

ACT Training Ride Safety Speech

Mandatory Instructions for All Training Ride Leaders

Thank you for leading the training ride today. Your time and commitment make a real difference. Safety is our FIRST priority on ACT Rides. THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT TO US. It is not enough to just read this safety talk before a training ride because we told you to; safety talks must be delivered with purpose. You must communicate clearly and firmly.

Imagine how you would feel if there was a fatality or serious accident on your ride, and you thought afterward that if you had made sure everyone was paying serious attention to your safety talk, it could have been avoided.

The information you are giving the riders is vital. Take personal responsibility for making sure they are listening to it and hearing it, word for

word. You must make sure your riders get the message as if their lives depended on it. The truth is, **their lives do depend on you.**

Rules for the Safety Talk

1. Bring the group together – don't let them be spread out all over

the starting area straining to hear you.

2. Do not begin the safety talk until everyone is gathered around you and is absolutely silent. If there is anyone talking, do not begin, and if anyone begins talking while you are giving your talk, ask them to stop talking and listen.

3. Speak in a loud, clear voice, so that everyone can hear you.

Ask

if everyone can hear after you have begun.

4. Read the following statements SLOWLY and clearly to everyone at the beginning of the talk. Look up and make eye contact with your riders while you are reading it. Read it as if the words are your own.

Enjoy your ride and remember: ACT smart! ACT safe!

Safety Talk

Hello everyone and thank you for being here. How many of you have been

on one of our training rides before? Great. The first priority for all of us involved with this event is to make sure that the event is safe. Nothing is more important to us than your safety and well-being. It is crucial that everyone listen to the information I am about to deliver, so I ask you all to wake up, listen up, and pay very close attention. If you are talking during this safety talk, I'm going to have to ask you not to ride with us today. It is that important to us and to me. There are many precedents for fatalities and serious injury on organized rides like ours. You could die on today's training ride, or be seriously injured. None of us wants that to happen. We want everyone to finish without a scratch. There is only one person who can guarantee your safety: **YOU**. There is only one person who can make sure you don't get killed on the road today: **YOU**. There is only one person who can make sure you don't get seriously injured: **YOU**. So, pay attention to all of the things I am about to tell you, and above all, remain alert. The motto for ACT 7 is, "**ACT Smart, ACT Safe.**" Stay awake today. Keep your eyes open. Stay focused. Check yourself every few minutes to see if you're really paying attention to the environment around you. Stay alert at all times today and during all of your riding.

So, here are the details:

You MUST wear a helmet to ride with us today. Helmets must be properly fastened. Helmets should be parallel to the ground, not on the back of the head like a baseball cap.

- **Wearing headphones while riding is illegal and dangerous. You cannot wear headphones while riding with us today.**

I am going to go over the Rules of the Road: What the Law Requires, Road Positioning, Riding Defensively, and Riding in a Group.

First off, what the LAW requires.

- The law states that a bicycle is a vehicle with the same privileges and restrictions as a car. Obey all traffic laws & traffic signals.
- Ride with traffic – NOT against it.
- Use hand signals to indicate your intentions.

Training Ride Leaders: Demonstrate the hand signals for left turn, right turn and stop.

Use your left arm for hand signals. Left arm straight out to the left

to indicate left turn....

Left arm at a right angle with hand pointing up to indicate right turn....

Left arm at a right angle with hand pointing down to indicate stopping....Signal every time you turn or stop; motorists and other

riders need to know what you intend to do.

Secondly, Road Positioning.

- Ride as far to the right of your lane as is safe, but ride far enough into the lane to avoid being struck by opening car doors.
- Ride in a straight line as much as possible so motorists can see how far to the left they have to go to get past you safely. Don't weave in and out between parked cars.
- Don't pass cars on the right at red lights. It's illegal and it forces cars to pass you again after the light turns green.

Thirdly, RIDE DEFENSIVELY.

- Assume that drivers can't see you.
- Be on the lookout for a person in the driver's seat of any parked cars you are about to pass. They might open their door suddenly, or pull out into traffic without checking for bicycles. Be extremely careful of car doors opening into you.
- Always stop and look "Left-Right-Left" before entering or crossing traffic.
- Watch out for oncoming cars that turn left in front of cyclists when crossing an intersection. Motorists sometimes underestimate the speed of a bicycle and incorrectly believe they can beat you to the intersection.
- Watch out for cars that pass you and cut you off by making an immediate right turn. Be especially cautious of this when

approaching a parking lot while in heavy traffic.

- Be careful of making sudden turns or movements; the car drivers

and cyclists behind you cannot read your mind.

- Be as courteous to drivers as possible – we do not want to incite

road rage towards riders or ourselves that may be ahead of us.

And lastly, riding in a group.

- When you pass other riders, **always pass on the left** and let them know by calling out, "On your left!" before you pass. Do not pass anyone ever without letting him or her know that you are passing them. Never pass on the right. Passing on the right can force the other rider into traffic. It is the responsibility of the person doing the passing to be sure that it is safe to move further left into the lane.

- **Ride single file** and keep a straight line at all times. (Wisconsin law does allow riding double file, but we are going to get used to riding single file on training rides because that is how we will be riding on the ACT Ride.)

- **When stopping in a group**, use the open-palm-down signal to tell the rider behind you that you are about to stop. When stopping suddenly, you may not be able to take one hand off the handlebars; in this case, call out "Stopping!" or "Slowing!"

- If there is a tricky intersection and the route directions are difficult to understand, call out to the people behind you, or get off

your bike and direct people for a few minutes.

- **Call out anything unexpected in the road**, like bumps, potholes, or

broken glass, to the riders behind you. And when a car is approaching, call out, "Car BACK!" Let the people around you know any information that will make their ride safer.

- Don't be a hazard to yourself. Do not look down to adjust gear in intersections. Wait until it is safe to make any adjustments to

clipless pedals, water bottles, gears, or stuff in your jersey. Even one second of not watching traffic can kill you.

- Remember that riding in a group is different from riding alone. Your riding behavior affects those around you. Sometimes riding in a group can be more dangerous, but riding in a group also provides us the opportunity to support each other, to watch out for each other, and to help each other. Conscientiously look out for your own safety as well as the safety of the other members of the ACT community.

Your training ride leaders,

- In addition to leading the ride today, I am here to answer any questions you have about ACT 8 – from fundraising, to training, to expectations about the week of ACT 8. I am here to help and be your resource. Come talk to me anytime during our ride.

Now, I'd like to distribute your training ride waiver, which I need you to read, sign, and return to me before we begin.

Contact information: Jeanne Marshall, 608-219-9267