



Chapter Ride Guide

of
Electric City H.O.G. Chapter
www.electriccityhog.com

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Anderson, SC

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Introduction

The Electric City Harley Owners Group (the “Chapter”) is a chartered chapter of Harley Owners Group, Inc. and conducts group rides for the benefit of its members. This Ride Guide contains information that each member is expected to know and observe so that everyone can participate in safe and enjoyable group rides with the Chapter. New members are encouraged to read this guide prior to participation in a group ride and everyone is encouraged to review this guide on a regular basis.

As stated in the Chapter’s Charter, the purpose of the Chapter is:

To engage in and promote responsible motorcycling activities for Harley Owners Group (H.O.G.) members by conducting chapter activities and encouraging participation in other H.O.G. events and other charitable activities. Chapter activities and operations shall be conducted in a manner consistent with a family oriented non-political philosophy.

The Chapter plans, schedules and conducts rides to fulfill this purpose. Please remember that safety is everyone’s primary responsibility and that we all share responsibility for the safety of the group. By observing the guidelines presented in this guide, group riding with the Chapter should be safe and enjoyable for everyone.

And always remember that our primary objective is to:

“RIDE AND HAVE FUN”

This guide is organized into sections as follows

Chapter Rides	contains information about the planning and scheduling of Chapter Rides.
Group Riding	explains the rules and procedures each member is expected to observe to increase the safety and enjoyment of the rides for everyone.
Disclaimer and Release Forms	contains legal information and the form requirements for participating in a Chapter ride.
Group Riding Checklist	is a two-page summary of the rules and procedures presented in the Group Riding section. This section is designed so that you can easily carry it for reference during a ride.

Chapter Rides

Ride Selection and Scheduling

The Chapter rides are selected and scheduled by the Activities Committee. The rides are typically chosen and scheduled two months in advance.

Members are encouraged to make ride suggestions to any of the Activities Committee, Officer or Road Captain. Suggestions may also be made through the Chapter's web site. Please don't hesitate to make a ride suggestion as the Chapter is always looking for new ride ideas and places to go.

All suggestions are reviewed for suitability. The destination must qualify with adequate motorcycle parking and the ability to handle a large group. If it is a restaurant, really good food helps. Not all suggestions may be selected and the Chapter is under no obligation to select a suggestion for any ride or make any selection within any time period.

Ride Schedule

The ride schedule is published on the Chapter web site and displayed at the Dealership. The Chapter web site contains the latest information about upcoming rides and changes in the schedule.

Whenever practicable, schedule changes are made to the web site as soon as possible. The Chapter reserves the right to change the ride schedule without notice at any time. Rides may be canceled at any time, usually due to adverse weather conditions.

Road Captains

The Road Captains are responsible for conducting the Chapter Rides. Prior to a ride, they select the route, check it for unsafe conditions, insure the destination is suitable and make any arrangements necessary for a large group. They also prepare each group by conducting a pre-ride briefing during which they go over a ride checklist, explain the planned route, and provide any other information pertinent to the ride.

Each ride normally has at least two Road Captains: a Lead Captain and a Sweep. Other Road Captains may be present and will ride within the group. All ride participants are expected to follow the directions, instructions and decisions of the Road Captains. When a large group is divided into smaller groups, each group will have a Lead Road Captain and a Sweep.

Ride Participation

All members are invited to participate in all rides. It is solely a member's choice to participate in a ride. The Chapter expects all riders to ride safely and ride within their experience and comfort level at all times.

New riders should learn the fundamental skills of motorcycle riding and gain some experience before joining a group ride. Taking an MSF approved rider course is highly recommended before joining a group ride.

Ladies of Harley (LOH) rides are open to all members, male or female. LOH plans, organizes and conducts these rides.

Harley Owners Group Event Categories

Chapter events are conducted primarily for the benefit of the Harley Owners Group Chapter members. There are three categories of events defined by national H.O.G.:

- **CLOSED** events are chapter events that are open to chapter members and one guest per member.
- **MEMBER** events are chapter events that are only open to H.O.G. members.
- **OPEN** events are chapter events that are open to chapter members, national H.O.G. members and other guests as desired.

NOTE: All Chapter rides are "Closed" events unless otherwise specifically stated. This means that you can participate in Chapter rides only if you are a current Chapter member. Members are limited to one guest per ride.

Group Riding

This section explains the rules and procedures used when group riding with the Chapter. Each rider is expected to observe and practice these rules and procedures when participating in a group ride with the Chapter.

There are four components to a safe and enjoyable group ride:

- Personal Preparation
- Group Preparation
- The Ride
- Emergencies

Personal Preparation

You are responsible for making sure that you and your motorcycle are ready for the ride.

- **Check the web site for schedule changes.**
Regardless of the amount of planning done for the rides, a schedule change will occasionally occur. Rides may be changed to a new time, a new place or both. Typically, rides are cancelled due to adverse weather conditions but may be cancelled for other reasons.
- **Check yourself.**
Make sure you are rested, alert, feeling well and dressed in appropriate riding gear. You should be physically and mentally prepared to make the ride. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and stress prior to riding. If you are tired, not feeling well, or just “not up to par”, it may be wise to stay home and ride another day. It is advisable to wear reflective clothing at night and bring a rain suit whenever rain is a possibility.
- **Perform a safety and mechanical check on your motorcycle.**
Any motorcycle used in a Chapter ride, event or other activity must be properly licensed, inspected and insured.

Check your bike for proper operation including the TIRE PRESSURE, oil level, turn signals, lights, cables, brakes, etc. Also check for any parts that may have loosened due to vibration (Always check your gearshift and brake levers before each ride).
- **Fill your gas tank.**
All members are to begin the ride with a full gas tank. The start of a ride will not be delayed waiting for someone to “get a quick fill-up”. All rides are planned with ample gas stops considering the smallest tank in the group and that everyone starts with a full tank.
- **Make sure you arrive for the ride before designated departure time.**
Not only is it fun to socialize prior to the ride, the Road Captain will make any announcements and give the pre-ride briefing during this time. If you arrive at the last minute, you may miss important information about the ride.

Group Preparation

Rides are scheduled to depart at a certain time and members generally start assembling for the rides 30 minutes earlier. During this time you are encouraged to socialize with your fellow Chapter members and listen to the pre-ride briefing.

- **Meet on time.**
All riders should start to assemble 30 minutes before the departure time. All rides leave promptly at the scheduled departure time in order to arrive at the destination on time.

- **Fulfill the Event Release Form Requirements.**

Members: Each member participating in a Chapter ride is required to have a signed “Chapter Membership Enrollment Form and Release” on file with the Chapter. Signing this form is required to join the Chapter or renew membership. If, for any reason, you are not sure if you have this form on file with the Chapter, sign an “Event Release Form for Adults” at each ride.

Guests: Each member is allowed one guest per ride. Each adult guest must sign an “Event Release Form for Adults” at the ride.

Minors: Every minor participating in a ride, whether a member or guest, must have a “Chapter Event Release Form for Minors” signed by the minor’s parent or guardian. Minors age 12 or older are also required to sign a “Minor’s Assumption of Risk Acknowledgement” at each ride. See the Disclaimer and Release Forms section for additional information.

- **Headlights to low beam, other “running” lights off.**

All riders except the Lead Road Captain and the Sweep should set their headlights to low beam and turn off any other “running” lights. This makes it much easier for the Lead Road Captain to see the Sweep and determine if a problem has occurred requiring the Sweep to stop.

- **The pre-ride briefing.**

The Lead Road Captain will give a pre-ride briefing covering the route, the Chapter riding rules and any other information concerning the ride. Listen closely and feel free to ask questions.

The Ride

Riding with a group can be fun and exciting, but only when everyone in the group observes the same rules. When riding with the Chapter, everyone is expected to observe the following rules so that the rides will be fun, safe and enjoyable.

The Road Captain will leave first from the starting point and is followed by all other bikes, which fall into the staggered formation as soon as possible. The Sweep will follow the group.

When a large number of motorcycles are present, the Lead Road Captain may divide them into two or more groups. Each group will have a Lead Road Captain and a Sweep.

- **Ride within your ability and comfort level.**

Riding within your ability and comfort level is very important for the safety of the group. If at any time you feel the ride has exceeded your riding ability or comfort level, or you have safety concerns, you should consider pulling off to the side at a safe place. The Sweep will stop with you. You can then decide whether or not to continue the ride or not.

- **Obey all laws (Speed limits, Stop signs, Stop lights, etc.). Expect rider ahead of you to make a FULL stop.**

Obey all laws, including traffic regulations and any applicable helmet laws. **Do not block vehicles that have the right-of-way.** It is illegal and dangerous.

- **Ride in staggered formation with approximately 2-second spacing.**

The Chapter rides in the standard staggered formation recommended by the State Patrol. The bikes form two columns, with the Lead Road Captain at the head of the left column. The second motorcycle will head up the right column and ride approximately 1 second behind the Lead Road Captain. The other riders follow the motorcycle directly in front of them by 2 seconds, which puts them one second behind the diagonal motorcycle in front of them. Use the 2-second spacing regardless of your speed. As your speed increases, the distance of the gap will increase.

When riding in adverse or limited visibility conditions (such as night, rain, fog, etc.), reduce speed and increase the spacing to 3 or 4 seconds.

- **Fill in gaps by crossing columns.**

When a motorcycle drops out of the ride and creates a gap, the following motorcycles fill the gap by changing columns and moving up into the gap. To assist in some of this column change, if a rider knows that he is going to drop out of the ride prior to the end of the ride, he should position himself as close to the rear of the ride in front of the sweep as possible.

- **Use hand signals.**

The Road Captain will use hand signals to indicate a change of course, hazards or other information to the group. Each rider uses the same signal to pass the information back through the group (Form the signal so it is clearly visible to the riders behind you). The common hand signals used by the Chapter are

- Left Turn
- Right Turn
- Left Hazard
- Right Hazard
- Single File
- Staggered Formation
- Slow Down
- Stop
- Pull Off

- **Pass with care only when it is safe and you have ample room and visibility.**

On freeways, the group can pass as a unit when not in the lane of the vehicle being passed. When in the same lane, the pass may be made by an individual motorcycle or by several motorcycles in formation but only when it is safe to change lanes.

On 2-lane roads, PASS ONE AT A TIME ACTING AS AN INDIVIDUAL. Only pass when you have ample room and visibility to safely complete the pass. Never blindly follow another motorcycle in a passing situation.

Once you have finished passing a vehicle, keep your speed up to allow room for the riders behind you to finish their pass.

- **Keep the group together without heroics.**

Often the group will get separated by a stop light, traffic congestion, etc. It is not necessary or advisable to take heroic or exceptional steps to regroup. In the event the group is separated, the Lead Road Captain will adjust the ride (either by slowing down or stopping at a safe location) until the ride is regrouped. In some circumstances, this may take several miles... BE PATIENT. Do not ride beyond your limits or break any laws while trying to regroup.

If the group becomes separated and you are the **LAST MOTORCYCLE IN THE FRONT GROUP** and the group makes a turn off the road being traveled, **STOP AT THE TURN AND WAIT FOR THE OTHERS BEHIND YOU** (but only if it is safe to do so). You will be the "Breadcrumb". As they approach, attract their attention so they can follow you and catch up with the group.

If you find yourself LEADING a separated part of the group, WATCH FOR A MEMBER OF THE GROUP (the "Breadcrumb") STOPPED AT AN INTERSECTION TRYING TO GET YOUR ATTENTION. Follow the "Breadcrumb" until everyone catches up with the group. If you do not see a "Breadcrumb" or are not sure of the route, **PULL OVER IN A SAFE PLACE**. Everyone behind you will pull over and the Sweep will either choose someone to lead or lead the group until it catches up with the group ahead.

- **Pull side-by-side at stops, start together with left motorcycle accelerating faster.**

This helps move the group through stops quickly and get as many motorcycles through a stop light as possible. As the two columns come to a stop, the right column will move up even with the left column. On the start, the two motorcycles leave together with the left motorcycle accelerating faster to reestablish the staggered formation.

- **Negotiate intersections as an individual.**

Act as an individual when proceeding through an intersection. It is your responsibility to insure that you safely have the right-of-way. If it is not safe for you to proceed, then wait until it is... no exceptions. Never blindly follow the motorcycle in front of you through an intersection, especially when making a left turn. The group will reform after the intersection.

When turning in an intersection, use a single file or tight stagger formation, never turn side by side.

- **Yield to cars (especially at entrance ramps and lane changes)**

This is very important. When a car needs to enter from an entrance ramp or is signaling to break into the group, yield and give them plenty of room. Remember the old expression: "All because you have the right-of-way, doesn't mean you are going to get it".

Most drivers (and even motorcyclists when in cars) proceed down an entrance ramp assuming that they will be able to merge in between two cars. When confronted with a line of motorcycles and no clear space in which to merge, some drivers may become unsure, confused and even intimidated by the situation. You can lessen the possibility of an unsafe situation by simply giving them plenty of room. Once the car merges into a line of motorcycles, it will generally get out as soon as possible. In almost all cases, you will not need to pass the car to regroup, it will move out of the way. Once the car is gone, close the gap while maintaining safe speed.

Another case of needing to yield happens when an inattentive driver pulls alongside the group and then realizes that they have to take an upcoming exit. **If a driver signals to break in, LET THEM IN.** In a lot of ways, this is an even more dangerous situation than the entrance ramp. People will go completely crazy when they think they may miss their exit. Think about it... it's much easier to just back off and let them in. They will be out of the way shortly and you can close the gap.

- **Signal all turns and lane changes with signal lights and hand signals; Make visual checks before you move**

The Lead Road Captain will signal for turns and lane changes. You in turn make the same signal to pass it back through the group and to signal any other vehicles near you.

Before making a turn or changing lanes and after you have signaled for an appropriate amount of time, look with your head (not in your mirror) to see if you have a clear space. If so, then make the turn or lane change. NEVER MOVE WITHOUT LOOKING!

It is not always possible for the Lead Road Captain to make lane changes when the entire group has a clear lane. If there is a car in the way, simply break the group around the car. If you are near the car, do not try to "get ahead" if it will crowd the car. Simply slow down and change lanes in back of the car. The car will soon be out of the way and you can close the gap.

- **Park as a group whenever possible.**

When the group stops for a break, park as a group whenever possible so that the ride can be smoothly resumed. Don't park with the front of your bike facing downhill. Don't park where you will have to back up over slippery gravel.

When turning off a roadway into a parking lot or fuel stop, pull as far into the area as possible to let other riders get off the road faster. Then find a place to park or fill up. Whenever possible, pull in and turn facing the outside at a diagonal in the spaces, pulling side by side so that you do not have to back up.

DON'T back up while your motorcycle is running. If you slip and accidentally pull the throttle, you can injure yourself, your motorcycle and other people and motorcycles near you.

- **The ride officially ENDS as we re-enter the Anderson city limits.**

You can return home at any time and by any route you choose. If you are not sure how to get home, ask a Road Captain for directions.

- **Consumption of alcohol during a ride is prohibited.**

If you decide to consume alcohol while on a ride with the Chapter, your ride is over and you will be politely asked to leave the ride by one of the Road Captains.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency requiring a stop, observe the following procedures so that the emergency may be resolved in the safest possible manner. Remember, we do not want a group of motorcycles on the side of the road in an unsafe manner under any circumstances.

There are two types of Emergency stops: Mechanical or Personal (non life threatening) and Accidents.

Mechanical or Personal Emergency:

Problem bike and Sweep stops – All others continue.

If a motorcycle encounters a mechanical or rider problem that requires a stop, it should signal and stop in as safe a place as possible, preferably well off the road. All other bikes are to continue with the Lead Road Captain to avoid having a group of motorcycles on the side of the road. To insure that the Lead Road Captain is aware of the problem, pass a signal to the front of the group by flashing your high beam and sounding the horn or use CB radio.

- **Only the Sweep stops to help.**

It is the Sweep's responsibility to stop and assist the problem motorcycle.

- **Lead Road Captain leads the group to a safe location.**

If the Lead Road Captain deems it necessary to check on the problem, he will stop the group at a safe place and call the Sweep to determine what action to take.

- **Road Captains and Sweeps have mobile phones and Road Captains have first aid kits.**

The Road Captains and Sweeps use their mobile phones or CB radios to communicate when necessary. The Lead Road Captain also carries a first aid kit.

Accidents:

All Road Captains following the accident and the Sweep stop, all others continue.

The Sweep is in charge until there is a Road Captain at the scene at which the Road Captain will take charge and will determine who needs to stay to accomplish the following:

- Insure that everyone stops in a safe location,
- Notify the authorities by calling 911,
- Render aid to injured persons,

Remember, **Do not move an injured person or remove their helmet,** trained emergency response personnel should do this.

- Maintain the accident scene and control traffic until the authorities arrive,
- Get the names and addresses of witnesses whenever possible, and
- Take pictures of the accident scene.

The Road Captains are responsible for completing an Injury Report and submitting it to the Chapter Secretary. Injury reports are filed in accordance with Harley Owners Group requirements.

- **Towing**

As an active full or full life H.O.G. member, you are covered by the H.O.G. Roadside Assistance Program. See your H.O.G. membership manual for details. When you need a tow, call the Roadside Assistance number (toll free) on the back of your H.O.G. membership card to arrange for a tow. There is no reimbursement if you choose another towing option. Also, your motorcycle insurance policy may cover towing expenses.

Disclaimer and Release Forms

Chapter Ride Disclaimer

The Officers of the Chapter hereby advise that any and all rides, runs, events and activities sponsored by this Chapter are solely intended for the benefit and participation of our current members and guests (limit one guest per member). Members are responsible for insuring that their guest has a properly executed release form on file with the Chapter. Nothing contained in any publications of this Chapter should be construed to mean that non-current, former members and/or members of the general public are invited to participate in these activities and/or ride motorcycles with this Chapter unless it is specifically so stated. No Chapter member may operate a motorcycle at a Chapter event or activity unless that member is properly licensed to do so and the motorcycle is properly licensed, inspected and insured. Members participate in any and all published activities and meetings at their own risk. The Chapter, its Officers and Sponsor assume no liability or responsibility for any persons, Chapter member or otherwise, at any ride or function.

Release Forms

The Chapter uses the following forms to fulfill the release requirements for participation in Chapter events. These forms are available from the Road Captains and from the web page.

Chapter Membership Enrollment Form and Release

Every member is required to sign this release form when joining the Chapter and when renewing their membership.

Chapter Event Release Form for Adults

All adult participants in a ride must sign this release form at the ride if the individual

1. Is not a Chapter member (i.e., a guest), or
2. Is a Chapter member and is not sure if they have a signed "Chapter Membership Enrollment Form and Release" on file with this Chapter.

A new form must be completed for each ride.

Chapter Event Release Form for Minors

A minor's parent or guardian must sign this release form whenever a minor participates in any chapter event other than a chapter meeting. A new form must be completed for each event. The minor must also sign the "Minor's Assumption of Risk Acknowledgement", if the minor is age 12 or above.

Minor's Assumption of Risk Acknowledgement

A minor, age 12 or above, must sign this form when participating in any chapter event other than a chapter meeting. A new form must be completed for each event. The minor's parent or guardian must also sign the "Chapter Event Release Form for Minors".

Group Riding Checklist

Each rider is expected to observe and practice the following items when preparing for and participating in group rides with the Chapter. This section is a two page checklist of the rules and procedures presented in the Group Riding section. This section is designed so that you can easily carry it for reference during a ride.

A ride consists of four components

1. Personal Preparation
2. Group Preparation
3. The Ride
4. Emergencies

Personal Preparation

- Check the web site for schedule changes
- Check yourself. Are you ready for this ride?
- Perform a Safety/Mechanical Check.
- Fill your Gas Tank.
- Meet on time.

Group Preparation

- All riders meet within 30 minutes before designated departure time.
- Fulfill the Event Release Form requirements.
- Headlights to Low beam, other "running" lights off.
- The pre-ride briefing

The Ride

- Ride within your ability and comfort level.
- Obey all laws (Speed limits, Stop signs, Stop lights, etc.).
- Use hand signals (See next page for illustration)
- Ride in staggered formation with approximately 2-second spacing.
- Fill gaps by moving up.
- Use hand signals and pass to the rear.
- Pass with care only when it is safe and you have ample distance and visibility.
- Keep group together without heroics.
- Pull to side-by-side at stops; left bike out accelerates faster.
- Negotiate intersections as an individual.
- Yield to cars (especially at entrance ramps).
- Signal all turns and lane changes with signal lights and hand signals. Make visual checks before you move.
- Park as a group if possible.
- Ride ends when re-entering Anderson city limits.
- Consumption of alcohol is prohibited.

Emergencies

- Problem bike stops; all others continue.
- Only the Sweep stops to help.
- Lead Road Captain leads group to a safe location.
- Road Captains and Sweeps have mobile phones and Road Captains have first aid kits.
- Use H.O.G. Roadside Assistance for towing (Toll free number on back of your H.O.G. membership card).
- Accidents: Group stops in a safe location – Call 911 – Render aid (Do not move an injured person or remove their helmet – this should be done by trained emergency response personnel) – Get the names and addresses of witnesses whenever possible. Take pictures.