

SALINAS SOCIAL CYCLING - RIDE RULES

Support a courteous social bike run. Envision a mass? Make it a Courteous Mass. Following these rules will help make the Salinas Social Cycling scene safe and positive for riders, motorists, pedestrians, and the whole community. Here's a summary. Details provided below.

1. Follow California Bike Laws.
2. Stop at Red Lights.
3. Stay in the Proper Lane. *Don't ride against traffic. Don't ride on sidewalks.*
4. Ride Straight, Ride Predictably.
5. Be Visible.
6. Roll Past Conflict.
7. Leave No One Behind.
8. Leave Nothing Behind.
9. Ride Sober.
10. Communicate with Fellow Riders—Help Enforce Ride Rules.

You are responsible for your own behavior. All participants ride at their own risk.

1. Follow California Bike Laws

Following CA bike laws is about more than avoiding a ticket. It's about preventing the City getting complaints from residents. It's about avoiding giving anyone a reason to shut the rides down.

Give special attention to following laws about equipment requirements (such as helmets for minors, brakes, reflectors, and front light) and laws about biking intoxicated, leaving one ear bud out, proper lane usage, and stopping at red lights.

Want more bike lanes in Salinas? Following bike laws also makes us better representatives for the entire bike community—so when infrastructure decisions come up, decision-makers feel good about people who bike.

2. Stop at Red Lights

The number one complaint against any social ride group or bike party is that some riders run red lights. Want motorists to respect our right to share the road? Show respect for motorists and the law. With a large group, stopping at red lights makes a strong visible statement that bikes and cars **can** share the road safely.

Besides, stopping gives more time to party! Social rides are slow-moving, not a race. Don't rush to beat a yellow that other riders can't make it through. Instead, stop and make a friend. Say hello to your neighbors, sing in the street. See how beautiful stopping can be?

Of course, if ever a police officer blocks an intersection and waves us through a red light, follow their directions.

3. Stay in the Proper Lane

Stay alert to guidance from ride leaders. If they are communicating, listen, and pass the information back to riders who may not hear them.

When possible, keep routes on 4- to 6-lane streets. This allows using one entire lane while also allowing for cars to pass the people on bikes.

Use **one** lane only. Do **not** stretch across two or more lanes and tie up traffic.

Most often, the proper lane to ride in is the **right**-hand lane. Our decisions are based on laws about operation on roadways.

<http://dmv.ca.gov/pubs/vctop/d11/vc21202.htm>

On a 6-lane street, unless turning, use the **center** lane. This avoids blocking cars that need to turn right or left.

Empty parking spots? It's tempting to swerve into them briefly to get out of heavy traffic. That may seem like a good idea, but it's **not**. You become invisible to drivers. Stay in the travel lane!

Remember too that CA laws for bicyclists are **not** the same as for pedestrians. Bicyclists are **never** to ride against oncoming traffic. Instead, bike the same direction as cars.

And do **not** ride on the sidewalk. In most cases, it is more dangerous than the street. CA law leaves sidewalk riding to local jurisdiction; for the Salinas sidewalk riding ordinance, and to learn more about sidewalk riding, see <http://bicyclingmonterey.com/bicycling-on-sidewalks-misconceptions-and-advisories.html>

4. **Ride Straight, Ride Predictably**

For the safety of others, ride straight and predictably. Don't make sudden stops. Don't weave or make sudden turns—that's part of why brakes can be a critical matter on group rides.

If you need to get out of the group, call out to announce it, hand signal, and move out slowly. Unless the situation requires otherwise, move to the right.

5. **Be Visible**

Along with riding predictably, being seen is one of the best ways to stay safe. Beyond the reflectors and light required by law, consider decorating your bike or yourself with other high-visibility items. Bright clothing helps too—you can't go wrong with white.

6. **Roll Past Conflict**

If you see an angry motorist or pedestrian, roll on by. Don't engage in shouting matches or with violent people. Just enjoy your ride. If a fellow bicyclist stops or otherwise reacts, remind them to "Roll past conflict."

7. **Ride Sober**

It is illegal to drink and ride a bicycle. The law applies just like a DUI. In addition, many riders who drink cause bicycle accidents. They harm fellow riders and themselves. Not all social gatherings need alcohol to be fun! Ride sober.

Even if you're 21 and confident you can have one drink without being under the influence, keep in mind that in Salinas, it is illegal to drink on public property.

8. **Leave No One Behind**

Prepare your bike before riding. Pump tires and adjust brakes as needed, etc. Bring your own patch kit and spare inner tube. Be sure you or friends have basic tools for emergency maintenance.

If you didn't come with family or friends, exchange cell phone numbers with a few new people.

If someone has a flat tire or other problem, a ride group doesn't usually stop. But **don't** leave a stranded rider alone. If someone is in trouble, a couple nearby riders who see him/her are to **stop** and see how they can help. Part of the purpose of social rides is making friends, and helping someone is a great way to do that.

9. **Leave Nothing Behind**

It's not acceptable—to City of Salinas or the Salinas bike community—to have a trail of trash following rides. Pack your trash, or throw it away at a rest stop. Remind fellow riders it is **not** okay to litter.

At meet-up places, if you see litter, consider picking it up so place is left better than you found it.

10. **Communicate with Fellow Riders—Help Enforce Ride Rules**

The handful of volunteers who organize rides cannot be the only ones who enforce the rules. It's important for **everyone** to speak up. No one wants to be an authority figure when they're having a good time! But the way to keep rides going and safe is for everyone to share responsibility for following—and communicating—Ride Rules.

Be vocal. "Stay to the right" is often enough to remind a rider they're slipping. If you see a knucklehead littering, simply boo. It's called community watch. It's the bike community self-monitoring, and when everyone participates, it works.

Of course, communicate any road dangers too, such as "pothole," "glass," or "door" (car door opening into lane).

These rules were adapted from the websites of San Jose Bike Party and Midnight Ridazz of LA, which provided some inspiration for Salinas Social Cycling.