



2016 RIDER INFORMATION PACKET

Krause Springs · April 30, 2016

LOVESPOKE

Radiate love. Share your story. Ride on.



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Whether you are a new to riding, or an avid and experienced rider, this Cycling Guide is intended to be a helpful resource to help you have a safe and enjoyable Hill Country Ride experience. Please keep this handy and use it as a reference.

You are also encouraged to visit our Web site, to find updated information or call our office with any additional questions. An office staff member, or one of our Biker Buddies, will be happy to answer your questions.

Other helpful tips will be offered throughout the season through our weekly email newsletter!

If you are a team captain, we ask for your help in ensuring all your team members have a copy of this Rider Info Packet! Let's Ride!

For more information: www.hillcountryride.org or **512-371-RIDE**

Hill Country Ride Essentials

Please visit the Important Ride Info page of our website at <http://web.hillcountryride.org/ImportantRideinfo.aspx> to find the following important pieces of information:

My Ride Center

Calendar

***Joyride* Schedule**

Ride Policies

Routes & Maps

Orientation Schedules

Event Weekend Schedule

What To Bring

Rider Information Packet

Fundraising Tips

Checklist

(What to Bring on Ride Day and any Joyride)

- Well-tuned bike
- Helmet – No exceptions – must be worn by all riders
- At least two bottles of water and/or sports drink
- Spare tube, patch kit, pump, and tire tools
- Sunscreen, lip balm, and sunglasses
- Well-rested body

5 STEPS TO CONFIDENT CYCLING

The League of American Bicyclists recommends these 5 steps to make your cycling experience as enjoyable as possible and to reduce the risk of crashes or injury. You can easily be a responsible, confident and safe cyclist.



1 Follow the Rules of the Road

- Ride with traffic and obey the same laws as motorists.
- Use the rightmost lane that heads in the direction that you are traveling.
- Obey all traffic control devices, such as stop signs, lights, and lane markings.
- Always look back and use hand and arm signals to indicate your intention to stop, merge, or turn.

2 Be Visible

- Ride where motor-vehicle drivers can see you.
 - Wear brightly colored clothes at all times.
- At night, use a white front light or reflector. Wear reflective tape or clothing.

3 Be Predictable

- Ride in a straight line and don't swerve between parked cars.
- Make eye contact with motorists to let them know you are there.
 - Do not ride on the sidewalk.

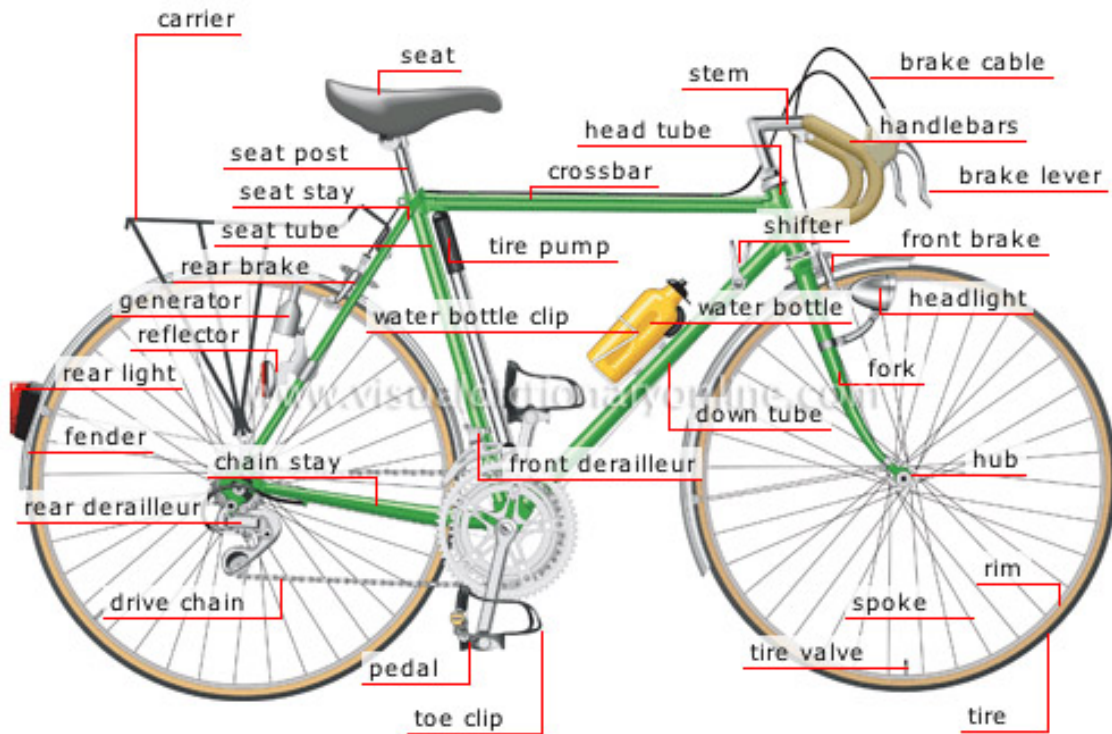
4 Anticipate Conflicts

- Be aware of traffic around you and be prepared to take evasive action.
 - Learn braking and turning techniques to avoid crashes.
 - Be extra alert at intersections.

5 Wear a Helmet

- Make sure that the helmet fits on top of your head, not tipped back or forward.
- After a crash or any impact that affects your helmet, visible or not, replace it immediately.

Before Any Ride: The **ABC Quick Check**



So... you're going for a bike ride. Your body will get a workout, and so will your bike. Have you checked your bike for mechanical safety? Timely bicycle maintenance can prevent a serious accident. Here is the "ABC Quick Check," which you should do every time you ride.

If you don't know what any of this means, don't worry! You don't need to be a bike guru to ride with us. We have bike support on all training rides and on Ride day that will help you with any problem you may have!

A is for Air.

- Check tire pressure.
- Check for damage to the tire sidewalls and/or tread.



B is for Brakes.

- Check the brakes for pad wear and adjustment.
- Check cables and housing. Cables need to travel smoothly.

C is for Chain.

- Check the chain to ensure it is fitted appropriately around the chain rings. Check the arms of the pedals to ensure they are running smoothly and firmly - if they feel loose and wobble from side to side, schedule a maintenance appointment with your local bike shop.



Quick is for Quick Releases.

- Quick-release hubs need to be tight, but not too tight.
- Quick-release brakes, which are opened when removing or installing wheels, need to be in the closed position.
- Quick-release seat clamps, need to be in the closed position. Check to be sure your seat is at the correct height.

Check is for a brief, Checkout Ride.

- Take the bike for a brief spin to verify that your derailleurs and shift levers are working properly.



Many items of the ABC Quick Check can be done visually; others require just a brief physical check. If you find that your bike needs adjustments beyond your ability, enlist the professional mechanics at your local bike shop.

From the League of American Bicyclists – learn more at www.bikeleague.org.

Stretching, Nutrition, & Hydration

STRETCHING

Stretching is extremely important in keeping your muscles flexible and injury free. Keep the following in mind when stretching:

- Make sure you warm up first—walk in place for three to five minutes. It is always better to stretch warmed-up muscles.
- Stretch muscles equally on both sides of your body. Don't focus your attention on one side or the other.
- Don't bounce while stretching. Take it slow and steady. Bouncing can cause injury to your muscles.
- Be sure to stretch your entire body—not just your legs. Include your arms, back, hips, shoulders, and neck.
- Stretch every time you get off your bike during a ride. Give yourself an extra five minutes of stretch time at each rest stop.
- Don't forget to stretch after you ride and before getting in the car for a long drive home. Stretch at home before going to bed. Your muscles will thank you the next morning.

NUTRITION

It's important that your body gets the quality fuel it needs to perform the extra work of cycling. Complex carbohydrates are the best source of fuel for your muscles—pasta, beans, rice, whole grains, fruits, and veggies. Consult with your physician or registered dietitian for advice.

HYDRATION

Fluids are crucial to your performance and sense of well-being. You've heard it before—drink, drink, drink! But it is amazing how few cyclists heed this advice. They forget to drink because of the excitement of the ride, and then they wilt before the end.

Dehydration is a common problem among cyclists, especially in warm weather, and can lead to serious problems. To prevent this, you must drink plenty of fluids while you ride.

Keep the following in mind:

- Pre-hydrate: Drink a bottle of water and/or 16 ounces of sports drink an hour before the ride.
- Consume at least one bottle of water per hour.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Your body begins to lack fluid before you feel the sensation of thirst.

Training Basics

We encourage you to join our organized Training Rides! This is, by far, the best way to get yourself prepared and get to know other people involved in this event. For more details, visit <http://web.hillcountryride.org/ImportantRideinfo/JoyRideSchedule.aspx>

Our volunteer Training Ride Coordinators have designed a tried-and-true training schedule to help you prepare. If you're unable to join us, below are some suggestions to help you get started.

Prepare yourself to ride the route distance you plan to ride on the "Day Of...". Whether you'll do 10 miles or 100 miles, you'll enjoy it more if you're properly prepared. Cycling is great year-round exercise to keep fit and help you avoid health problems, so get started today if you haven't already!

Where do I begin?

- Assess your current state of fitness and cycling abilities.
- Always consult with your physician before beginning any new exercise program.
- Plan your schedule and make time for training.

Training Basics

- Find your base mileage. Go for a ride on your bike and see how far you can go comfortably now. This is your base mileage for your weekly long ride.
- Every week or two, increase that distance by no more than 10-15 miles, or less if your base mileage is less than 20 miles.
- Continue building your longest ride to date until you've reached your target distance, ideally at least two weeks before the Ride.
- Ride a combination of long distances at a moderate pace and shorter distances at a more strenuous pace and with hill-climbs.

Training Tips

- Pace yourself; increase your mileage and build endurance slowly.
- Stretch and hydrate before, during, and after rides to maintain flexibility and avoid fatigue, stiffness, and injuries.
- Cross train with other cardiovascular workouts. Strengthening your core muscles with abdominal crunches, yoga, and Pilates will reduce stress on your back and neck while riding.
- In inclement weather, cycle indoors on a trainer or in spin classes.
- Be safe, have fun, and enjoy your training!

For more detailed recommendations on a training plan, please contact us at 512-371-RIDE.

Safe Riding Tips

With regards to safety, there are two important facts that you should not forget while on the Ride or any Joyride:

- The bicycle is legally considered a vehicle in most states. With that in mind, you have full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and are subject to the regulations governing the operation of motor vehicles where applicable.
- Our routes are not closed to traffic. Thus, the only time you should ignore signs or traffic signals is the same as if you were in a car: only when a police officer is directing you to do so. Our volunteers on the route are only there to alert you to traffic and road conditions, NOT to direct traffic for you.

With these two things in mind, here are a few safety tips:

- OBEY ALL TRAFFIC SIGNS, SIGNALS, and directions from TRAFFIC OFFICIALS. Stop at all stop signs. Signal all turns. Cross only at intersections.
- Ride in a straight line, predictably and in control. Avoid excessive weaving back and forth.
- Ride single file on the right, with traffic, a couple of feet from the edge of the road.
- Warn others when stopping or turning by giving required hand signals with the left hand.
- Pass on the left only. When passing another cyclist, call "on your left." When you hear someone calling out, don't turn around. Ride straight and steady.
- Keep a safe distance: do not follow too closely behind other cyclists or cars. Never draft behind cars.
- Never make abrupt stops. Slow gradually, and when stopping to rest, move completely off the path of other cyclists.
- Keep clear of road-edge hazards such as sand, gravel, trash drains, and parked cars.
- Cross railroad tracks with your tire at a right angle to the tracks.
- Talk to your fellow cyclists. Call out details like "car back," "car up," "on your left," "stopping," "gravel," "potholes," or "tracks."
- Speed must be reasonable for control with regard to weather, traffic, road, and light conditions.

- Do not bring stereos with headphones—they are not permitted because they interfere with your ability to hear traffic sounds around you.
- Use extra caution when riding in the rain. Roads become more slick and cars won't be able to see you as well.
- Be vigilant when going fast downhill. Keep your hands on the handlebars for more stability.
- Wear bright clothing that can be easily seen and avoid loose fitting apparel that could get caught in the spokes or chain. Don't forget your helmet – it is required to ride.

Other Important Safety Tips...

- **Watch for Dogs**
Be aware that dogs are unpredictable. If a dog does decide to pursue you, the best course of action is to squirt it with your water bottle. It will startle the dog and give you time to get away. Do not kick a dog that chases you!
- **For the Fun of It**
Remember, this is not a race. You will be riding with cyclists of all levels and abilities. Be courteous to other cyclists as well as motorists with whom you share the road. Most important, have fun!

TO THE RIDE!