



# Touring Guide

## All Groups

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

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## 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, if ignored, can make your first ride less enjoyable for you and the rest of the group.

## Ride days, times, start locations and cancellations

Our main Saturday morning, and also holiday Monday 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. The *Events Calendar* on the BCC website lists the start time & location for each ride and you should always check this for a possible cancellation or start time change before heading out, especially if the weather is questionable.

## 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.

## 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 on the events calendar 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 the accident report to the VP Touring.

## Keeping yourself updated

We use the events calendar and the forum on the website to keep everyone informed of what's happening so it is important that you sign up for the forum and access this information regularly. Please contact our webmaster if you have any difficulty with the sign up process.

During the week the tour leaders for the forthcoming Saturday ride will post details for each group ride. These details typically include a link to a route map and will give an indication of the distance and destination for the ride. You should register with the group that you plan to ride with to give the tour leader an idea of the number of riders to expect. This also is the only way to have your ride tracked for our Ride Achievement Awards.

## 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 be 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 yourself 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 call off a ride due to the weather. If the forecast the day before the ride is iffy, tour leaders will often announce that they will post a go-no go decision on the events calendar in the morning 90 to 120 minutes before the start of the ride.

## 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 never ridden in a group before, 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.***

## **OCA (Ontario Cycling Association) insurance**

The Brampton Cycling Club is insured through the OCA 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 OCA registration/waiver forms) prior to your first ride with us. If you belong to another OCA affiliated club you will already have your insurance through them and so you will only need to pay the membership portion of the BCC fee to join us.

## **Guest rides**

If you belong to another OCA affiliated club and would like to join us for **one** guest ride, please print, sign and bring with you our Club waiver form and present that to the tour leader along with your membership card for the other 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 our 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. You will need to bring signed BCC and OCA waiver forms with you and present them to the VP Touring or the tour leader at the start of the ride.

## **Membership cards**

Immediately after registering online, you will receive your BCC membership and OCA 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](mailto:vptouring@bramptoncyclingclub.com)) should you have any questions regarding our touring program.

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