

AMBA RIDE LEADER MANUAL



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RIDE LEADER RESOURCES

Documents Available on AMBA Riders Leader Facebook Group:

FOR THE TRAILHEAD

AMBA Ride Waiver / Sign-In Sheet

Pre and Post Ride Briefing Card (back page of Sign-In Sheet)

AMBA Ride Leader Manual (this document)

Welcome Group Ride Leaders Initial Introduction

Group Ride Leader Contact List

Accident Report Information Gathering (inside Ride Leader Manual)

AMBA/IMBA Membership Form

Accident Report Information Gathering (inside Ride Leader Manual)

AMBA/IMBA Membership Form

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AMBA MISSION

AMBA is a non-profit association whose mission is to create, enhance and preserve great trail experiences for mountain bikers in the Greater Albuquerque, NM Area, and to create a bicycle friendly community through cycling awareness, safety, advocacy and promotion of bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation. AMBA seeks to preserve, protect, and promote mountain bike access and diverse riding opportunities on NM's public and private lands through education, communication, and unified action.

AMBA Resources

www.ambanm.org – AMBA Website, links to join AMBA-IMBA

www.meetup.com/AMBANM – RSVP for rides/events

www.facebook.com/AMBANM – Community News / Trail Conditions

<https://ambanm.wildapricot.org/> -- AMBA (not IMBA) membership information

WHAT IS AN AMBA RIDE LEADER

AMBA Ride Leader: A person who oversees an AMBA social ride and facilitates getting more people on their bikes. As a ride leader you don't have to be fast and you don't have to be at the front of the group. You are responsible for being the guide of the group. This includes planning the route, arriving at the ride to greet the riders, ensuring that waivers are signed, and making judgment calls such as whether or not to cancel the ride due to weather. We are there for the slowest rider. Once the ride begins, you can use your best judgment to decide if you should ride at the back or lead others through new trail experiences. **You must be an AMBA member to guide a ride.**

Ride Leader Reimbursement Program: AMBA realizes that not all potential ride leaders want to join a club in order to lead rides and share their love of mountain biking. The Reimbursement Program provides these individuals a path to become a ride leader with minimal financial outlay. Ride leaders wishing to enter this program must tell the Meetup Group Coordinator. They will then join AMBA/IMBA. Upon leading four rides, AMBA will reimburse their full membership fee.

Ride Leader Minimum Requirements

- Be a club member
- Lead or sweep 4 rides per year (annual)

AMBA Liability Insurance

All AMBA ride leaders are covered with general liability insurance under the AMBA insurance plan. **Participants do not need to be an AMBA Member to be covered by this insurance.**

LEADING AN AMBA RIDE

General Responsibilities

When leading a ride you are a representative of AMBA's mission and values. You are expected to communicate the mission of AMBA as well as promote AMBA's positive accomplishments. Encourage people to join the Chapter. Be friendly and inclusive of all riders in your group.

Your primary concern is the safety of the group. Although you cannot guarantee a rider's safety, you can avoid many problems through good preparation, with your goal being to avoid all accidents. Basic First Aid training, while

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not required, is recommended. Encourage riders, especially those unfamiliar with the trail, to keep their speed within their comfort level. Social rides are not races and the goal is zero accidents.

Every ride presents a unique situation, and it is therefore impossible to anticipate every combination of variables a ride guide may encounter. Try to anticipate everything you might need and everything that could potentially go wrong.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR POSTING/LEADING RIDES:

- Make your ride your ride. This helps with commitment levels, knowledge of trails, and in case no one shows up (happens occasionally) you can just do your ride.
- Have 8 people or less per one group ride leader. If you want a larger group, invite other group ride leaders to join you. This suggestion comes from experience; as you will have varying levels of riders join you. It is hard to lead larger groups with varying skill levels and for everyone to have fun.
- It's OK to lead from behind.
- Describe your ride well in your Meetup description. Words like "fast-paced", "easy-going" "sheer drop-offs and big exposure" help to give riders an idea of what they have signed up for.
- Try and plan a social afterwards. This is not a competitive club, people enjoy meeting at bars, restaurants, picnics, and BBQ's to find new MTB partners and friends.
- Be outdoors savvy. Don't get lost. Be aware of the weather and don't ride in the mud or lightning storms. It is okay to cancel a ride based on these conditions.

POSTING AND PREPARING FOR A RIDE

Sign up to lead a ride

Use the AMBA Ride Leaders Facebook Group and www.Meetup.com/AMBANM to coordinate and sign up to lead or sweep a minimum of 4 rides each year.

A week or so before the ride:

Trails:

- Know the trail you've chosen to ride i.e. you've ridden it recently.
- Be familiar with trail closures and re-routes in the area.
- Bring a trail map (consider bringing maps for all participants).
- Support trail best-use practices (see Trail Etiquette and IMBA Rules of the Trail below).
- Only take riders on legal mountain biking trails.

Meetup:

- Post the ride, with all pertinent information, on Meetup using the template.
- Rate the ride correctly using the AMBA rating system (<http://files.meetup.com/18646701/AMBA-Ride-Ratings.pdf>). If you're unsure how to rate a ride, ask one of the other ride leaders. Watch out for grade inflation, because this can cause unrealistic expectations of more beginner riders thinking they can join more difficult group rides!
- Post a meetup time and departure time for the ride e.g. Meet @ 6, Ride leaves @ 6:15.
- Check all the information on Meetup for accuracy.
- Check the sign-up sheet to make sure you have a Sweep (not required). If not email out to the ride guide list.

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- Every 1-2 days, check the comment section at the bottom of the event (ride announcement on the calendar), since people use this to coordinate carpools and ask questions. Make sure to reply.
- Pick the post-ride meeting location (this can be done in advance or at the last minute).

Pre-ride preparation:

- Print out AMBA Waiver / Sign-in Sheets to take with you to the ride (get a clipboard).
- Carry multi tool, tube(s), pump, small first aid kit, cell phone.
- Optional items: Spare chain links, connectors & quick links, patch kit, duct tape.
- It's a good idea to bring a floor pump, and offer its use to everyone before the ride.

To cancel a ride:

Post weather cancellations on the www.meetup.com/AMBANM website on the day of any rained out ride as early as possible.

1. Change the title of the ride to "CANCELED: <rest of the title>".
2. Use the email feature on Meetup to send all participants who have RSVP'd a cancellation notice.
3. Monitor the meetup chat and make answer any questions that arise.

No-shows:

Please remind people to update RSVP's. No-shows keep people on the wait list from going on rides. Please text the Meetup coordinator if someone is a no-show (that means they did not update their RSVP and did not show). The coordinator will remove them from the next ride they sign up for, and notify them via messages on Meetup why they were removed.

ON THE DAY OF A RIDE

Before you arrive:

- Gather waivers/sign-in sheet and pens.
- Check rider list and sweeps.
- Check the weather and if applicable know what time the sun sets.

At the trailhead:

- Show up ahead of time and be prepared.
- Introduce yourself as ride leader to each person and try to learn each rider's name.
- Make sure participants sign in and encourage riders to sign the online waiver (<https://waiver.fr/p-ytHno>).
- Double check that your riders have all the items listed below under **AMBA Rider Guidelines**.
- Get the cell # for your group's Lead/Sweep.
- Discuss ride plan with Lead/Sweep including: route, turnaround time, stopping locations.
- Put the Sign-In Sheet (with emergency contact info) and a pen (in case you need to fill out Accident Report Form) in your pack.

Give a pre-ride talk:

- The goal is to get through this in 2 minutes or less and get riding!
- Introduce yourself to the group.

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- Introduce the Leads/Sweeps.
- Share the AMBA Mission /AMBA accomplishments and community service.
- Give a brief description of the trail / route, and let riders know how often you plan to regroup, i.e. every trail intersection.
- Briefly review the importance of demonstrating good trail etiquette in a big group.
- Remind riders to let you know if there are any special medical needs the ride guides should be aware of (EpiPen, Inhaler, etc.).
- TAKE A HEAD COUNT OF YOUR RIDERS.
- Make sure to start the ride on time or as close to it as possible. Let late comers catch up.

Sweeper:

- Get the cell # for your group's ride leader.
- Carry multi tool, tube(s), pump, small first aid kit, cell phone, trail map (at minimum).
- Always stay behind the last person.
- *As a sweep, you may be the first person to attend to accidents and mechanicals, so be sure to have adequate expertise and initiative to deal with those situations, and to formulate a sensible evacuation plan in case of emergency.*

AMBA Rider Guidelines (for your reference - this is on the AMBA website and meetup site):

- *All riders MUST wear a helmet.*
- *Bring water and a trail-ready bike.*
- *Riders should also carry basic tools:*
 - *a spare tube in the correct tire size*
 - *a pump*
 - *tire levers*
 - *a chain tool and basic Allen wrenches*
 - *Snacks are recommended.*
- *Riders must sign a liability waiver.*
- *All riders ride at their own risk. Ride guides take no responsibility for rider safety/injury.*

STOPPING DURING A RIDE

When & where to stop

- Stop at every trail or road intersection! Wait for everyone in the group (unless another plan was agreed upon previously with the lead/sweep) before restarting.
- Stop where riders can easily pull off to the side of the trail, where it is safe to re-enter the trail, where the group is visible to other riders, and where the group won't be obstructing the trail.
- If it's a beginner level ride, stop before technical or difficult obstacles or terrain.
- Stop at regular intervals along the ride to prevent riders from spreading too far apart.
- *If the group is of similar ability and people want to keep rolling, stop less often - but always at intersections.*

During each stop

- **Take a head count.**
- Observe riders for exhaustion, hunger/thirst or other problems.
- If appropriate, describe the next section of the trail.

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- Take pictures to post on the Meetup site!

AFTER THE RIDE

- Make sure all riders return - take a head count.
- Thank everyone for coming.
- Tell the riders about upcoming trail building events, rides, other events & parties, etc.
- Proceed to after ride snacks or dinner.
- Email a photo of the sign-up sheet to: waiver@ambanm.org
- Record any accidents or incidents during the ride.
- Email the Meetup Group coordinator, membership@ambanm.org, a copy of your waiver / sign-up sheet.

TYPES OF AMBA SOCIAL RIDES

RIDE	LEVEL	OTHER	DAY	TIME
Lights On Tuesday	B	Co-Ed	1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays	6:00 - 7:30 p
Lights on Tuesday	C	Co-Ed	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday	6:00 - 7:30 p
Mix & Mingle Saturday	B / C / D	Co-Ed	Saturday	TBD
Six Pack Sunday	A / B / C	Co-Ed	Saturday or Sunday	TBD
Just Us Gals	A / B / C	Women	Thursdays	TBD
Shredd'n Sunday	B/C	Co-Ed	Sundays	TBD
	All Levels			

- Go Ride: a single event lead by you
- Series Ride: e.g. every Wednesday evening @ 6pm for four weeks
- Social event: Multiple rides lead by multiple ride leaders where we all meet afterwards at a predetermined meeting spot to socialize
- Just Us Gals: an all women ride

Special Occasion Ride Events:

- Albuquerque Mountain Bike Festival
- National Trails Day
- Holiday Rides – i.e. Turkey Day
- IMBA TKMBD – Kids Ride

SAFETY PROTOCOL

Emergency Action Planning

First Aid training is outside the scope of this ride guide training. The following advice on responding to an accident/wildlife is not comprehensive, and IS NOT INTENDED to replace your own Wilderness & First Aid training,

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certification and experience. It is of a GENERAL nature, and is intended as a rough guideline only.

The Albuquerque Mountain Bike Association recommends, but does not require, that each ride guide is certified in First Aid. Regardless of your training and preparation, accidents do happen. You need sufficient maturity and composure to deal with accident situations.

Accident or incident: NO injury

- If there is an accident or incident without injury, make sure you assist the rider in doing a complete inspection of their bike before they start to ride again. Are the brakes working? Wheels true? Handlebars straight?
- Suggest that the rider take a few minutes to “regroup” before starting the ride again.
- If you have pulled out your first aid kit, even only for a minor injury, make sure you complete a comprehensive Accident Report Form.
- If no first aid treatment was required and the rider has resumed riding, **inquire after a short period to see if they are still feeling well.** You need to be careful about hidden injuries that potentially worsen with time. Keep monitoring their progress, and if in doubt about the need to complete an *Accident Report Form* (see below), err on the side of caution.

Accident or incident: INJURY

If you are the first ride leader to reach an injured person, your first task is to ensure the safety of yourself, the group, and the area around the injured person. Then the person most qualified in first aid will:

- Assess the scene, secure the scene & remove dangers. If necessary delegate other riders to secure the trail from other bikes
- Assess the mechanism of injury. Ask what happened. Are other riders injured?
- Call 911 if necessary.
- Keep at least one person, preferably a ride leader, with the injured rider at all times.
- Implement emergency action plan to get help.
- Organize the group.

If the injury is minor you must make a reasoned assessment as to whether the rider should continue. If they should not continue, implement a plan to assist them and their bike down the trail. If injuries are minor and they continue, keep monitoring them for shock and hidden injuries that may put them at further risk later on.

No matter how big or small the injury, be aware that the injured person and other group members may be upset and in need of reassurance. Maintain your composure and show compassion, but remember to always maintain absolute alertness - this way you have more control of the group, and you can minimize any extra danger or potential for further injury. Once the situation is under control, and the group resumes riding, take it slowly and stop after a short distance to check that everyone is ok.

Calling 911:

- **When in doubt ALWAYS call 911** - *The rider has the right to refuse to use this service. Even if the paramedics assess the injured, there is no charge if the rider does not get in the ambulance.*

Accident Report Form

Always keep in mind that you will be required to record all details of the accident and treatment. While on the trail treating an injured person you must fill in the *Accident Report Form* including the following:

- Date

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- Time
- Trail
- A diagram of the injury site with details of bike and body position
- Names of all ride guides present
- Names of all riders/witnesses to the accident and treatment
- A summary of the status of the injured
- ***Noted recommendation that the injured person be checked over by a physician***
- ***Signature by injured person that you made this recommendation***

Follow up:

When the injured person does not go to the hospital:

- Recommend that they be checked over by a physician immediately after the ride or as soon as possible. Have the rider sign the *Accident Report Form* to acknowledge your recommendation.
- Best practice: Make a follow up phone call to the injured person to wish them well and check that no new injuries or conditions have presented themselves. If there are any new developments note these in the *Accident Report Form*.

If the injured person is evacuated / taken to the hospital:

- Notify their emergency contact person immediately. This is on your sign in sheet.
- The helmet always goes with injured person in cases of emergency situation.
- Make arrangements to transport their bike and personal items.
- Fill out an *Accident Report Form*.

Work with the other ride leaders to make sure all details are recorded accurately. Submit accident report form to the Ride Leader Coordinator (Dave Harding: climrbikr@gmail.com) and waiver@ambanm.org

Discussing the accident

From the time of the accident, use extreme caution when discussing the accident. Do not communicate with outside parties about details of the accident. An authorized representative of the AMBA should deal with this.

ON THE TRAILS

Trail Etiquette & IMBA Rules of the Trail

1. Good trail etiquette starts before you arrive at the trail. Please carpool whenever possible, or ride to the trailhead.
2. Treat everyone you meet on the trail like you'd treat a friend. Everyone is there to have a good time and being nice solves a lot of problems before they happen.
3. **Yield. Yield. Yield. To pedestrians and equestrians. All the time.** See "Yielding" below for a short and sweet definition of what it means to yield to different people.
4. Stay on the trail. Riding outside the tread, to ride abreast or to avoid rocks or mud, breaks down the trail edge and widens the trail. Muddy stretches and snow banks should be crossed, rather than skirted. The trails are too wide already.
5. Ride on trails that we're allowed to ride. Familiarize yourself with area trail closures.
6. Stay in control. Don't ride beyond your limits. When riding in a large group, be considerate of other users.
7. Respect animals' needs for undisturbed territory. After all, the backcountry is their home. When taking a photograph or a closer look, stay downwind, avoid sudden movement and never chase or charge any

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animal. Give the wildlife plenty of space, for their safety and yours.

8. Don't collect, damage or remove any public property, including wildflowers, rocks & wildlife.
9. Carry all trash out in your pack. Bury any human waste. Leave no trace.

Yielding 101

First thing's first. "Yield" means that one party is allowing another party to go on without hindrance if they so desire. What this really means is "be cool" to other people. Imagine that your mom is the other person on the trail (or maybe George Clooney or the Swedish Bikini Team or whomever you like). Be friendly and let people know that mountain bikers are friendly folks who know how to play well with others.

- **Always yield to Equestrians:** Bikers often scare horses. We are less familiar to them than hikers, so use caution. We recommend that as you approach an equestrian you call out a friendly greeting from far away. Start slowing down before you think you need to. You want to start talking from about 50-75 ft away if you can. Horses spook easily, **so stop and ask the person on the horse how they would like you to get by.** Would they like you to get off and walk (this is great for horses that are really skittish), wait and let them pass, or should you pass slowly at the next safe spot?
- **Always yield to Hikers:** Hikers have the right of way, so yelling "On your left!" probably isn't the best strategy. Always Stop and let them pass. Most of the time, people are cool. Yes, some people are jerks. Some hikers are jerks. Some bikers are jerks. The thing is that two jerks don't make for a nice person. Two jerks make for a fight. Go home feeling like Gandhi and we'll all be the better for it.
- **Yielding to other Bikes:** Uphill traffic gets the right of way. If you're riding down a hill, stop and let them by. Yes, we all have had many a buzz killed having to stop for uphill traffic. It happens, but it's much worse losing all momentum on a killer grind up the hill.

WEATHER

Thunder and Lightning http://nols.blogs.com/nols_news/2012/08/lightning-safety-in-the-backcountry.html

There is NO safe place outside in a thunderstorm. If you can, get inside the nearest car or building. If you absolutely can't get to safety, this section may help you slightly lessen the threat of being struck by lightning.

- Know the weather patterns of the area you plan to visit. For example, in mountainous areas, thunderstorms typically develop in the early afternoon, so plan to ride early in the day and be down the mountain by noon.
- Listen to the weather forecast for the outdoor area you plan to visit. The forecast may be very different from the one near your home. If there is a high chance of thunderstorms, cancel the ride.

If you are caught in the open and lightning is nearby, these actions may slightly reduce your risk of being struck by lightning:

- Avoid open fields, the top of a hill or a ridge top. Move to a lower altitude if possible.
- Stay away from isolated trees or other tall objects. If you are in a forest, stay near a lower stand of trees.
- Stay away from water, wet items (such as ropes) and metal objects (such as fences and poles). Water and metal are excellent conductors of electricity. The current from a lightning flash will easily travel for long distances.
- Disperse your group spaced several body lengths apart (~20 feet) to reduce the chances of multiple injuries. Assume the "lightening position" (see next bullet point).

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- Lightning Position: The safest position to be in is crouched down on the balls of your feet. Keep your hands over your ears and do not allow other parts of your body to touch the ground. **Keep your feet as close to one another as possible.**

WILDLIFE

Rattlesnakes http://nols.blogs.com/nols_news/2011/07/snake-envenomations-in-north-america.html

In the event of a Rattlesnake bite

- Retreat out of the striking range of the snake.
- **Act swiftly** - The most important aspect of treatment is to get the victim to an appropriate medical facility as quickly as possible.
- If possible, **splint the bitten body part** to avoid unnecessary motion, making sure to remove any rings or constricting items and clothing as the affected area may swell.
- **Evacuate ASAP** by calling emergency responders or hiking calmly to the nearest car.
- **Watch for signs of shock:** (sweating, clammy skin, or shallow breathing), since the fear of having been bitten is often more dangerous than the bite.

Things NOT to do:

- Don't panic - Keep the snake bite victim calm, still and quiet. Restrict movement, and keep the affected area at or below heart level to reduce the flow of venom.
- Don't apply a tourniquet - Concentrated venom will rapidly destroy cells. Allowing it to spread will dilute the toxin and reduce tissue damage.
- Don't apply ice directly to the wound or immerse the part in ice water: Cold reduces healthy circulation to the infected area.
- Don't apply a suction device - This was once standard procedure, but is no longer considered safe.

BLACK BEARS

Black bears are highly intelligent, with individual responses to people and situations. Bears will usually smell or hear you and leave the area long before you see them. Wild black bears seldom attack unless they feel threatened, cornered, or are provoked. Remember, most bears prefer to avoid contact with humans, and any bear you do see is probably just as frightened as you are!

To ensure a surprise or unpleasant encounter with a bear doesn't occur, avoid moving through bear habitat silently and alone. Travel in groups (the larger the better) and make lots of noise by talking or singing.

If You Surprise a Bear on a Trail

- Stand still, stay calm and let the bear identify you and leave. Talk in a normal tone of voice. Be sure the bear has an escape route.
- Never run or climb a tree.
- If you see cubs, their mother is usually close by. Leave the area immediately.

If the Bear Doesn't Leave

- A bear standing up is just trying to identify what you are by getting a better look and smell.
- Wave your arms slowly overhead and talk calmly. If the bear huffs, pops its jaws or stomps a paw, it wants you to give it space.
- Step off the trail to the downhill side, keep looking at the bear and slowly back away until the bear is out of sight.

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If the Bear Approaches

- A bear knowingly approaching a person could be a food-conditioned bear looking for a handout or, very rarely, an aggressive bear. Stand your ground. Yell or throw small rocks in the direction of the bear.
- Get out your bear spray and use it when the bear is about 40 feet away.
- If you're attacked, don't play dead. Fight back with anything available. People have successfully defended them-selves with pen knives, trekking poles, and even bare hands.

MOUNTAIN LIONS

No studies have been done to determine what to do if you meet a lion. But based on observations by people who have come upon lions, some patterns of behavior and response are beginning to emerge. With this in mind, the following suggestions may be helpful. Remember: Every situation is different with respect to the lion, the terrain, the people, and their activity.

- When you walk, hike or ride in mountain lion country, go in groups and make plenty of noise to reduce your chances of surprising a lion.
- Do not approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or with kittens. Most mountain lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them a way to escape.
- **Stay calm** when you come upon a lion. Talk calmly yet firmly to it. Move slowly.
- **Stop or back away slowly**, if you can do it safely. Running may stimulate a lion's instinct to chase and attack. Face the lion and stand upright.
- **Do all you can to appear larger**. Raise your arms. Open your jacket if you're wearing one.
- If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones, branches or whatever you can get your hands on without crouching down or turning your back. Wave your arms slowly and speak firmly. What you want to do is convince the lion you are not prey and that you may in fact be a danger to the lion.
- **Fight back** if a lion attacks you. Lions have been driven away by prey that fights back. People have fought back with rocks, sticks, caps or jackets, garden tools and their bare hands successfully.