

How to Create and Run a Bicycle Club

Starting and running a bicycle club offers numerous benefits, from building a strong community to promoting health and exploring new adventures. It's a rewarding endeavor that enriches the lives of its members and the broader cycling community.

5 Pretty Good Reasons ~



Build a Community: Starting a bicycle club brings together individuals with a shared passion for cycling. It creates a sense of belonging and fosters connections among members who might not have met otherwise. The camaraderie and friendships formed within the club can be lasting and meaningful.

Promote a Healthy Lifestyle: Cycling is an excellent way to stay active and healthy. By organizing regular rides and events, a bicycle club encourages members to prioritize their physical well-being. The support and motivation from fellow club members can also help individuals stay committed to their fitness goals.

Explore New Routes and Destinations: Being part of a bicycle club opens up opportunities to discover new cycling routes and destinations. Club members can share their favorite trails and explore new areas together, making each ride an adventure. Group rides often lead to discovering hidden gems that solo cyclists might miss.



Enhance Cycling Skills and Knowledge: A bicycle club provides a platform for members to learn from each other. Whether it's tips on bike maintenance, improving riding techniques, or navigating challenging terrains, the collective knowledge within the club can help everyone become better cyclists. Experienced riders can mentor beginners, creating a supportive learning environment.

Organize Events and Races: Running a bicycle club allows you to organize a variety of cycling events, from casual group rides to competitive races. These events can attract new members, raise the club's profile, and provide exciting challenges for participants. Organizing events also fosters teamwork and collaboration among club members as they work together to ensure everything runs smoothly.



Here are some basic and important guidelines for starting a bike club

Get a strong president and hand-pick your board, there is a lot of work to do and it takes varied skills. Do the "early" work in the winter, like February. Have your big annual membership party/drive. Get people thinking about riding, get them to sign up early so you can bring some numbers to sponsorship targets. It takes a while to order the kits and you need the sponsor logos to design the kits, so membership and sponsorship are early efforts.

Membership Structure:

You could do either annual memberships that include "X", or you can do a lifetime membership that would be easy to sell but depend on sponsors for the budget.

An example of membership levels:

Race: \$250/year, including bib shorts, a race-cut jersey, USA Cycling licensing, and discounted race entry fees.

Recreation: \$125/year? Include shorts, club fit jersey, tailored for casual riders and enthusiasts.

Lifetime: \$50

Leadership Roles:

- **President:** The face of the club, responsible for networking, promoting initiatives, and representing the club at events.
- **Secretary:** Manages club insurance, licensing, and waivers.
- **Events Coordinator:** Organizes seasonal events like signup parties, themed rides, plus the weekly gravel grinders, road and mtb. rides.
- **Membership Coordinator:** Focuses on member acquisition and retention, organizing annual signup events and community-building activities. Handles all membership questions.
- **Kit Manager:** Handles club merchandise, from jerseys to accessories, and manages vendor relationships. Arranges pickups and deliveries.
- **Marketing:** Promotes the club through local partnerships, sponsorships, and online platforms (Facebook, Strava, Instagram).
- **Sponsorship Coordinator:** Secures financial support from sponsors, manages sponsorship tiers, and ensures sponsor visibility.
- **Tech Support:** Manages club website, social media accounts, and event photography.

Challenges and Solutions:

Getting members to show up for rides and events, especially if it doesn't involve drinking. People get intimidated and think that every ride is going to be full gas, or the ride will be too slow and social. In a perfect world, I'd have a roadie group, a mtb group, a gravel group and a cyclocross group with ride leaders for each. There would be plenty of crossover most likely.

Organizing group rides can be challenging due to varying skill levels and preferences. Having reliable ride leaders for different types of rides (gravel, road, mtb) helps cater to diverse member interests and maintain club cohesion. Dedicate ride leaders to either road, gravel, cyclocross or mtb to build ownership.

Here are some additional aspects you might want to consider:

Safety and Regulations: Implementing and communicating safety guidelines for group rides, including traffic rules, helmet requirements, and communication protocols.

1. **Legal Considerations:** Ensuring the club is compliant with local laws, liability insurance coverage, and waivers for participants.
2. **Community Engagement:** Hosting community outreach events, charity rides, or cycling advocacy efforts to enhance the club's visibility and impact.
3. **Training and Education:** Offering workshops or sessions on bike maintenance, riding techniques, and safety practices to empower members.
4. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Promoting a welcoming environment for cyclists of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities.
5. **Environmental Responsibility:** Encouraging eco-friendly practices such as promoting bike commuting, organizing trail maintenance days, or participating in clean-up initiatives.
6. **Long-term Sustainability:** Developing a strategic plan for club growth, financial stability, and succession planning for board members and key roles.
7. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establishing channels for member feedback and continuous improvement, such as surveys or regular meetings.
8. **Technology Integration:** Utilizing apps or software for ride tracking, member communication, event planning, and social engagement.
9. **Social Activities:** Organizing social gatherings, group meals, or non-riding events to foster camaraderie among members.

Conclusion: Building a successful bike club involves creating a strong board, actively promoting the club, and ensuring diverse ride offerings. It's about fostering a community of cyclists passionate about riding together.

This document is brought to you by **TheGravelRiders**, which is brought to you by **Grooveback Unltd**.

