

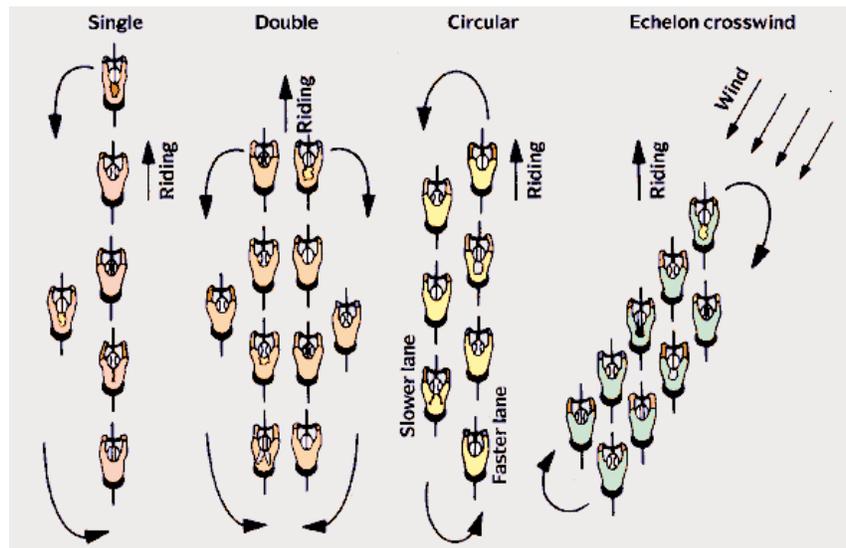
Paceline Etiquette

Off the Front

Try not to accelerate when taking the lead...unless you really did mean to drop the guy who just finished pulling!
Gradually increase speed if appropriate.

Swing wide of pot holes and debris, and/or point them out.

Short pulls of 30 seconds to 2 minutes benefit the group better than long, time-trial like efforts. The overall speed of the group increases thereby improving everyone's spin practice. The weaker riders can "pull through" spending very little time at the front.



In the Pack

Don't focus on the rear tire of the bike in front of you. Instead look forward several riders to see what the paceline is reacting to.

Don't make sudden movements. The riders behind you are counting on you to maintain a predictable line. Move slowly and remain no more than a handlebars width from the rider next to you.

Use brakes cautiously, if you brake hard in a paceline you'll cause everyone behind you to pile up.

If you have to slow a little bit, move to the side or sit up and catch some air.

Communicate. Call out actions and conditions i.e. TURNING, SLOWING, STOPPING, DOG!!!

Don't overlap the wheel of the bike in front of you. If you do overlap, move away until slow down gradually. Protect your front wheel. (It is usually the person who overlaps wheels who wipes out!)

Wait until you're in the back of the paceline to eat that energy bar or peel the banana.

Stay relaxed, loose and fluid, keep the pedals spinning soft-pedal if you have to.

Aero bars have no place in the paceline - ever.

Change positions correctly. A common beginner faux pas is to stop pedaling just before pulling off the front. This creates an accordion affect toward the rear. Keep a steady pressure on the pedals until you have cleared the front. After pulling off, soft pedal and let the group pull through. As the last couple riders are passing through, begin to apply more pressure to smoothly take your position at the rear.

Know your limitations. If you are not strong enough or too tired to take a turn at the front, stay near the back and let the stronger cyclists pull in front of you instead of making them go to the back of the line. This will keep them from having to pass you when you create a gap, and will allow you to hang on to the faster riders

In the hills

Climbing. If you stand abruptly while climbing, you will move backwards relative to the rider behind you when you hit the bottom of the pedal stroke. If you need to stand, shift up a gear to compensate for the slower cadence and stand up smoothly, keeping a steady pressure on the pedals.

Descending. The leader must overcome much greater wind resistance as speed increases. If you are leading, keep pedaling. If you are following, back off to compensate for the greater effects of drafting. If you are closing on the rider in front, sit up and let the wind slow you or use light braking to maintain spacing..

Safety

Headphones are taboo. If you want to listen to the radio, stay at home.

Relax. This one is really important. If you have tense arms and get bumped from the side, the shock will go directly to the front wheel and you will swerve and possibly crash. Plus, if you are tense, you are using energy you need to pedal your bike and keep up with the group.

Courtesies

Don't leave stragglers. If you get separated at intersections, as a matter of courtesy, the lead group should soft pedal until the rest have rejoined. No one should be left alone-remember, this is a group ride.