



Code of Conduct

1. Be Prepared

Know your equipment, your ability, the weather, and the area you are riding and prepare accordingly. A well-planned ride will go smoothly for you and your companions.

2. Don't Ride On Closed Trails

Whether it is to protect the environment or for rider safety, a closed trail is off limits for a reason. Riding closed trails is not only illegal; it gives mountain bikers a bad reputation.

3. Say No to Mud

Riding a muddy trail can cause unnecessary trail widening and erosion that may lead to long-lasting damage. Riding when the trail is muddy can cause tremendous damage. Find trails in your town that are durable, drain well, and ride these when it is wet. Volunteer to help your local club build tougher trails that withstand rain.

4. Respect the Trail, Wildlife, and Environment

Be sensitive to the trail and its surroundings by riding softly and never skidding. Do not litter and never scare animals. It is all about respect.

5. Stay on the Trail and Ride Softly

Do not intentionally ride off trail. Riding off trail can damage the ecosystem. Never cut switchbacks. Make it a game to stay directly in the center of the trail at all times. Take corners carefully to avoid blowing off line. Stay off trailside plants. Ride over rocks, logs and waterbars instead of around them. Dirt holds a special place in the heart of mountain bikers, so be kind to it. Do not skid; adjust your braking to the soil and terrain. Float over the trail. Ride like a ghost, not a bag of anvils. Pass through unnoticed and silently.

6. Ride Slowly On Crowded Trails

Do not ride fast on busy trails, you must move slowly to ensure safety for all trail users. Ride busy trails during off-peak times.

7. Pass with Courtesy and Care

Slow down when approaching other trail users and respectfully make others aware you are approaching. Pass with care and be prepared to stop if necessary.

8. Share the Trail with Other Trail Users

Mountain bikers, hikers and equestrians must share multi-use trails. Remember: mountain bikers should yield to hikers and equestrians. It is all about respect. Treat the trail like the valuable treasure that it is. Same goes for other trail users - respect them and they will return the favor.

9. Don't Do Unauthorized Trail work

Unauthorized or illegal trail work may lead to environmental damage, injury or even potential trail closure.

10. Be quiet!

Learn how to adjust your brakes so they do not squeal. Do something about that rattling seat pack full of

wrenches and chain links. Deaden chain slap with a chain stay protector. Do not hoot and holler. Exception: Get a bell and use it, but not right in a hiker's ear. Ring it once at 50 feet and then do not touch it - instead use your mouth to say hello

10. Get Involved

If you want to make a difference in your mountain biking community get involved with a local club. www.rocketmtb.ca for more information

11. Good etiquette extends to the trailhead.

Keep that thumping car stereo turned down, and resist the urge to imitate the Duke boys slinging gravel as you peel out in your quest for post-ride pizza and brews.

Communication is Key

Some mountain bikers have mastered technical riding. They are able to negotiate the hairiest sections with grace and style. Other riders are masters of the downhill - launching over rocks and drops without fear. Climbing specialists can stomp their way to the top of a hill with half the effort it takes the rest of us. But more important that strong climbing, technical or downhill skill is mastering the art of the pass - being able to deftly move among hikers and equestrians with the ease of a politician, the grace of a dancer and the good will of an ambassador.

If every rider exercised proper passing etiquette, mountain bikers would be welcomed almost everywhere. Land managers would not bristle at the thought of opening trails to bicyclists. Hikers and equestrians would keep an open seat at the trail planning tables - inviting our participation.

The old cliché is true: you never get a second chance to make a first impression - on hikers, horseback riders, trail runners or other mountain bikers. Chances are, trail users with the strongest anti-mountain biking mentalities were probably incited by unpleasant interactions with inconsiderate mountain bikers.

Even after 25 years, mountain biking is still perceived as one of the newest sports on the trail. It is important that we work to counter the negative and false image that mountain bikers are out-of-control and insensitive. The trick is to find a balance between respecting other trail users and enjoying our off-road riding experience.

The elements of a perfectly executed pass include slowing down, being prepared to yield the trail, communicating a plan and passing safely.

Every time we pass another trail user, we have the power to make it a positive experience. It is the single greatest thing we can do for the future access of our sport.

Respect remains important.

BE NICE TO THE PEOPLE YOU MEET ON THE TRAIL.

Rocket Mountain Biking Club endorses this Code of Conduct. Every member will get a copy of this Code of Conduct for his or her records.

Bill Fenton
President
Rocket Mountain Biking Club
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