



**DEFENSIVE CYCLING PRACTISES
2014**



DEFENSIVE CYCLING PRACTISES: THE COLLINGWOOD CYCLING CLUB

Who We Are: We are an organized and disciplined cycling club servicing the Collingwood, Town of Blue Mountains and Clearview Township areas.

We have over 400 members and we run regular group rides on weekend mornings and smaller rides midweek.

We offer group riding clinics and seminars educating our membership on the rules of the road, riding skills and cycling etiquette.

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WHAT IS A DEFENSIVE RIDE PRACTICE?

It is a common sense-based safe cycling strategy that recognizes the needs of cyclists as vulnerable road users as well as the needs of motorists and other road users.

It is based on the same principles as the Defensive Driving model used by the province. The Defensive Driving program is based on the premise that the law cannot define or prescribe actions for all circumstances and situations. It is an additional guiding set of principles based on common sense to supplement the law and improve safety for all road users.

For cyclists, the priority is a safe cycling experience while sharing the road with vehicles that are significantly larger and sometimes faster. Cyclists seek 'safety in numbers' by riding together. The Collingwood Cycling Club is a well-organized and disciplined club promoting the Defensive Cycling Practices on our local rural roads.



THE LAW GOVERNING CYCLING IN ONTARIO!

The Highway Traffic Act (HTA) is the governing legislation for cycling and driving on Ontario roads.

The HTA was written by the 'Road User Safety Group', a division within the Ministry of Transportation.!!- It was written in 1974 and last amended in 1990.

The principle of the HTA is '**SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT**'. What that technically means is that when ambiguity exists between conflicting interpretations of the HTA, one should always select the safest option.

The HTA is supplemented by Ministry of Transportation (MTO) guidelines issued on a periodic basis. These guidelines are designed to clarify the finer points of a law and or regulations.



THE MOST RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE HTA WITH REGARD TO CYCLING

S.1 (1)[Definitions] states that a bicycle is a vehicle

S.151 (5)(7) states that a vehicle is not allowed to use the paved or unpaved shoulder.

MTO Bicycling Guidelines recommend that a cyclist ride a minimum of 1 meter from the white line or the edge of the pavement. Please note that MTO Guidelines are intended to supplement the HTA .

S.147 Slower Vehicles Travel on the Right

Any vehicle traveling upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at that time and place shall, where practicable, be driven in the right-hand lane then available for traffic or as close as practicable to the right hand curb or edge of the roadway.

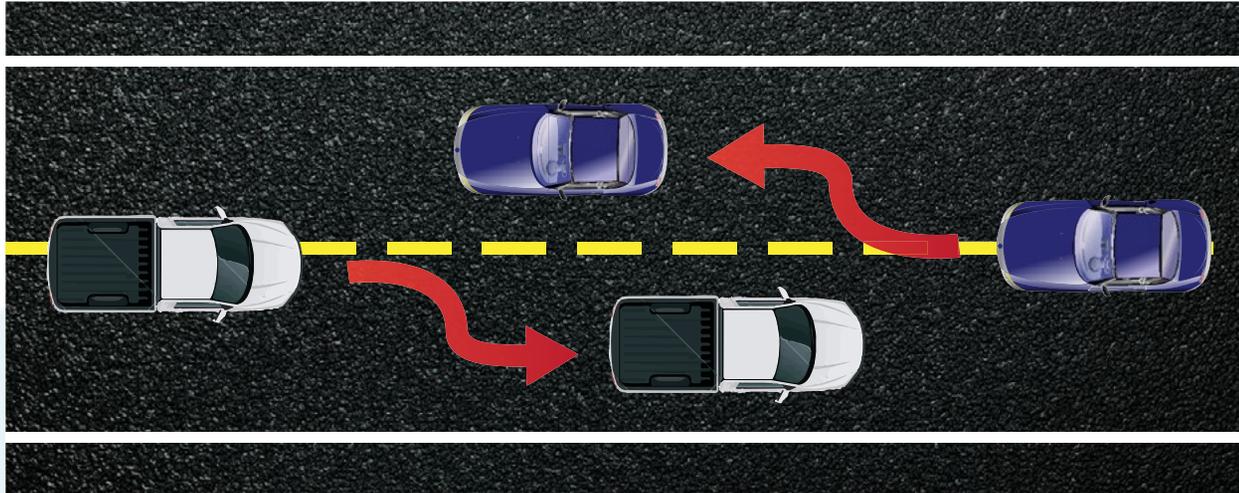


S.148 The Passing Rules

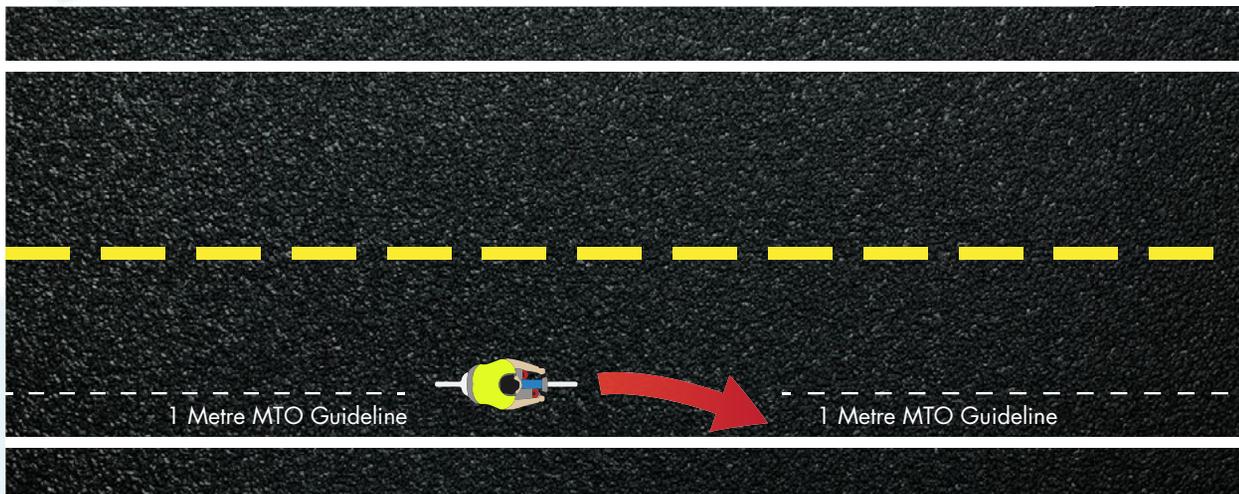
- (1) Every person in charge of a vehicle on a highway meeting another vehicle shall turn out to the right from the CENTRE of the roadway, allowing the other vehicle one-half of the roadway free.
- (6) Every person on a bicycle who is overtaken by a vehicle, traveling at a greater speed shall turn out to the right and allow the vehicle to pass. The vehicle overtaking shall turn out to the left so far as may be necessary to avoid a collision.



Vehicles turning out as per S. 148 (1)



Cyclists turning out as per S. 148 (6) and MTO Guidelines





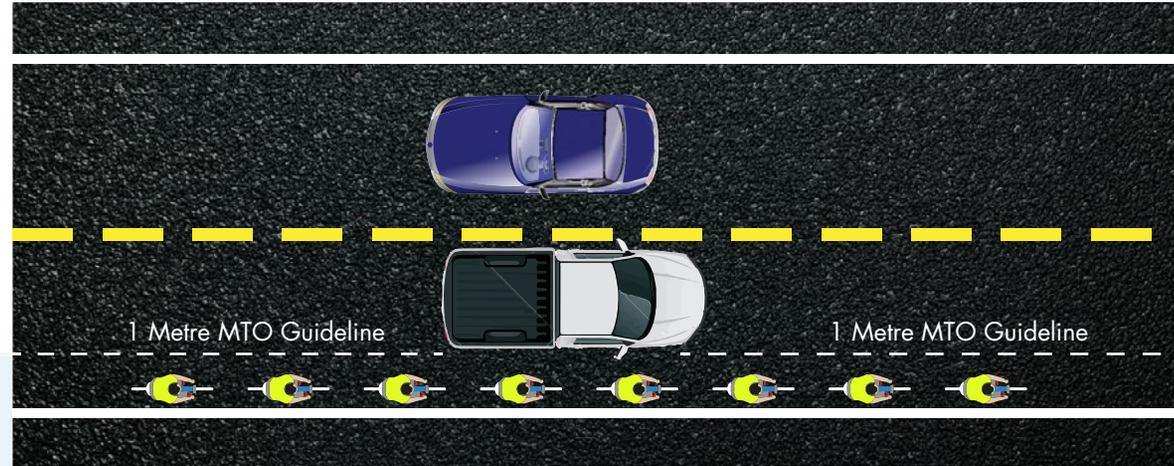
THE ROAD AHEAD MUST BE CLEAR!

S.148 (8a) No person in charge of a vehicle shall pass or attempt to pass another vehicle going in the same direction on a highway unless the roadway in front of and to the left of the vehicle to be passed is **SAFELY FREE FROM APPROACHING TRAFFIC.**

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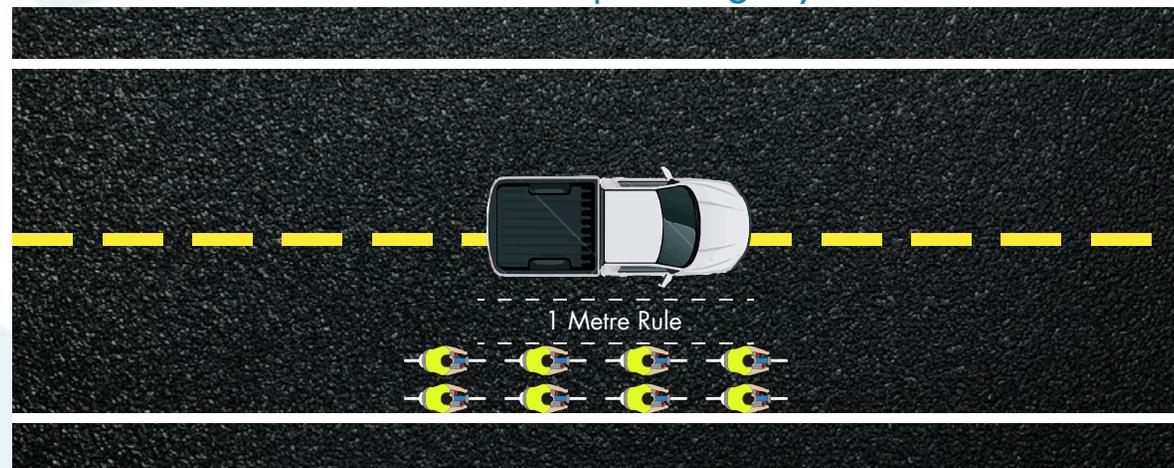


“Threading the needle” a very dangerous scenario



The rationale for defensive cycling practices

Drivers must use other lane to pass legally



The 1 meter rule: the minimum space between the outer edge of vehicle mirror and the outer edge of cyclists elbow (MTO Guidelines)



Summary of the HTA

Looking at the entirety of the above sections of the HTA it is not precisely clear where the bicycle should be on the roadway but what is clear is that the HTA requires the overtaking vehicles to make proper lane changing passes.

- 1) **S. 151** states bicycles cannot be on the shoulder therefore they must be on the roadway.
- 2) **S. 147** states slower vehicles travel as close to the edge as practicable but that phrase is not defined nor does the section specifically address bicycles as it does **S. 148**.
- 3) **S. 148** defines the way vehicles pass each other and it does not clearly define how far right a bicycle should move but (8) clearly and strongly indicates that overtaking vehicles have to perform proper lane changing passes and not pass within the lane.
- 4) Finally, it should be noted that there is no specific prohibition or mention of two abreast cycling in the HTA.



So Where Does That Leave Us?

- 1) Cyclists need to turn out to the right if and when a vehicle is obstructed by their presence. **S.148 (8)**
- 2) Cyclists are entitled to be a minimum of 1 meter within the lane on the right and do not have to turn out more than that amount according to MTO Guidelines.
- 3) Drivers are required to pass only when the road ahead is clear and to use the oncoming lane to pass safely. **S.148 (8)**



Why Are Drivers Annoyed by Two Abreast Cyclists?!

- There are many reasons; here are a few:
- They think it is illegal.
- They think it is dangerous.
- They think it is harder to pass.
- They think cyclists should not be on the road, period.

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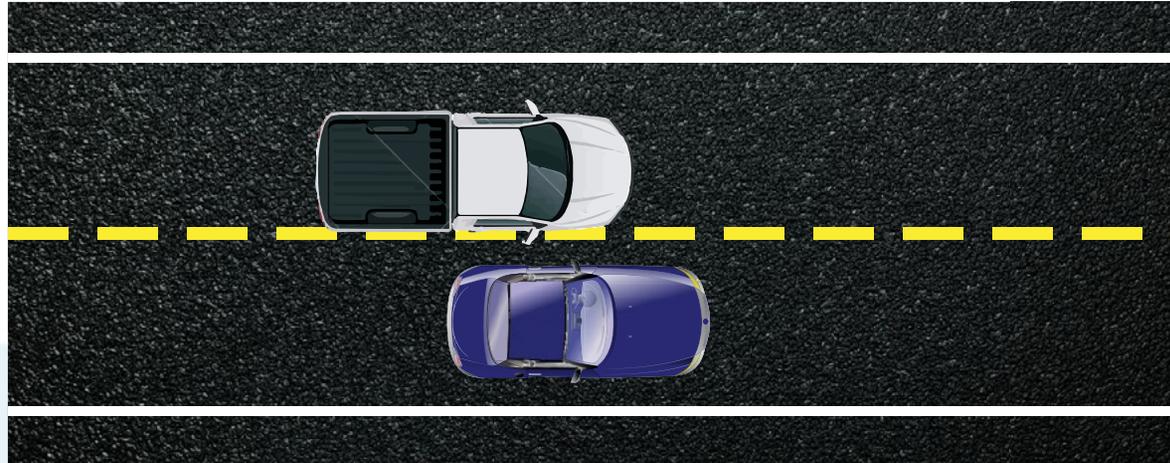
Why is Two Abreast Cycling the Most Common Cycling Formation?

1) It is the safest way.

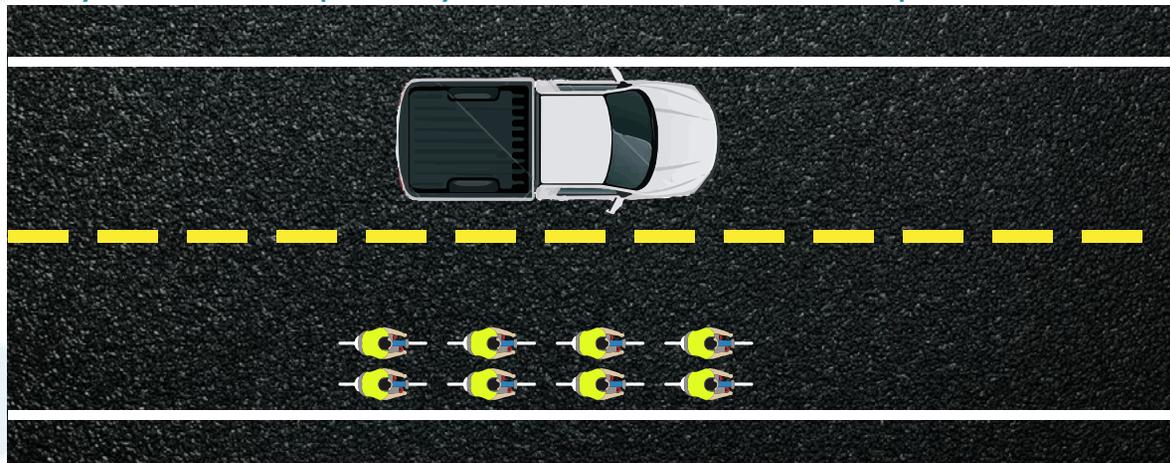
- A group of two abreast cyclists makes it instantly clear to an approaching driver that a proper lane change will be necessary in order to pass safely.
- Drivers should give cyclists the same amount of room they would give another car/vehicle when overtaking which means they should be on the other side of the road.



Do cars pass other cars like this?



Why don't cars pass cyclists with the same respect as cars?



It is time to recognize and respect vulnerable users of the road.



Why is Two Abreast Cycling the Most Common Cycling Formation?

2) It is a lot easier and safer passing a two abreast paceline

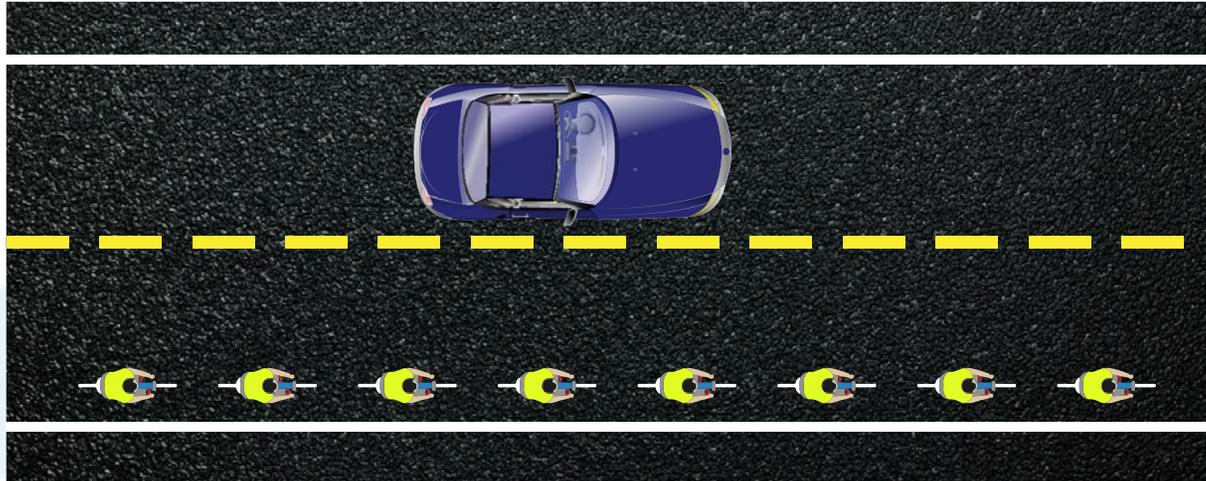
Two abreast riding reduces the length of the group by half. The reality is the length of the pass is much more relevant to the safety of the pass than the width of the group being passed. !

3) Group Communication

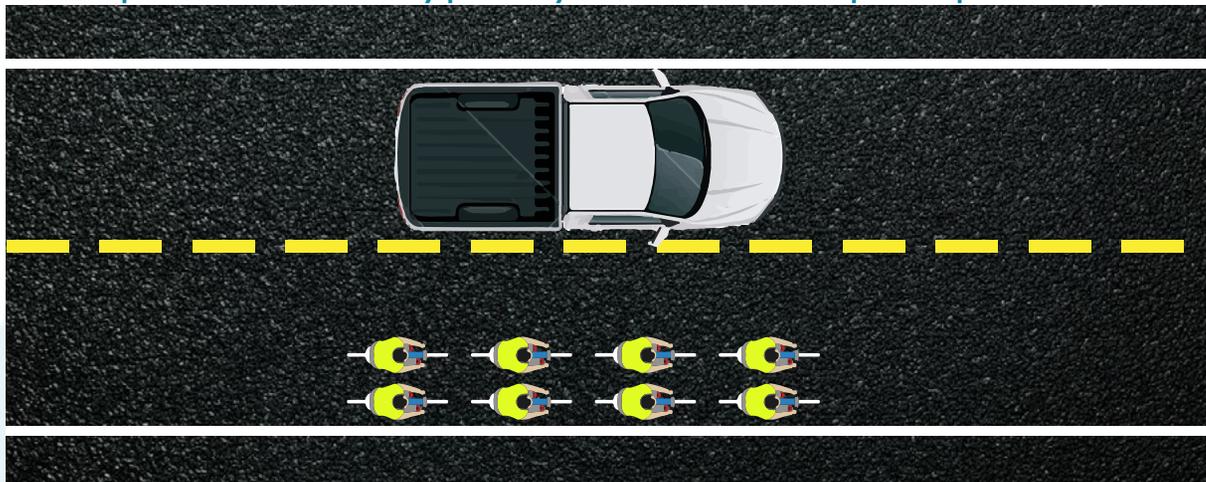
Disciplined cyclists are always watching out for each other within the group. Those at the back are trained to call out an approaching vehicle while those at the front are watching for hazards and vehicles ahead.



Single pacelines are twice as long as a double paceline



CCC pacelines are typically the size of a pickup truck.





The Reasons for the Defensive Cycling Strategy

- 1) Our reality is that a small but significant percentage of drivers do not respect the vulnerability of cyclists as legal road users.
- 2) Cyclist need to ride in a manner that strongly encourages vehicles to pass properly and not within the same lane. The double paceline is our strongest method to achieve that goal.

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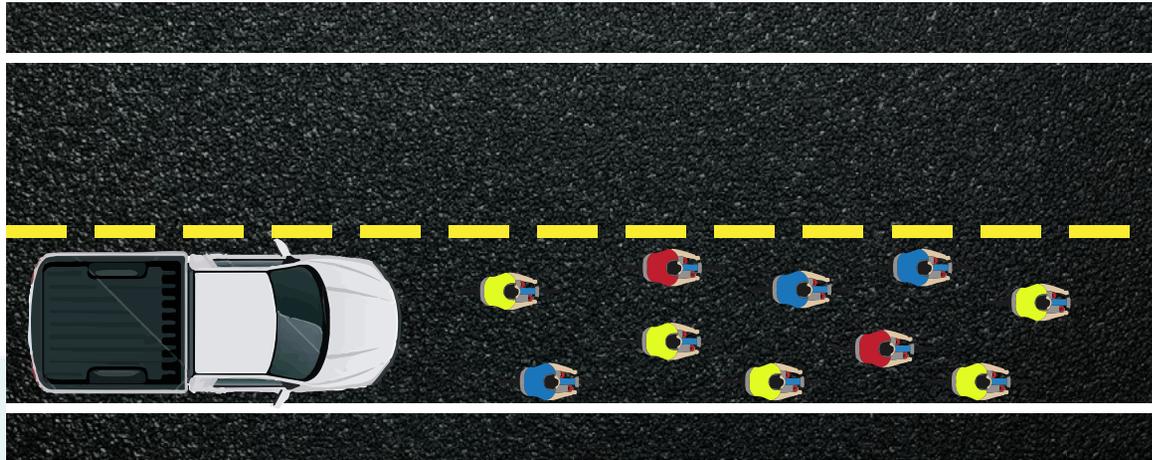
What Does The Collingwood Cycling Club Do To Practice Defensive Cycling?

Our Context: We Ride at the Safest Times and Places

- 1) All rides take place on the lower-volume, lower-speed roads. The Club will not ride on Hwys 26, 124 or 91.
- 2) All rides are scheduled in the morning for lowest traffic times.
- 3) All rides start and finish from the edge of town to reduce traffic exposure.
- 4) All group rides will be 8-10 riders with a maximum of 16; small groups have better coordination and control.
- 5) We will attempt to have all rides led by a designated group ride leader who will supervise the safe and disciplined operation of the group.
- 6) We undertake to educate our membership about our Defensive Cycling Practices, the HTA and all Safe Cycling Practices.

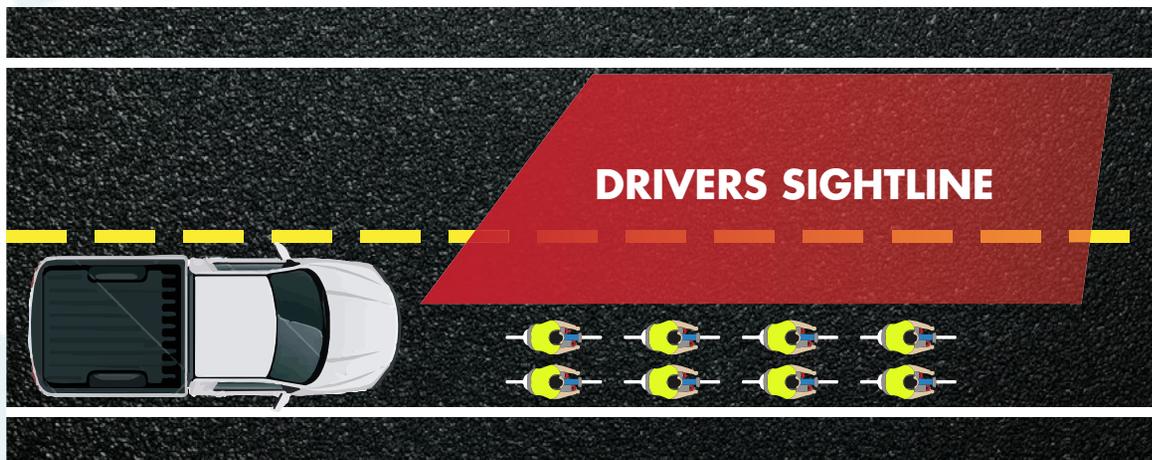


Bad Cycling Formation



Driver has poor sightlines – Cyclists appear disorganized

Perfect Cycling Formation



Driver has ideal sightlines – Cyclists are organized



Collingwood Cycling Club Defensive Ride Practices!

7. "TIGHT AND TO THE RIGHT"

8. TWO ABREAST AND NEVER MORE

9. RIDE SINGLE FILE WHEN OBSTRUCTING TRAFFIC

10. ABIDE BY THE HTA

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The Vast Majority of Cycling is Recreational and Strives to Avoid Car Traffic

Local clubs and tourists are riding weekend mornings on quiet country roads. Is expediency for motorists a top priority at these times? Isn't it the ideal time and place to ask for some patience and understanding from drivers? Shouldn't the pendulum swing towards higher margins of safety towards cyclists during these off peak travel times?

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What should our goals be?

Minimal or Ample Margins of Safety

- 1) The CCC defensive ride practices have made passing significantly safer and easier for motorists.
- 2) Motorists need to recognize that they have a legal and moral obligation to pass vulnerable road users with greater care and patience.
- 3) The law is straight forward; pass only when the road is clear. We are asking that motorist do so with ample, not minimal margins of safety.



Let's Accept that Not All Road Users are Equal!

We can all agree that our society and the laws it creates are based on the fundamental principle of the sanctity of human life. The Highway Traffic Act manifests that sanctity by creating legislation based on the preeminence of safety in all matters related to traffic. If we accept the sanctity of life, if we accept that human safety is the paramount principle of the HTA, we have to accept the reality that cyclists are vulnerable users. It is not logical or morally acceptable to legally categorize a bicycle as a vehicle on par with trucks or cars. The HTA needs to clearly recognize that distinction but pending any fundamental legal changes we as individuals, sharing the road with cyclists, need to accept that vulnerable users exist on our roads and that they need be treated with respect, not derision and hostility.



**Thankyou for time. For any questions or more information
please contact the Collingwood Cycling Club.**

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