Don't interfere with information being passed on between the Road Captain and Sweep.
- If you wish to converse with a fellow rider, call them by name, "Hey Harry, this is Jack" or whatever the handle might be.
- Limiting the use of the CB for idle chatter is particularly critical during departures and arrivals.
- Normally, in a group ride there are times like first starting out and coming to rest at a gas or food break, we give up the CB to the road Captain and his Sweep. It's just a matter of safety.

## Security and Parking

- Participants in a ride may be required to watch motorcycles (if necessary) for a short time, in pairs.
- When parking, the Road Captain and Second should direct the bikes to an area out of the traffic pattern.
- No one wants their bike side swiped or damaged by passing vehicles.
- Guidelines for parking are for a variety of reasons:
  - To avoid confusion and possible collisions.
  - To keep the group together in the parking lot.
  - By lining up in order, departures become easier.
  - Take up less space in the parking area.
  - Better public image.
- When approaching a parking situation we follow these steps:
  - Change formation to a single file.
  - Allow the leader to look for a space big enough for the group. If there is more than one group, the Leader of the first group will try for a space large enough for all. If that isn't possible, then each group should try to stay together
  - Leaving a parking area should be done with caution, and consideration of others exiting.

## Stops and Final Destination

- Keep the same position during transit and after stopping for gas, etc. Re-take that previous position so you are aware of the bikes around you.
- If the Road Captain or the Sweep approaches you at a stop or final destination, remember, they have the group's best interest at heart, or better yet our safety. Listen to what they have to say, you may be in their place one day, and you'll want others to listen to you. Of course, they will be the very example of tact and diplomacy, when they critique your riding skills. But listen, it just might save your life and the lives of others.

## Law Enforcement

- If the police stop the group, the Ride Captain should lead the group to a safe place.
- Riders should stay in formation (by or on their motorcycle). Allow the officer to come to you. The Ride Captain should be the only one who approaches the officer and should promptly identify him/herself.

## Get the Right Gear

- We've all seen people on motorcycles in shorts and flip flops. Those people are not being safe. Since a motorcycle offers little protection in a crash, what riders wear is part of the crash protection system. Even if you aren't in a crash with another vehicle on your bike, you could simply lose control and lay the bike down. In that situation, you'll be sliding along on asphalt. That's not something you want to do in shorts.
- There's a reason a lot of bikers wear leather: it's strong enough to protect their skin if they slide along the road surface. Plus, motorcycle riders are exposed to other road hazards, like small rocks, bugs and cigarette butts, that people in cars are protected from. At 60 miles per hour (96.6 kilometers per hour), even a small rock can sting. Leather gear can help protect you.

## Responsibility

- A group, organization, or club is not responsible for accidents, injuries, thefts, etc.
- Each individual is responsible for any violation of the law. Riders ride at their own risk.
- The group should meet before and during the ride regularly to pass along information.
- If you do not understand something, get clarification.
- Experienced riders should get to know riders with whom they are riding.
- Encourage new riders to be cautious and not unsafely or beyond their personal comfort level.
- The group should ride to their destination in formation. If a motorcycle does not wish to stay with the group at the end or during the ride, wait until all bikes are parked before leaving the group.
- If you leave your place in the group, re-enter at the rear, in front of the sweep.
- Riding in an unsafe manner with a group should not be tolerated.
- The safety of the group is everyone's responsibility.
- It is a rider's obligation to report noncompliance of any group-riding rule to a Road Captain...a life may depend on it.
- Know and ride by these rules.

## Conclusion

- Group Riding can be a lot of fun if all the members are comfortable within the group. If one or more members of the group are not comfortable; then this should be discussed at the next stop so as to accommodate or correct the cause of the problem. It's very easy to take each problem and, with a little tact, teach whomever might not have a sufficient understanding of these simple rules. We all can then enjoy the fine sport of Motorcycling.





## DUTIES

### Road Captain (Lead)

- Road Captain: a person who devises group riding rules or guidelines for an organized group ride. And who communicates these guidelines to the group, and who generally plans and lays out group rides. The Road Captain may or may not ride lead for a particular ride.
- Lead Bike: a person who rides in the most forward position in a group and who relays information to all other riders in the group via hand signals. The Lead Bike determines the group's direction, speed, choice of lane, and formation. He or she often must make quick navigation decisions in the face of road hazards, changes in road surface conditions, poor signage, construction and other obstacles while maintaining control of his or her bike and communicating to those following.

### Number Two (Second Lead)

- Stay behind the leader in the opposite half of the lane.
- Set the spacing appropriate to the road, traffic and speed conditions.
- Signal and move to a single file formation if conditions warrant: Poor pavement on edge of road/Narrow section/Cyclists, pedestrians or horse riders/Parked or stopped vehicles
- Watch for obstacles on the road and point them out to those following.

### Sweep

- The Sweep is the second busiest rider in the group.
- Keep an eye on the other riders, watching for loose luggage, problems with bikes etc.
- When a rider drops out of formation due to a malfunction, or other problem, the Sweep should ensure that this rider is safely off of the road and help that rider with the problem.
- Once the problem is resolved, catch up to the waiting group.

## All Other Riders in the Group

- Everyone else has responsibilities too.
- Arrive alert & well rested.
- Arrive on-time at the departure point with a full tank of gas and ready to go.
- Pay attention during the Pre-Ride meeting to ensure you understand the day's itinerary.
- Inform the Road Captain and or Sweep beforehand if you intend to leave the group during the ride.
- During the ride, maintain your lane position.
- Take advantage of rest stops and gas stops to avoid unnecessary extra stops later. Be ready to go
- When the rest stop is over. Be prepared to discuss situations that occurred during the ride. Accept constructive criticism with good humor. If you are uncomfortable with another rider in your group, discuss the situation with the Road Captain at the earliest opportunity.
- Enjoy yourself.
- Ride your own ride within your own skill and comfort boundaries



## INJURY REPORT

Chapter Name/Number:

Date of Injury:

Name of Person(s) Injured:

Address:

Date of Birth:

Summary of Incident (ie: when, where, type of injury and how injury occurred):

Witness Names:

Telephone number:

Pictures of accident scene taken: Yes / No

Witness Names:

Telephone number:

Pictures of accident scene taken: Yes / No

Name of Police Dept.:

Police Report Number:

Officer Name and Badge Number:

NAME OF PERSON FILLING OUT INJURY REPORT:

DATE:

*\*attach extra sheets if necessary to provide all details*