



Proper Signaling

Introduction to Signaling

The ability to quickly and efficiently communicate with fellow cyclists is a necessary habit to learn. Hand signals and vocal calls are the two best methods for communicating with other cyclists. The responsible cyclist will use hand signals as the primary means of communication along with vocal calls as a secondary means when appropriate. Please note that when riding with a new group you should pay attention to the hand and vocal signals they use and adapt accordingly.

Hand Signals

A Google search will quickly show that there are numerous alternatives for use of hand signals in cycling. The following reflects the common practices for Sussex Cyclists.

Learning and using hand signals can greatly enhance safety when riding in a group. Using hand signals allows you to effectively point out objects in the group's path of travel as well as to inform other cyclists of your intentions. Below are a few of the basic hand signals that you should become familiar with if you intend to ride in a group.

Slowing or Stopping

This signal is a clear indication to the cyclists behind you that you've stopped pedaling and that you are slowing or intend to bring your bicycle to a complete stop very soon.

Never make an immediate stop, even after signaling, unless an emergency situation warrants it.

This hand signal is often combined with a loud vocal call of "**Slowing**" or "**Stopping.**"



Left or Right Turn

An extended straight arm is used to indicate to fellow cyclists and vehicular traffic of your intention to make a left or right turn.

We suggest you do not use the signal of extending your left arm and bending the forearm upwards at 90 degrees.

There seems to be growing consensus that the bent left arm (see next signal) can be misinterpreted



Road Hazard

This signal is used to identify a hazard on that the group is riding on. Potholes, drainage grates, and manhole covers are great examples of items you should identify using this signal.

Make sure that you point at the hazard, as it appears ahead, allowing sufficient time for it to be avoided.



Loose Road Surface

This signal is used to alert cyclists of a scattered hazard on the road that could cause traction problems.

Examples of a scatter hazard include loose gravel, sand and broken glass. Instead of simply pointing at the hazard, like you do for the “road hazard” signal, you make a waving action with the open palm of your hand facing the ground.



Moving Over

This signal is used if your group is coming up on a parked car in the way, passing an oncoming runner, approach a narrow bridge, road sign or other obstacle, or overtaking a slower rider.

Typically this means taking your right hand and waving it behind your back. The motion goes from right to left, signaling everyone to move left.



Vocal Calls

Vocal calls are an important addition to hand signals to communicate in a group of cyclists. Ambient noise from traffic or other sources may present problems with vocal calls along your route, so stay aware of your conditions and use necessary precautions to ensure the safety of all riders. Below are a few of the basic vocal calls that you should become familiar with for riding with Sussex Cyclists.

Slowing or Stopping:

Yell "Stopping" if you are going to be stopping your bicycle quickly. It is best to give the riders behind you an ample amount of warning before you stop. Announce that you are "Slowing" as you roll up to a traffic light or stop sign. This gives the other riders plenty of time to prepare for your next call of "Stopping".

Car Back:

Those at the back of the group shout this when there is a vehicle behind the group and it is attempting to pass. NEVER call out "Car" as this can be confused with "Clear".

Car Up:

"Car Up" is shouted by those at the head of the group when there is an oncoming car (e.g., entering the intersection in the opposite direction of travel). NEVER call out "Car" as this can be confused with "Clear."

Rider up, or Walker Up:

Rider Up or Walker Up is called when there is bike rider or walker coming toward the group in the opposite direction, or when the group will be overtaking a Rider or Walker in the direction the group is headed.

Bump, Gravel, Hole, etc...

These calls can be used in conjunction with the appropriate hand signal to aide those behind in being aware of the upcoming hazard.