



[www.londoncyclingclub.ca](http://www.londoncyclingclub.ca)

# Members' Handbook

Second Edition

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## CLUB OPERATIONS

### Mission Statement

*The London Cycling Club (LCC) is a volunteer-based non-profit organization for social and recreational bicycle touring.*

### The Board

The Board is made up of elected volunteers who help to coordinate the various activities of the club. It meets at least 4 times a year, and welcomes any member who wishes to present business for consideration. A list of the Board members may be found in the Membership Information brochure and on the website.

### Riding Groups

Riding in a group allows riders to meet and converse with other riders, saves energy (particularly when riding into the wind), and makes it easier for the tour leader to guide and direct riders. Also, if you have a flat or any other problem, you will have other riders able and willing to help you.

The LCC splits up into groups of no more than 12 riders of similar capabilities. The length and speed of the rides vary with each group, from the short group to the long/fast group.

### Group Leaders

Veteran members act as group leaders, sharing their cycling experience and their knowledge of the rules of the Club with the riders in their groups. The leaders work to keep the groups a safe size and moving effectively. While it is up to each individual cyclist to have an enjoyable and safe ride, the leaders can help with useful tips and advice, and their instructions should be followed.

### Website

The club's website is located at [www.londoncyclingclub.ca](http://www.londoncyclingclub.ca). Information about Saturday and Sunday tours, tour route maps, club news, photos, membership application, waivers and a list of Board members can be found on the website.

### Annual General Meeting

The LCC Annual General Meeting is usually held at the beginning of November of each year and consists of a wrap-up of the year's cycling season, election of new Board members and socializing.

## MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Each member must have submitted a completed membership form (with applicable fees) as well as a signed waiver **prior** to participation in LCC rides.

Members under the age of 18 must also present a waiver of liability signed by a parent or guardian **prior** to participation in LCC organized rides.

Copies of the Membership Form and Waiver Form may be printed from the LCC website at [www.londoncyclingclub.ca/membership.html](http://www.londoncyclingclub.ca/membership.html)

It is expected that all club members will pay their yearly membership dues prior to the start of the cycling season.

The club will accept guest riders only if each guest pays a fee and completes the required waivers. The Guest Member rate is determined annually by the LCC board. Guest Members may participate in up to four rides, after which full membership is required.

### How to Join the LCC

1. At the kick-off brunch in March, members can fill in membership forms and waivers and pay their membership fee.
2. Waivers and membership forms can be downloaded from the LCC website.
3. Waivers, membership forms and cheques (made payable to the London Cycling Club) must be mailed to the Membership Director. **Please do not bring these items to the park on Sunday mornings.**

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## MEMBER ORIENTATION

Each member will be oriented to the three levels of participation, ride lengths, expected speeds, and planned route of the day, as well as expected behaviours and equipment requirements.

### To assist our new and recurring members the club provides the following:

1. New members should read and/or download a copy of the Members' Handbook, so that they may be educated regarding LCC recommendations for expected behaviours and equipment.
2. Returning members will be oriented to current club policies and procedures by periodic updates on the LCC website or via e-mail.
3. A Sunday Tour Leader and Short Group Leaders. Our leaders will follow the role expectations as defined by the Board in the London Cycling Club Policies for Sunday Tour Leader and Group Leader Responsibilities.
4. Detailed route maps will be posted on the LCC website. In an effort to keep Club costs down, **members are expected to print these maps and bring them to the ride.**

## CLUB RIDES

### Sunday Rides

Riders meet at the Saturn Playground parking lot, located in Greenway Park off Springbank Drive (enter on Greenside Avenue), **at least 15 minutes** prior to departure time. Occasionally a ride may start at another location; these rides are indicated on the Sunday Touring Calendar in the Membership Information brochure. The LCC website will have details about the exact location.

Riders will break up into groups (short, medium and long). Riders are expected to review and ensure that they understand the route map prior to leaving the park.

In April, May, September and October, rides leave the park at 9:00 am sharp. In June, July and August, rides leave at 8:30 am sharp.

All tours have been designed so that there is a rest stop at the half-way point.

### Saturday Rides

The Saturday rides start outside of London and are a chance for members to see other parts of the countryside and experience different terrain and conditions. Details on where the ride starts will be sent by e-mail and will be posted on the website.

## CANCELLATION OF A RIDE

LCC rides will be conducted only when weather conditions allow good visibility of the riders to vehicular traffic on the road:

1. LCC events will automatically be cancelled if the forecasted probability of precipitation is 70% or greater. The LCC website has links to "Local Weather" and "Precipitation Radar".
2. LCC events will be cancelled by the Tour Leader if conditions of obscured visibility exist (fog, precipitation, low light).

## RIDE PREPARATION

- **Carry valid I.D., OHIP card and a note with at least one name and phone number of a person to call in case of an emergency.**
- Report any special medical conditions to the President.
- Carry enough money for snacks/drinks along the way, as well as a cab ride home in case of a breakdown.
- Arrive at **least 15 minutes** before the scheduled start time.
- Walkmans and headphones of any kind are **NOT** allowed.
- All club members must wear a CSA, SNELL or ANSI approved helmet on club rides. For adequate protection, it is important that the helmet be properly fitted.

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- In the event that a rider's bike is equipped with aero bars, they may **NOT** be used on any LCC ride.

### **Clothing**

The following are not mandatory but will provide you with greater comfort:

- Cycling gloves provide a better grip on the handlebars, absorb sweat, reduce numbness, and protect your hands in case of a fall.
- Lined cycling shorts, available at all London bike shops, fit snugly and reduce chaffing. On a long ride, you'll be glad you have them.
- Jerseys absorb sweat and have rear pockets which can store food, maps, etc. within easy reach. Most jerseys are brightly coloured to help make you more visible. To purchase an official London Cycling Club jersey, contact one of the Board members.

### **Bike Equipment**

The following items are mandatory:

- **Bottles:** It is vital that you have a sufficient supply of liquids for your ride. At least one water bottle (most people really need two) in an appropriate bottle mount is a requirement for any club ride.
- **Tool kit:** As a minimum you should have one spare inner tube, a patch kit, tire levers, a frame pump and know how to put it all to use. The next things to add are some basic tools, such as Allen wrenches in appropriate sizes and screwdrivers. These tools can fit into a seat bag which can be mounted under the seat.

## **PICKING YOUR GROUP**

If you are new to the club, start with the easier groups and move up as you get stronger, more proficient and more confident. If you need help deciding, ask a group leader or a Board member for advice. When choosing a group based on riding speed, remember that the group's average speed and top speed need to be considered. Though you may well be able to keep the same average speed, you may not be able to keep up when the group speeds up for a

while. By the same token, you may be able to keep up a high speed for a short duration, but not maintain the average over time. Either situation can cause a lot of frustration.

Be honest about your riding ability — don't bite off more than you can chew. You will get the most pleasure out of group riding if you go out with people who have the same goals for the day and ride at the same pace as you. If you only want to do 50 km., then do so.

The groups are formed based on average speed and distance. Use the following as a guide:

### **Long Group**

This group does an average of 30 km/hour and up. In order to achieve that average they cycle about 30 to 40 km/hour and that is for the entire 100 plus km ride. Usually that means they will do 20 to 25 km/hour uphill. They will throw in some sprints. They don't always follow the route, often extending it by a hill or two or three.

### **Medium Group**

Most people like to do the distances covered by the medium group. If there are enough people, the medium group is divided into two groups based on speed: fast and slower.

### **Fast Medium Group**

This group does an average of 28 to 30 km/hour. They ride about 26 to 35 km/hour for the ride. Uphill they will likely do 18 to 20 km/hour. This group is usually a lot of strong individual riders.

### **Slower Medium Group**

This group does an average of 25 to 28 km/hour. They ride about 24 to 32 km/hour for the ride. Uphill they will likely do 15 to 18 km/hour.

### **Short Group**

This group does an average of 20 to 25 km/hour. They will go as fast as their slowest rider. If you need to have enough energy to go home and mow the lawn, this may be the group for you.

## TOO FAST?

When riding with a group, let someone know if you need to slow the pace down a bit. There is no shame in asking for the group to slow it down a bit. Once you recover, you can pick up the pace again. Most likely there are a few other riders who are grateful you asked to slow the pace. If you find that on every ride you have to ask the group to slow down, you should probably join a slower group.

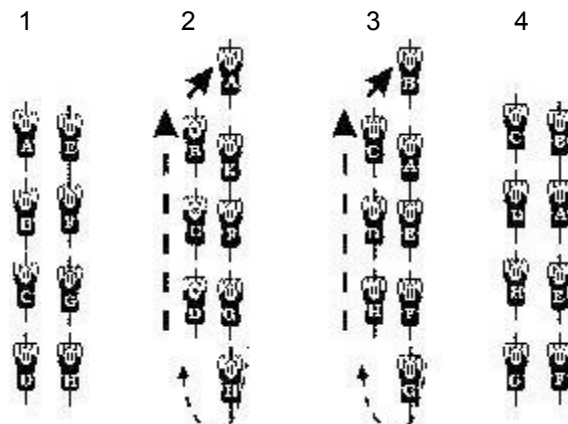
## IN-BETWEEN GROUPS?

If you find yourself in-between groups, not quite a slow medium but not a fast medium, then go out with the slower group and work on strength. Take longer turns at the front of the paceline (your buddies will love you for it and you'll get stronger). Work on keeping a steady pace into the wind. Go back and get a tired rider and bring them back to the group. There is likely someone else in the group who is also feeling like you so work together. Work on technique and strengthening your weak areas.

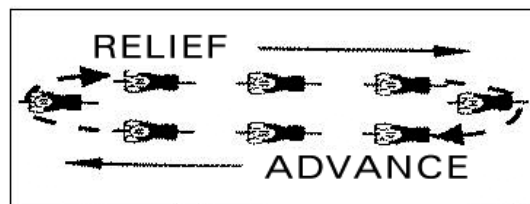
## PACELINES

The goal of group riding is to move the group along in a double file, known as a paceline, with everyone wasting as little energy as possible. There are important performance advantages to be gained. Done properly, drafting in a pack can save a significant amount of effort. It is estimated to be about 30% harder pulling in front than drafting behind another rider. In a group, the lead rider pushes against the air, letting others ride in his or her draft more easily until their turn comes. To gain this advantage, you must ride close to the person in front of you, ideally somewhere between two feet and six inches (for the experienced). Not everyone is comfortable with riding close to the person in front or having someone that close behind. If you are not used to riding with a group, you may just want to stay at the back until you feel comfortable.

## How the Paceline Works



A formation that is used frequently for group riding is the double paceline. Two lines ride side by side about one foot apart. The advantages of this formation are that it permits conversation and makes the group more compact in length. While the group maintains a certain speed, the left front rider accelerates slightly to move up and across in front of the right lead rider who calls out "clear" when the outside rider is clear to come across to the inside position. Outside riders (advance) move up one place and inside riders (relief) back one place. The inside (relief) rear rider moves over to become the tail rider of the advance group.



This all leads to having two lines of cyclists: one moving towards the front (the advance line), and another maintaining a certain speed and moving toward the back of the pack (the relief line). The key to getting a rotation working properly is not staying at the head of the advance line for too long before moving over to the relief line. You should move on to the back of the advance line without leaving a large gap in front of you. Always make sure there is no one else coming up behind before moving over. The speeds you reach in such a group can be exhilarating but it

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takes good bike handling skills to pull it off safely. When riding into a strong wind, it is recommended that rotations happen quite often so that the lead riders will not tire. The timing of the rotation is determined by the two lead riders who yell “rotate”.

## SINGLE FILE

Traffic and road conditions dictate when to ride single file. If motorists are experiencing difficulty passing the group because of heavy and continuous traffic in the opposite direction, the group leader will decide whether conditions merit changing to single file. The key factor is the width of the roadway. It may be safer to hold up traffic if there is insufficient width for it to pass comfortably. Riding single file may not benefit either cyclists or motorists — it doubles the length of the group and this could make passing more hazardous because of poor sight distances. Although it is important to try to accommodate the needs of other road users, riders’ safety must never be compromised. When single file is called, the inside riders put a bike length between them and the bike in front. The outside riders then move in ahead of the rider on the right. As soon as the heavy traffic has passed, the group should revert to double file.

## IN THE GROUP

If you are not used to riding in a group, you should start out by leaving a gap of approximately one bike length. Though this is not very efficient at first, as your skills and confidence grow, you should begin to close the gap. Always try to keep an even gap — don’t yo-yo back and forth. Stay relaxed.

Never let your front wheel overlap the rear wheel of the rider ahead. If they turn suddenly you will be taken down. Also, don’t stare at the wheel in front of you, look at the road ahead of you.

If you are tired, drop off the back of the group and stay there for a rest. By staying at the back, you can ride safely and still get the full benefit of the draft, so as not to get dropped. Make sure you let the other members of your group know that’s what you’re doing.

Always have your hands close to your brakes so that you can react quickly.

Never leave a tired rider alone unless you are confident another group is close behind or that the rider can get home under his or her own power.

## Communicating in the Group

### **COMMUNICATE! COMMUNICATE! COMMUNICATE!**

This cannot be overstressed. Most accidents can be avoided simply by communicating.

When there is an obstacle on the road (such as a hole, crack or glass), that could cause problems, each rider should point to it or call out a warning as soon as it comes into view or as soon as the riders in front of you indicate it, allowing those behind to prepare. Give advance warning — don’t wait until you are at the obstacle to indicate it — it doesn’t give others enough time to react. When you are in the front, it is okay to make a small course correction to avoid a hole (preferably while still pointing it out to those behind you), but it is not advisable to swerve or slow suddenly. **Accidents are more often caused by sudden moves than by hitting an obstacle.** It is a hard reflex to counter, but unless it’s a real wheel eater, you’re often better off riding through it rather than reacting suddenly and causing a pile-up. You should call out the hole to those behind you as you will have a hard time pointing it out. If you don’t feel comfortable taking a hand off your bike to point out an obstacle, call it out, making sure you’re loud enough to be heard. Each rider is responsible for passing on information from the lead riders to the riders behind. You are not expected to point out every single pothole or obstacle. Each rider has to take responsibility for their selves. This means everyone should be paying attention to the traffic and the road, even if they are riding at the back.

When there are pedestrians, slower cyclists, or cars parked on the side of the road, the leader should call out the situation well in advance and each rider should indicate to the one behind him to move over.

Once we are out of concentrated traffic, we tend to forget about cars. We should remain alert

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and when a car approaches from ahead the leader should call out “car up” to avoid anyone suddenly moving into its path. When a car approaches from behind, the riders at the back should yell “car back” and the group should respond by squeezing over to the right as far as possible, even going single file if necessary in order to allow the car to pass.

When slowing down, warn those behind by putting your hand back with your palm flat or calling out that you are slowing down. When you are stopping, you should do this, but also call out your intention so that you avoid a pile-up. When overtaking other cyclists, be they club riders or not, be aware that they might not know that you are there. Alert them to your presence as soon as they are within earshot, and always overtake on the left, never on the right. Yell “gravel” when there is gravel on the road as gravel can be hazardous.

### **Hills in a Group**

The leader should concentrate on maintaining a smooth steady effort up the hill, not necessarily a steady speed, while keeping his line and not wandering all over the road. If you want to pass, check behind you that there is no traffic, and then call out “passing” and only pass on the left. If you know you are generally slower than the others in your group on hills, stay on the right, so that other faster climbers can pass you easily. By doing this, if the group is climbing faster than you, the other members can pass you gradually and you may still be able to hang on to the rear of the group.

On the downhill, you should spread out a bit. At the front, the leader should keep pedalling. Riders behind will have to ride the brakes very lightly or sit up a bit in the air stream to avoid overtaking the rider in front. Keep it smooth and predictable, and tighten up the group again at the bottom. Some riders tend to coast downhill quicker than others, but you should avoid riding more than two across.

### **At the Front of the Group**

The rider at the front has to watch the road, point out obstacles and move smoothly around them, not lead people into them. When there are no obstacles, the lead must ride as straight a line as possible, keeping the tempo smooth and constant, so that others can follow. There is no

point pulling at the front if there is no one on your wheel or if they have to waste effort sprinting to keep up. The leader must not slam the brakes, but should use them gently. At least one foot of road should be left on the inside of the line so as not to crowd the group onto the shoulder.

How long you should stay at the front depends on the speed of the group and how you feel. Don't stay so long that your speed drops and you begin to slow the group. At a leisurely pace, rotations may last for several minutes while in a fast breakaway they may only last a few seconds. Set a pace others can follow. If you are getting tired, try to maintain the tempo but take a shorter pull. If you don't feel comfortable taking the lead, speak to the group leader so that other arrangements can be made.

Slow the pace down a bit over rough roads. The people behind cannot see the road as well and may not be able to comfortably keep up a high speed as they bounce around blindly. After anything that slows the group down, such as a corner, an intersection or railroad tracks, remember that the back of the group tends to slow down a lot more than the front, so take it easy for a few seconds so that everyone can close formation before gradually resuming full speed.

The safety of the group is dependent upon the smoothness and alertness of those at the front. While at the front, you should be scanning well down the road, alerting people of upcoming problems and planning the safest route around them. Remember that those behind you can only see a few feet of road ahead.

When the rider ahead of you decides to stop at a light, intersection, to yield the right of way to someone else, etc., those behind must absolutely stop. There is no room for those behind to make an independent decision. There are very good reasons for this: first, there is a danger of bikes colliding with each other since those ahead are not expecting to be passed; secondly, and much more seriously, other traffic will see the leaders yielding and proceed, and the riders who have decided to overtake the leaders will make themselves vulnerable to a danger they might not have seen.

On the other hand, riders in the group must not “follow-the-leader” blindly. Every rider is

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responsible for his or her own safety at all times. For example, when the rider in front of you chooses to cross an intersection or some other obstacle, you must look out for yourself. Check to ensure that you are indeed clear to proceed safely, even if someone else has yelled "clear". If you decide that you cannot proceed safely, make sure to signal your intentions to those behind.

## GROUP RIDING ETHICS

**Respect and consideration for your fellow cyclist and for the other vehicles on the road are the guiding principles.**

Keep the groups to a reasonable size, 12 riders or less. And keep an eye on each other. If someone is suddenly missing, the group should wait or go back. If a rider has a flat or a mechanical problem and cannot continue with the group, the group should be sure that he or she is in a position to resolve the problem before leaving the rider behind.

If you decide to leave or drop out of a group, let the others know before dropping off so they don't go looking for you. If you are having a problem, and you can manage on your own, let the group know so that the rest can continue with their ride.

Many of the groups are composed of people that are well enough matched to work in a paceline on the flats but are of different levels when it comes to hill climbing. Quite often the group will split up on a climb. The first ones up the hill should slow the pace down, allowing the others to join the group.

One great advantage of group riding is that each person takes their turn battling the wind. The riders behind the lead riders get the benefit of drafting. If a rider is dropping off the back and there is a strong wind, they are left to fight the wind on their own. An already tired rider will get further behind. This can be very disheartening. A few strong riders in the group should go back and help bring the tired rider back into the group or the group should slow down so that the rider can catch up.

Keep in mind that many other people use the bike paths in the parks for walking dogs, pushing

strollers, rollerblading, etc. and you should respect their right to use these paths. Keep speeds under 20 km/hr in parks. When approaching slower path users, sound your bell or call out "on your left", then pass on the left when the opposite lane is clear.

Don't be shy to tell members of your group when they are out of line or doing something dangerous. By not telling a rider what he or she is doing wrong, you are endangering everyone in the group, compromising everyone's enjoyment, and not helping the rider to improve.

## GROUP LEADERS

(LCC will attempt to arrange for a Group leader for all Short groups. For all other groups, the leader is on volunteer basis of riders in that particular group)

### Group Leader Goals

- To make group riding **safer** and **more enjoyable**.
- To share riding experience/techniques.

### Group Leader Responsibilities

- Welcome new riders to your group.
- Know your route prior to leaving the park.
- Go over rider responsibilities with each new rider.
- Count the number of people in your group prior to leaving the park.
- Remind the group to keep the speed under 20 km/hr when going through the park.
- Check to see if someone in the group has a cell phone in case of an emergency.
- Keep your group together and follow the map.
- All cyclists should take turns at the head of the group.
- All cyclists should signal road hazards, turns, slowing down, or their intention to stop.
- When stopping, please get off the road.
- Regroup at the top of hills and after crossing railroad tracks.
- Show courtesy to motorists, pedestrians, and other cyclists.
- At stop signs and road crossings, every cyclist should decide for themselves whether the way is clear or not. ("Clear!" for the first cyclist is no guarantee for the last cyclist.)

- If someone has a flat, the whole group stops.
- If someone is feeling tired and can no longer keep up the pace, preferably someone should be with that cyclist at his/her pace. If not, then make sure the cyclist has a map and is not in any pain.
- Ensure no rider is dropped.
- In case of an accident, advise the Sunday Tour Leader and complete an accident report.

These points all relate to common sense riding and, on most occasions, all should go smoothly. The Group Leader is there to remind the riders in his/her group of these rules in order to improve our group riding techniques. Should anyone refuse to adhere to these rules after a few polite requests, please report this rider to any Board member.

## ILLNESS, INJURY OR EXHAUSTION RESPONSE

In the case of an incident where a rider is not able to continue a ride due to an injury, illness, or exhaustion, the rider will receive care and consideration that is reasonable to offer, given the rider's consent, apparent severity of the issue, the distance and weather conditions back to the starting point of the ride.

### In response to an illness or injury the assigned Group Leader will:

- offer First Aid within his or her level of knowledge, ability and training, with the rider's permission or ask that another qualified individual administer First Aid.
- attempt to notify emergency response services if the health incident is serious or if there is reason to suspect that the health incident may become serious. ***If in doubt, send for help!***
- offer to escort an ill or injured rider back to the starting point of the ride if the rider opts to and is able to continue.
- confirm that the injured or ill rider is accepting responsibility for themselves if the member opts to return without the Leader.
- notify the President of the incident and provide the details required to complete the Accident Report.
- upon returning home, the Group Leader will call the rider to ensure that they have

returned home safely.

In the case of rider exhaustion, the assigned Group Leader must ensure that a reasonable plan is in place so that the rider can return safely to the starting point.

## MECHANICAL ISSUES RESPONSE

In the case of a mechanical failure where a rider is not able to continue a ride, the member will receive reasonable assistance from the assigned Group Leader to ensure a safe return to the starting point of the ride.

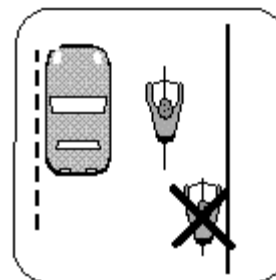
The assigned Group Leader will encourage the entire group to stop and wait until the rider either fixes the mechanical failure, or deems the problem to be irreparable.

If the mechanical failure cannot be repaired, then the Group Leader must attempt to notify a party indicated by the rider to pick them up, and provide an accurate location of the rider, or ensure that another reasonable plan is in place so that the rider can return safely to the starting point of the ride.

## TRAFFIC LAWS, SAFE RIDING PRACTICES

It is in our own interest to obey traffic laws and follow the rules of the road. It only takes a few inconsiderate cyclists to create a negative perception of cyclists among the general public. Never ride through red lights. If you are at the back of the group when the light changes to red, please stop. The group should wait for you on the other side or ride slowly so that you will be able to catch up. Keep out of right turn lanes when going straight or turning left.

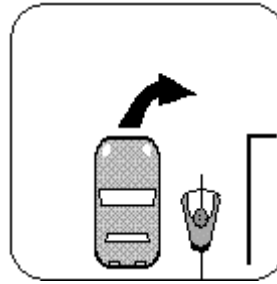
### Position in the Lane



For all vehicles, slower traffic keeps to the right, but this does not mean bicycles should teeter on the edge. Hugging the edge of a narrow lane

encourages motorists to try to squeeze by. Ride in the middle of the lane and force drivers to either follow you or pass you in the left lane. You have a right to the space you need in order to be safe. Riding closer to motor traffic may seem counterintuitive, but it makes you more visible to drivers who are overtaking, oncoming, or pulling out of side streets and driveways. It helps prevent the “Left Cross” and the “Right Hook” (see below), and gives you more room to manoeuvre. Take the lane if you are moving near or at the speed limit, the lane is too narrow for safe overtaking, or if you are avoiding parked car doors or other roadside hazards.

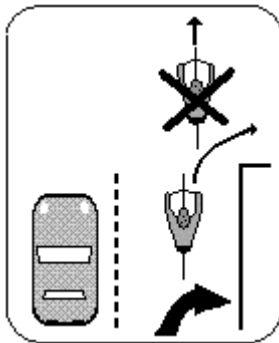
### Fend Off the “Right Hook”



Motorists sometimes overtake bicyclists only to wind up cutting them off when making a right turn. Guard against this type of danger by being further from the curb, forcing the driver to make a more

sweeping turn. Expect the “right hook” to happen.

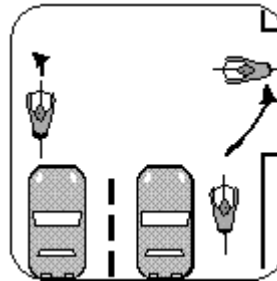
### Intersections



Approach intersections in the correct position for your destination. Turn left near the centre line, right near the curb, and for straight through, in between these extremes. Follow lane markings — do not go straight in a right turn only lane. When

turning, convey your intention with hand signals and proper positioning. For left turns, hold out the left arm and point to indicate a left turn. For right turns hold out the right arm. When going straight, keep pedalling rather than coasting.

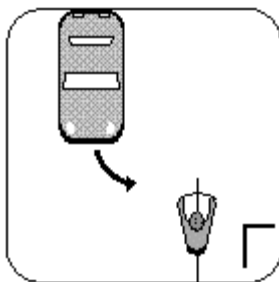
### Turning Left



There are two ways to turn left: “vehicular” style and “2 Step” style. It should rarely be a necessity, but use a “2 Step” turn if traffic is too heavy for you to turn left like other vehicles. Go through the intersection, align

yourself facing left, and proceed when clear or on the green if at a signal.

### Watch for the “Left Cross”



Left turning motorists tend to look down the center of the lane for other motor vehicles, and are less likely to notice bicyclists who are close to the curb and smaller. Avoid this danger by being vigilant, and be more

visible by positioning yourself closer to, or even straight down the middle of the lane. Keep from being visually screened by other motor vehicles.

## CONCLUSION

The London Cycling Club wants all its members to have a safe and enjoyable cycling season. If you have any questions or concerns about any item in this handbook, please speak with a Board member.

# Happy cycling!