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Motorcycling Guides

number

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RIDING IN A GROUP USING THE BUDDY SYSTEM

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Introduction

Riding in a group can be great fun and making sure nobody gets lost is easy, providing you follow a few simple rules.

Riders in a group sometimes get strung out, due to speed differences, traffic, red lights and any number of other reasons, so making sure you all get back together is important. Nobody likes getting lost!

At Tour1, we take groups of riders on tours throughout Europe and the system we use to make sure we stay together is called 'The Buddy System' and this guide says how that system works.

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Every rider in the group has a part to play in making sure nobody gets lost. The buddy system we use relies on one aspect only to make sure we all stick to the planned route. That is everyone keeps an eye out for the rider **BEHIND** you (your 'buddy') and your role is to make sure that rider **BEHIND** you knows which way to go.

Most of the time, we will be riding close enough together so we can all see where we have turned. Providing the rider behind you is close enough to you to see where you have turned at a junction, you don't need to do anything, as that person can see where to turn because he or she can see you make the turn.

But, if you cannot see the rider behind you when you make a turn, you must wait there until you are certain that rider behind you knows which way to turn. If you don't slow down or wait, the riders behind you won't know where to go and will get lost.

When riding, it is easy to concentrate on the rider ahead of you, but your responsibility is to make sure the rider **BEHIND** you doesn't get lost.

Use your mirrors frequently. Keep an eye on your 'buddy'.



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In practice, the buddy system is easy, as no matter how strung out the group gets, providing you look after the person behind you, nobody will get lost.

But.... and this is the important bit..... you only need to do this when we turn. If for example, you are approaching a junction or roundabout and going straight on, you don't need to wait for the rider behind you to show them that we have gone straight on. Similarly, on a road with no turn-offs you don't need to ride slowly in order to keep the rider behind you in sight. That allows you to ride at whatever speed you like, but you must wait at the next turning point.



Sometimes, the bike ahead of you will disappear from your sight, but that doesn't matter and you shouldn't worry. There is no pressure at all for you to try to keep up and to ride faster than you normally would. Why? Because that rider will be waiting for you at the next turning point to show you which way the group has ridden. It is very important that you ride within the speeds that you are comfortable with and **there is absolutely no pressure on anybody to try to keep up with the bike in front of them.** It is very important

that you to feel comfortable with your own riding. It is easy to try to ride too fast just because you feel pressured to keep up with the group there is **absolutely no need to do this** and in fact, you must avoid doing it.

Most often, a group will soon assess each others preferred riding speed and faster riders will tend to ride at the front of the group and slower riders near the back.

When riding in a group using this buddy system, sometimes the group will ride close together and sometimes a group may become more spread out, but both are perfectly fine.

Occasionally, when the ride leader feels the group is becoming too strung out, or when that leader knows there is a tricky section of road ahead to navigate, the ride leader will sometimes pull over to the side of the road to let everyone get back together as a group.

Just look after the rider behind you and nobody will get lost.