



Touring Guide

All Groups

General information about our touring rides and how you can best prepare for your first ride with us.

Last Revised March 30, 2023

Introduction

Thinking of joining the club? That's great! We want to make sure that your first ride is so pleasant that you'll keep coming back for years. That's why we ask you to read over the following points which detail the kinds of things that will make your first ride more enjoyable for you and the rest of the group.

Ride days, times, start locations and cancellations

Our main Saturday morning, and also holiday Monday & Friday morning, club rides are rotated between several commonly used starting locations. We have Sunday and Wednesday morning club rides starting from a couple of fixed locations. We also have Tuesday and Thursday evening rides starting from a fixed location. Once you become a BCC member you will be added to our **Cycle Club App event/ride scheduling** account. With the Cycle Club App, or from a browser, you can search and view all scheduled BCC group rides including the date, start time & location for each. You can then use Cycle Club to register for any club ride you wish to attend. Once registered for a ride you will receive an APP notification and/or email of any changes in the start time or a possible **ride cancellation**. This primarily occurs because of questionable forecasted weather.

Tour Group ride format

Rides are organized into eight groups based on the average speed and ride distance as listed below. Group selection will depend on your experience, abilities and available ride time.

Group Name	Average Speed (km/h)	Early Season Distance (km)	Rest of Season Distance (km)
Beginners	16 – 22	20 – 40	30 – 60
Easy Rollers Short	18 – 23	20 – 40	30 – 60
Easy Rollers	18 – 23	40 – 70	70 – 100
Touring Short	23 – 26	30 – 50	50 – 70
Touring	23 – 26	50 – 70	70 – 110
Classic	26 – 28	50 – 80	80 – 120
Classic+	28 – 31	60 – 90	90 – 130
Sportif	31+	60 – 90	90 – 130

Most rides normally stop for 15 to 30 minutes at a coffee shop somewhere around the half-way point for a rest and some light refreshments.

Riding in a group

For efficiency and safety's sake we ride in a two-abreast group (*see Group Riding Techniques*), except on busy roads or certain hills where the leader will ask riders to "single up". We know that riding close together is an intimidating prospect for new riders and we do not insist that you do it right from the start. New riders usually stay at the back of the group with one of the leaders where they can keep greater distances between each other. As you become more comfortable you will inch closer to the other riders and experience the benefit of riding in their slipstreams (drafting).

Tour Leaders

All Brampton Cycling Club rides have a tour leader responsible for all members in their tour group. Tour leaders are either pre-assigned in the **Cycle Club App** or may be identified at the ride start location before the ride begins. Tour leaders are experienced BCC members who are familiar with the rules of the road and group riding techniques. Always listen to and obey the tour leader. If you decide to leave a tour ride before it is complete you must tell the tour leader.

In case of a reportable accident, the tour leader submits an accident report to the VP Touring.

Keeping yourself updated

We use the Cycle Club App and the **Forum** on the BCC website to keep members informed of what's happening in the club. So it is important that you sign up for the Forum to access this information. Please contact our webmaster if you have any difficulty with the sign up process.

During the week each tour leader scheduled for the forthcoming Saturday rides will post details for their ride group. This typically includes a URL link to a route map providing the distance, elevation and destination for the ride. Make sure to use the Cycle Club App to register with the group you plan to join. This will ensure you receive notification of any cancellation, changes or other comments posted about the ride. And also so the tour leader knows to expect you on the ride.

Fitness

Regardless of whether you show up in April or in August, we expect anyone joining us to have a reasonable level of fitness and a good guideline is to be able to ride the full distance at the posted speed for the group. If you have been exercising once to four times a week to maintain moderate aerobic fitness, you shouldn't have any trouble with this. If you should experience problems on a ride please be assured that the tour leader will make sure that you are looked after. However, please do your part by not attempting a ride beyond your capabilities.

Time restrictions

Our rides may last for 2 to 6 hours & we realize that not everyone can spare that length of time. You are welcome to join in our rides and turn back early to suit your own schedule but please understand that under these circumstances you are entirely responsible for getting yourself back to the start. When you leave the ride please make sure that you let the leader know that you are turning back so that your absence is accounted for.

Equipment

The Brampton Cycling Club is a road cycling club and all our rides are planned accordingly. **All our rides require the use of a road bike in good working condition.** All riders must have an approved helmet and are expected to carry a spare tube, a pump and tools for removing and re-installing a tire on the rim. It is not essential that you be able to fix your own flats – there are usually a number of very experienced riders who can help you with that. However, we do encourage all inexperienced riders to take a basic maintenance course sometime in their first year to learn how to replace and patch a tube and make basic adjustments to their bicycles – but you don't need to do that before joining us.

Nutrition

You should bring at least one bottle of water (two bottles for longer rides on hot days) and an energy bar or banana to sustain you during the ride. Dehydration is the leading cause of fatigue and it is essential, even on cooler days and gentler rides, that you drink plenty of fluid right from the start of the ride and not wait until you feel thirsty. Many of us use sports drinks instead of pure water as they also replenish electrolytes & provide some energy. There are many such drinks on the market and it is usual to try a few types out until you find one that works for you. Your local bike shop will be able to advise you on what's available. It is also a good practice to drink plenty of water during the 24 hours before a ride as this will help greatly in preventing dehydration.

Lunch money

Most of our rides include a stop for a light lunch at a Timmy's or a café. Please bring along enough cash (\$10 is usually enough) to get yourself a drink and some food.

Got new equipment or had work done on your bike?

If you have new equipment, e.g. a new bike or new pedals, please don't use a club ride to test it out for the first time. Instead, go out on your own to a safe venue like a paved bike trail or an empty parking lot to familiarize yourself with your equipment. This is especially important for gear shifting and clip-in pedals as you need to familiarize yourself with their operation before heading out on the road. In fact, any time you have had work done to your bike, even a tune up, it's a good idea to at least take it around the block before heading out to a group ride.

Punctuality

It's always a good idea to show up before the published ride start time to give you time to get ready. This is especially true when you are joining us for the first time. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early and identify yourself to the tour leader.

Weather

As a general rule we do not set out on a ride if it's raining. During warmer weather we may take the risk if the rain is due to stop soon or if there is only a risk of showers sometime during the ride. It is at the tour leader's discretion whether to cancel a ride due to the weather. If the forecast the day before the ride is iffy, tour leaders will often comment in the Cycle Club App that they will post a **Cancellation** decision for the ride in the morning at least 90 minutes before the scheduled start.

Joining us for the first time?

New riders are strongly encouraged to contact the *VP Touring* by email or otherwise prior to their first planned ride so that we can ensure that you are directed towards the group that best suits your requirements. Before your first ride with us, in addition to this *Touring Guide*, please make sure that you carefully read the following files:

- *Club Risk Management Policy*
- *Group Riding Techniques*.

For your first ride with us, you are asked to select a group you are very comfortable with and then gradually move up to the faster and more experienced groups. If you have limited or no experience riding in a group (i.e. peloton), please do not start with a group faster than the Easy Rollers unless you have attended one of our Group Riding Clinics or received approval from the VP Touring.

OC (Ontario Cycling) Insurance

The Brampton Cycling Club is insured through the OC and it is a condition of our insurance that you must be a club member to participate in our rides. You must complete the online registration (which includes the BCC and OC registration/waiver forms) prior to your first ride with us. If you belong to another OC affiliated club you will already have your insurance through them and so you will only need to pay the BCC membership portion of the registration fee to join us.

Guest rides

If you are an **active member of another** OC affiliated club and would like to join us for **one** guest ride please print, sign and bring with you **our BCC Club waiver form** and present that to the tour leader along with your **membership card for your OC affiliated club**. If you would like to participate in more than one ride, please join our Club.

Trial rides

Not sure if you will enjoy group cycling? Contact our VP Touring to learn more about the club and ask about the Trial Ride program. If, after confirming with our VP Touring that you should be capable of riding comfortably with one of our groups, you may be able to join us for a single trial ride on one of our designated trial ride dates. This program is offered through Ontario Cycling and you will need to register for your BCC Trial Ride through the OC website. Our VP Touring will provide you with the details.

Membership cards

Immediately after registering online, you will receive your BCC membership and OC insurance cards by email. Please print them and bring them with you whenever you participate in any club event. You may be asked prior to a ride for proof of membership.

Any questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact the VP Touring (vptouring@bramptoncyclingclub.com) should you have any questions regarding our touring program.

Hope to see you soon on one of our Touring rides!