

RIDE HOST INFORMATION

Hosting a ride is meant to be fun for you and everybody on the ride. All ride hosts must be a current Valley Spokesmen member. Being a ride host means you define the ride, when it is, where it goes and where it starts. A ride host does not have to ride at the front of the group.

The great thing about hosting a ride is that you get to choose the route, the pace and the rest stops. You get to show people your favorite routes, favorite hills, favorite vistas and points of interest. You get to meet new people who share your interest in cycling and you get to learn about the other interests fellow cyclists might have. By hosting a ride, you have the ability to share and learn safe bicycling habits and to foster cycling in our community. By hosting a safe and fun ride, you become an ambassador for the Valley Spokesmen and great sport of cycling.

The Valley Spokesmen Bicycling Club wants to encourage people to host rides and offers [incentives](#) in the form of VS club kit (clothing). The more rides hosted the more kit accessories earned.

RIDE HOST GUIDELINES

Selecting a route

Please choose a ride that you enjoy and, if possible, has not been ridden in the previous several weeks or is planned for the following weeks. If there is another ride the day you want to host a ride, check that your ride is different e.g. local vs. distant, long vs. short, etc. and, as a courtesy, ask if that is alright with the other ride host.

- **Choose an existing ride** from the [Valley Spokesmen ride library](#) – Be sure to familiarize yourself with the route a few days before just in case any changes need to be made due to road closures or construction.
- **Modify an existing ride** from the [ride library](#) – You can modify a ride to make it new and make it yours. You will have to make a new cue sheet to show your changes. You can submit it to the ride masters to add to the library.
- **Create a brand new ride** – Be sure the start location has sufficient free, paved parking. Public parks, Park & Ride Lots and near freeway access are the best. Avoid using shopping center parking lots. Avoid dirt or poorly paved roads; dangerous intersections, especially when a left-turn is required; and extremely fast, busy roads without a designated bike lane.

Telling everybody about your ride

- Send an email to the [ride coordinators](#) announcing your ride. The club requests rides to be submitted a couple of months in advance in order to be printed in the newsletter. It will also be posted to the [ride calendar](#).

- If you host a ride after the newsletter has been published be sure your ride is posted to the online [ride calendar](#). The ride coordinators will be happy to assist you. This must be done at least 72 hours prior to the ride date. Send an email to the vslist (vslist@valleyspokesmen.org) telling everybody about the ride.
- Provide the ride coordinators with the following information:
 - Name of the ride
 - Mileage, [Ride rating](#) and expected elevation gain
 - State if the ride is Drop or No-Drop
 - Date and time of the ride
 - Start location for the ride. Include an address or a link to Google Maps with directions.
 - Your name as the ride host with cell phone number and email address
 - Description of the ride including rest stops, highlights of the ride and if there are different mileage options. State if any parts of the ride are on dirt (ie path to 'hole-in-the wall' and mountain bike rides). Indicate if there is a restroom at the start location.
 - Link to the ride 'turn by turn' instructions (Valley Spokesmen uses [RideWithGPS](#))
- If there are important changes to your ride, i.e. route or time change (due to weather-related conditions), email the [ride coordinators](#) immediately to update the online ride calendar. If you can no longer host the ride, send an update as to who will be the substitute ride leader or if the ride will be a 'no host'. Then send an email update to the VS group list. All rain cancellations should be made by 7:00 am the morning of the ride.

Prepare a cue sheet (list of 'turn by turn' instructions)

- We recommend you use [RidewithGPS](#) to map your ride. You will need a RidewithGPS account (free) to save it. The rides from the Ride Library came from RidewithGPS.
- After creating your route, select Export from the right side of the page and choose Cue Sheet CSV File. Open the file in Excel, verify the directions are clear and easy to follow and add rest stops and/or regroup locations. When it looks correct, save the document. If you need any help, please contact the Route Masters at (vs-rides@valleyspokesmen.org).
- Print out and bring extra copies of route slips to the ride. Leave any extras on the windshield or back window of a vehicle for late arrivals. As you attached it to the ride calendar etc. you only need to bring a few.

Pre-ride preparation

- Print out at least 2 [sign-in sheets](#) from the Valley Spokesmen website. Don't forget to bring along 2 pens and something to write on.
- Arrive 15 minutes early
- Have all riders sign the sign-in sheet and offer a cue sheet if they did not print one for themselves. Ride hosts are required to sign in as well if they are cycling with the group.
- It is requested that you print out some [membership forms](#) to encourage non-members to sign up. Membership is not a requirement; non-members are welcome on Valley Spokesmen rides.

- Helmets are **mandatory** on all Valley Spokesmen rides. Head phones, including ear buds, are **not permitted**.
- *Emphasize* that each rider should have ID and emergency contact information on their person.
- Announce that if anyone plans to leave the ride before the group returns to the starting point, that they should let the ride host know their intention.
- Be familiar with the procedures on [What to do in an Emergency](#)

Starting the riders

- Prior to starting the ride make a short announcement about the ride including re-group locations, rest stops, key safety issues along the route and the expected average speed. Make sure all ride attendees have your cell phone number in case of an emergency.
- Introduce yourself and welcome everyone on behalf of Valley Spokesmen and encourage all non-members to join.
- Identify if there are new riders participating and ask them to introduce themselves and how long they have been riding. Welcome them to the ride and make them feel welcome to the group. As ride host, start the ride with the new riders and determine their riding level. Once their ride level has been determined introduce them to fellow group members who cycle at their same pace.
- Start the ride on time. Leave extra cue sheets on a vehicle in a visible location.
- Carry the sign-in sheets with you the entire ride in case of emergency. Taking a photo of the sign-in sheets with your cell phone works well too.

At the end

- Try to account for all the riders that started. Some riders may simply ride home if they live close to the route. Look for empty cars in the parking area. **DO NOT KNOWINGLY LEAVE A RIDER STRANDED.**
- Send the completed sign-in sheets to VSBTC, P.O. Box 2630, Dublin CA 94568 or via email to b-bpowers@att.net. The club uses this information to help riders track their miles for the year.
- Ride host credit and mileage will be given to those rides posted 72 hours in advance, was open to all Club members and had at least three (3) riders participate. Paid cycling events, such as Cycle Oregon or BAC, do not count.