



LIFE



LIBERTY



THE PURSUIT



OF THE RIDE

BICYCLE CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA

MEMBERS' GUIDE

Most of the information in this Guide comes from the following references available to BCP members:

- **Quick Release (QR)** – the BCP monthly Newsletter
- **BCP Website** – www.phillybikeclub.org
- **Email message board** – To subscribe/unsubscribe or change your options for the BCP email list, go to <http://five.pairlist.net/mailman/listinfo/thelist>

Thank you for joining the Bicycle Club of Philadelphia!

This guide is designed to answer the most common questions members have.

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Now that I've joined BCP, what do I get?

For the low, low price of \$15 a year (if you receive our monthly newsletter electronically, \$20 to receive it by mail), you get a lot! You get our monthly newsletter, discounts at most local bike shops, and members' discounts for our special events, such as:

- Scenic Schuylkill Century – September
- New Hope to New York Ride (Peter N. Odell Memorial Ride) – Labor Day weekend
- Fall 3-Day Weekend Event – October
- Fall end of season picnic
- Annual Banquet – Winter
- Spring Kickoff Party –
- Spring 3-day Weekend – May
- Annual Picnic – June

There are many reasons to belong to a club, but most of our members find BCP a great place to:

- Meet other cycling enthusiasts (at your level),
- Go on group rides (more fun and safer than riding by yourself),
- Become a better cyclist by riding more and varied routes, and getting advice from others,
- Lend your talents by volunteering, and
- If you're "lucky", you may also have the opportunity to learn how to fix a flat or do other roadside repairs.

Your membership dues support the costs of our events (snacks, food/beverages, giveaways, fees for using parks, city services, banquet halls), for printing brochures, etc. BCP is a not-for-profit organization and we also make contributions to bike related organizations whose work benefits the biking community in general and our members by making biking more accessible and safe.

For more, go to the website – look for the navigation icons at the top right side of the page. Under "Join/Renew", go to "Membership Benefits".

How can I get the most out of my membership?

Read this Guide! Come out for a ride! Take a tour of the BCP website to see what's going on and what information is available. Come out for a ride! Read your Quick Release (QR) newsletter. Come out for a ride! If you're an experienced group rider (or when you become one), take the Ride Leader training and become a ride leader. Come out for a ride! Volunteer to help at one of our events.

Where is my membership card?

Look at your QR – on the second-to-last page, the one with the membership application, you will see a membership card in the bottom left corner. In addition, if you want to get the discount at a local bike shop (see list of clubs offering discounts on the previous page of the QR), many shops have access to a membership look-up list and can verify your membership. Please do not share your membership card with non-members.

BCP MEMBERSHIP
The Bearer of this Card is a Member
of the Bicycle Club of Philadelphia
and is entitled to all the benefits of
membership, including club discounts
at applicable Bike Shops.
Date: January 2012

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How will I know when it's time to renew my membership?

On the email message with the QR, look for the membership notice:

.....
Watch this space -> .Membership is current. <- Watch this space
.....



**JOIN
RENEW**

The notice will change when you have one or two months left on your membership. This is your reminder to renew your membership. If you do not renew your membership, you will also receive a reminder postcard when you are 2 months overdue. After 2 months, you will not be able to log in to the website.

Renewing is EASY! Click on the “Join/Renew” icon on the website and select “Renew Membership” – you can renew in a few clicks using PayPal or a credit card, or by mail.

How can I find out about club rides and events?

BCP offers a wide variety of rides for cyclists of all levels of ability. Whether you want a leisurely jaunt through Fairmount Park or the challenge of the hills of Gladwyne or Chester and Berks Counties, we have something to suit you.



RIDES

There are three ways to find **rides**. Scheduled rides and events are listed in the QR and on the website (click on the “rides” icon, then “Daily Ride Calendar”). In addition, if you subscribe to the email list, you receive notice of “ad-hoc” rides that are added after the newsletter goes to print. The email list and the website will also post ride cancellations. Please check, as sometimes rides are cancelled for weather or other reasons, such as unexpected unavailability of the ride leader. The ride leader contact information is provided so you can check with the leader if you’re not sure if a ride is on – or if the ride is right for you. *The ride leaders really don’t mind getting a call or email – they’re happy to help and want you to enjoy your ride!*



**EVENTS
LINKS**

On the **Events** page you will find area rides, usually full-day or multi-day events, of interest to our members, but not sponsored by BCP. Most of these events have an entrance fee and/or fundraising requirement, and provide amenities such as rest stops/snacks, SAG (support and gear) support on the course, and a marked route with cue sheets. Links are provided for detailed information/registration.

I’ve never been on a group ride before. What do I need to know?

First, review the Ride Guide page (under “Rides”) for explanation of the Ride Classifications (groups A, B, C, D, according to average speed/ distance/hills). This information is also in the QR.

Please be conservative in choosing your first group ride – start at a level of difficulty that is lower than what you think you can do. Even if you have a cyclometer on your bike, most people overestimate how fast they are riding on average. (Generally, A and B groups often do not stop and wait for stragglers.) You can always move up to a more difficult class on your next ride. We want you to enjoy your rides with BCP and also get to be a better rider, no matter where you start.

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- **If you are new to riding**, depending on your fitness level, we recommend our Sunny Sunday Afternoon D-level ride or Sunday C Spinoff, available most Sunday afternoons. The D-level ride adapts to the abilities of the riders and provides instruction as needed. The C Spinoff is a friendly group open to new riders, but does not provide instruction. There is a contact name on the Daily Ride Calendar listing on the website, please don't hesitate to call or email the ride leader for more information.

Also on the Ride Guide page are BCP's **Rules for Group Rides**. We take these rules seriously for the safety of all our riders.

- Helmets are required on all BCP rides.
- No earphones allowed.
- Minors must have a release waiver form signed by a parent.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early and be prepared to leave on time! The listed starting times are actual departure times.
- Follow the PA Vehicular Law – a bike is a vehicle.
- Always ride on the right.
- Use hand signals to indicate stops and turns.
- Do not call “clear” when crossing intersections – it may be clear for you, but not for others behind you.
- Each rider assumes his or her own risk on all rides.
- Those who ride ahead of the group are on their own ride.
- Always notify the ride leader when leaving the group.

Do I need to register for a ride?

No. However, we do have an optional pre-registration feature (optional for the ride leader to offer it, and optional for the participant to use it). All you need to do is enter your emergency contact information and the cell phone you will have on you during the ride. After you've done that once, it only takes one click to be pre-registered. We do encourage you to pre-register, as it will:

- Save time at the start – all you need to do is sign in.
- Help the ride leader gauge how many people are coming.
- Provide legible names and contact information should someone need to be notified.

Can I bring a friend who's not a member?

Sure! You don't need to be a member to ride with us. We do encourage riders who ride with us on a regular basis to support the club by becoming members.

What should I bring on a group ride?



RIDES

Be sure your bike is in good condition and your tires are inflated within the recommended range on the sidewall of the tires. You should pump your tires before *every* ride. The unexpected can always happen, of course. While our ride leaders are not bike mechanics, many of them, or others on the ride, often have experience fixing common problems.

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In addition to a cheerful outlook and sense of adventure, always bring along:

- Water or a sports drink
- A spare tube, flat kit, and frame-mounted pump or CO₂ canister
- A snack, especially if the ride does not have a food stop (even if you think you will not need to eat, on occasion you may find yourself needing an energy boost)
- Money (especially if there is a food stop, but also for emergencies)
- Your cell phone (for emergencies, not to talk to your friends during the ride)
- Identification, including emergency contact (not someone who is riding with you)

What's the difference between BCP and the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia?

Founded in 1979, **The Bicycle Club of Philadelphia** ("BCP") is a recreational biking group which offers a wide variety of rides throughout the Greater Delaware Valley for cyclists of all abilities and interests.

Founded in 1972, **The Bicycle Coalition** (BCGP) is a non-profit, member-supported advocacy group, dedicated to promoting the bicycle for everyday transportation and to protecting and extending the opportunities for all cyclists to ride with safety and dignity throughout the region. BCGP serves the Pennsylvania counties of Montgomery, Delaware, Chester, Bucks and Philadelphia as well as South Jersey and the state of Delaware.

How do I get onto the "Member Access" section of the website?



The email or letter you received when you joined the club contained a username (your email address if you have one) and password. Click on the "Log In" link at the very top right corner of the website home page, or choose "log in now" under "Member Access". The first time you log in, you will need to reset your password to something you will remember. You can set up a profile with your contact information, add some comments about why you joined the club, why you love cycling, etc. You can also choose whether this information is made available to other members on the Member Directory. For more information on this process, look for the box called "Web Site information" on the bottom left side of the website's home page.

What is the BCP Email List? How do I get on it?



BCP has an e-mail list, "TheList", where you can exchange experiences and information about rides, bikes, and other cycling related matters. Over 800 BCP members and non-members are subscribed, and can send and receive messages on the list. The list is open to members and non-members, and the posts on the list represent the opinions of the individual subscriber and do not represent the official policy or opinion of BCP. Look on the website under "More" and click on "E-mail List" for general information, policy and etiquette for the List.

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What else?

Get familiar with our website. Check out our photo album, view back copies of our newsletter or board minutes, look up the local bike shops that offer discounts, change your password, and so much more. Note that you must first log in to access some sections of the website.

How can I help?

There are many opportunities to volunteer! It's a great way to meet more people and to give back to the club. We all appreciate when an event is well-organized and successfully executed – and it takes people to make it happen! Read your QR, read the front page of the website, ask the board members how you can help. Many of the events listed will include information on how to volunteer.

Here are just some of the ways you can help the club:

- Promote the club to your friends
- Lead rides (or if on a ride, volunteer to help the ride leader by staying at the back to ensure nobody gets dropped)
- Staff the BCP booth at an Expo event
- Join a planning committee for one of the club's events; such as the Awards Banquet or the Scenic Schuylkill Century
- Volunteer to be a member of or resource to one of our committees; such as technology, advocacy or design
- Write an article for the Quick Release
- Help mail newsletters (see "Newsletter Mailing" near the bottom of the middle column on the website home page)
- Become a Board member

If I have questions, whom do I contact?

You can always contact any BCP board member, ride leader or coordinator. We are all happy to help. Board member contact information is the QR and on the website (member access > board member), riders leaders in the ride description and coordinators in the QR.