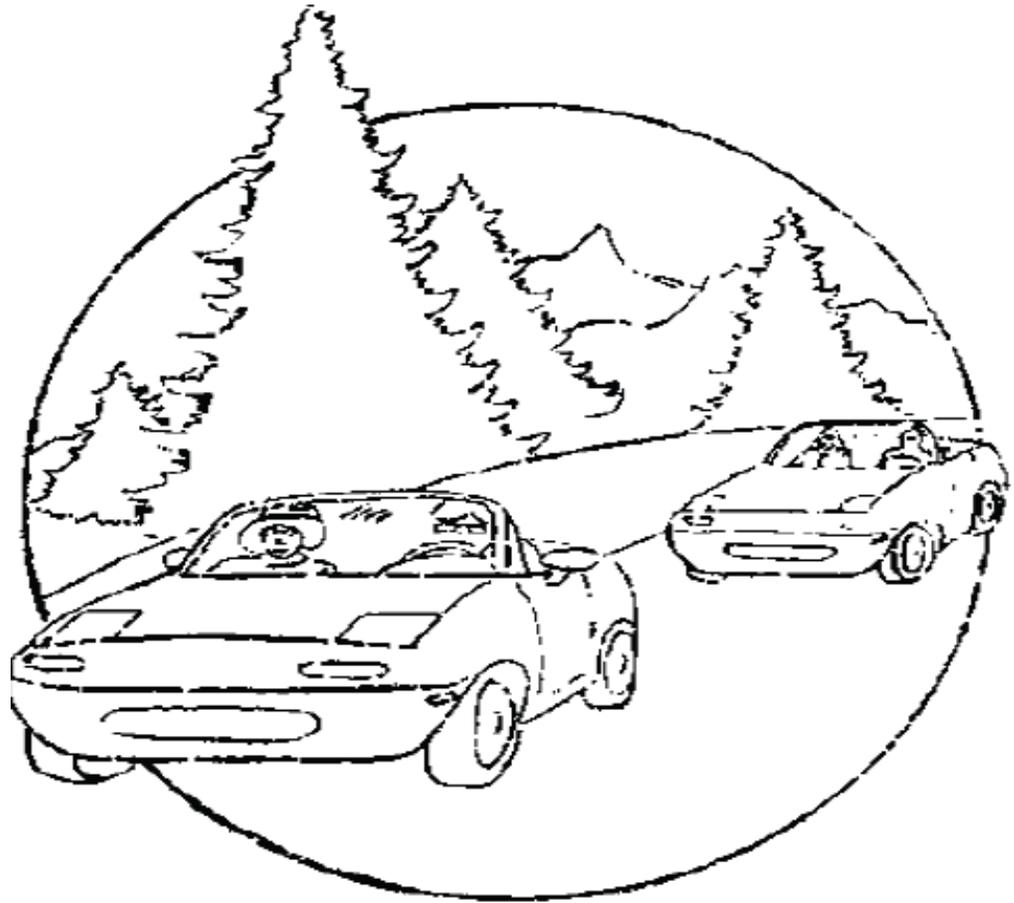




TRILLIUM MIATA CLUB Ontario, Canada



Trillium Miata Club Disclaimer:

The Trillium Miata Club assumes no liability or responsibility, neither any injury nor damage resulting from the use of the information contained herein.

Unless otherwise stated, none of the information bears the status of "Factory Approval". All ideas, opinion, maintenance or modification tips expressed are to be used solely at the reader's discretion.

Welcome to the Trillium Miata Club.

This touring etiquette booklet has been originally written by Larry Whitney, long time Trillium Miata Club member and supporter. The drawings are Larry Whitney originals. Thank you Larry – from all the happy and safe tour attendees.

Please take the time to read this booklet. It will help you enjoy a safe and orderly group driving experience with other Miata owners. Touring etiquette is simply being considerate of everyone else on the tour, watching out for their safety (as well as your own) and sharing the road with other vehicles.

Always arrive on time for a tour with:

- a full tank of gas
- fluid levels topped up
- tire pressure checked
- a working CB radio.

(The club owns a few extra CB radios. If you would like to borrow one for a tour, please let the Tour Director know in advance).

For your own comfort and general health, it is recommended that you have additional jackets, sweaters and hats in your car at all times. Sun screen, lip balm and hats with sun visors as well as good quality sun glasses to protect your eyes are advisable.

The Tour Captain will hold a brief drivers' Meeting before the tour begins. They will outline the day's events and will often provide maps with an itinerary. The club generally tries to scheduled a "pit stop" every hour and a half in order to avoid fatigue. After each pit stop, please maintain your position in the group.

If you have to leave the tour early, please inform the Tour Captain and your group leader so they won't think they've lost you in Kalamazoo.

ENJOY YOUR TRILLIUM MIATA CLUB TOUR!!



GO PLACES, GO TOURING

LWT

GENERAL RULES OF THE ROAD

Please don't forget there are laws to be obeyed when driving on any roads. As a driver, your actions directly impact your safety and the safety of other motorists. Some of these laws might be different in different locations (e.g. lights must be on when windshield wipers are going in many US States).

Here are some important tips (from OPP Staff Sergeant Ed Hickey, Hwy 407 Detachment, Highway Safety Division) to remember every time you get behind the wheel of a motor vehicle:

Pay attention to the road

Distracted drivers are a safety risk! It is illegal in Ontario for drivers to use any hand-held communications and entertainment device – not just cell phones – while operating a motor vehicle. We have seen a decrease in the number of persons using hand-held devices but are concerned about the large number of drivers who continue to engage in this dangerous activity.

Buckle up – seatbelts save lives

All Ontario drivers and passengers must wear a seatbelt in a properly adjusted and securely fastened manner – it's the law. Wearing a seatbelt properly will dramatically increase your chance of surviving a motor vehicle collision.

Obeying the speed limits

Speed continues to be the number one cause of motor vehicle fatalities in Ontario. Slowing down and obeying the posted speed limits will reduce the number of fatal crashes and serious injury collisions – are you doing your part? Speed limits also vary between highways and cities / towns.

Drinking and driving

Make a wise choice before you get behind the wheel. Don't drink and drive.

In Ontario, the legal limit is now 0.05 for a breath test. We ask everyone to refrain from consuming alcohol during breaks and lunch / dinner stops while on tour. Make a wise choice before you get behind the wheel. **Don't drink and drive.**

Traffic safety is in everyone's best interest. Help make Ontario's highways safer for all motorists. Please also be respectful of other vehicles on the road – it is a good idea to travel in smaller groups, rather than one long group. This will avoid a "convoy" which may intimidate or frustrate other vehicles.

We ARE driving sports cars. And we ARE out there to have fun in the best sports car in the world.

Feel free to visit the Trillium Miata Club website for up to date information regarding club activities: www.trilliummiata.ca

SPEEDS, SPACE AND GROUP SIZES

In the interest of safety, group size should be 5 to 7 cars. The smaller the group, the easier it is for the tour captain and leaders to keep track of everyone. There is also less "accordion effect" as is typically experienced with larger groups speeding to catch up. This will help avoid the need to slam on brakes unexpectedly.

Spacing should be no less than two seconds behind the car in front of you. To check your spacing, watch as the car ahead of you passes a sign or lamp post, then count "one steamboat, two steamboats". If you pass the sign as you say "two steamboats", you are two seconds behind the car. This is called the two second rule.

If you feel you are too close to the car ahead of you at two second of spacing, by all means back off a bit, but don't back off to the point where you are leading a second tour. Also, the more space you leave, the more likely a "four door" is going to wedge in front of you.

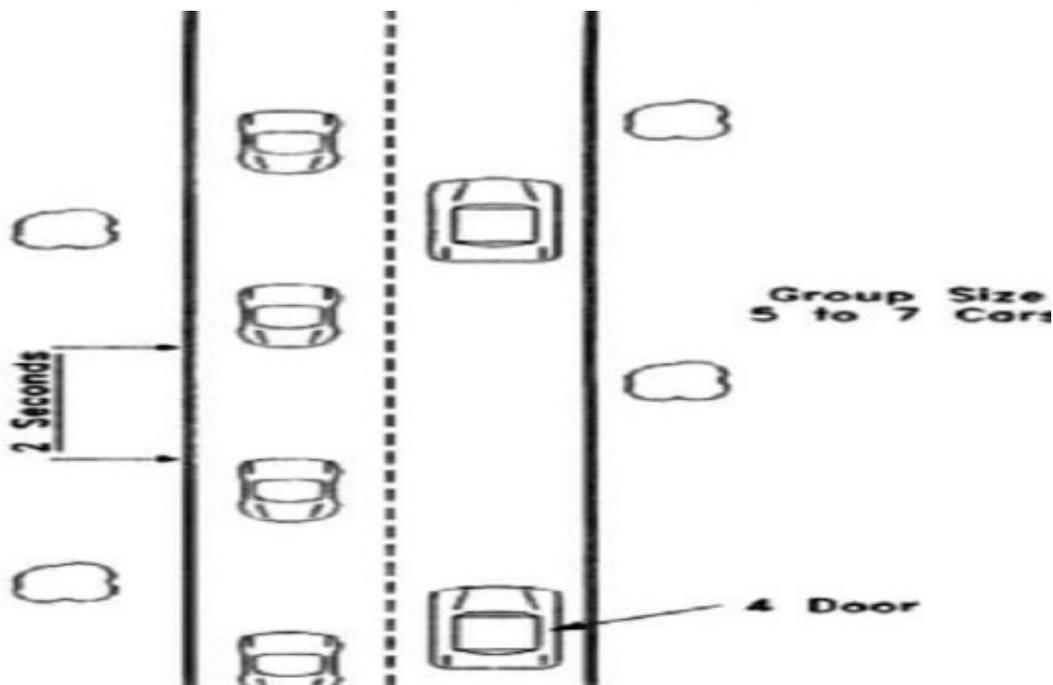
Another case where you might back away a bit more from the car in front of you is in very scenic areas so that you can relax while you take in the view. With experience, you will become more comfortable driving within a group.

Always remember, we are a car club and as car enthusiasts, we enjoy driving and our responses to road conditions and traffic situations are somewhat predictable. Speeds should always be consistent with safety. A club tour is NOT a race.

Consider the consequences if one of our cars spins out on a twisty road or we encounter a group of bicyclists while we are pushing our roadsters down narrow back roads...

A club tour is about cruising with friends, top down and seeing new places or events.

On super slabs (4 or more lanes), the safest speed is normally the flow of traffic.

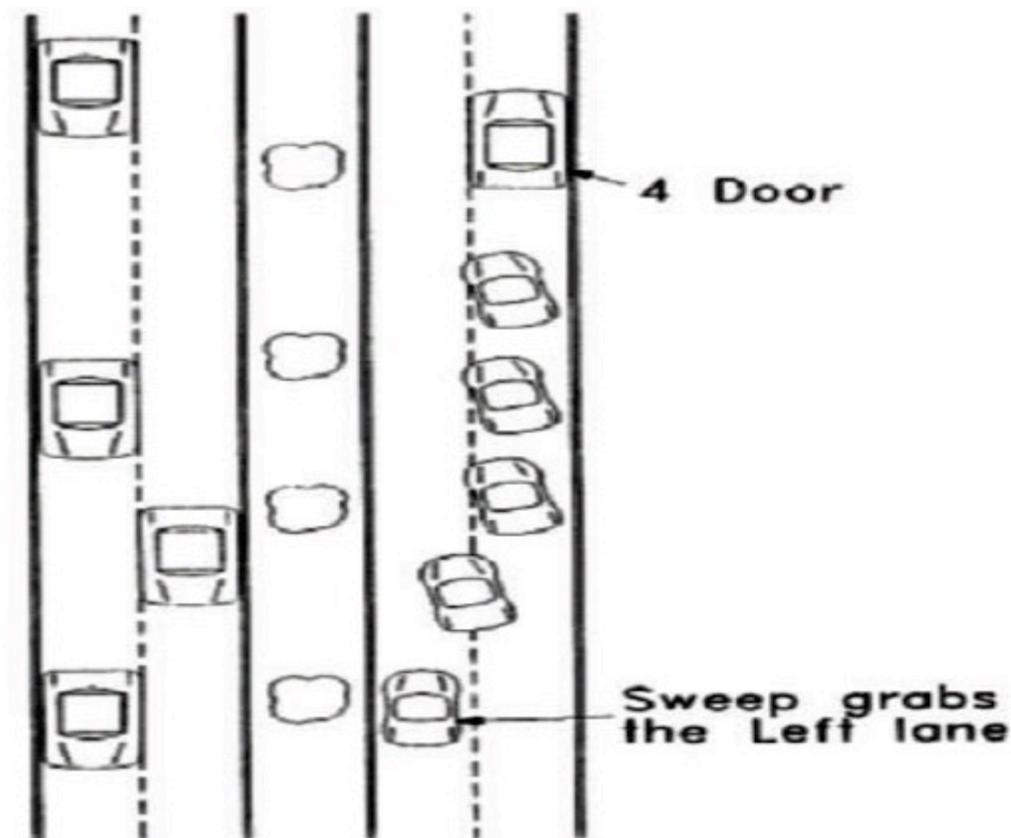


PASSING FOUR DOOR VEHICLES

The tour leader will assign someone to act as sweep at the back of each group. The sweep's responsibility is to watch out for the group from behind in case anyone has a problem. Another responsibility is to advise the tour leader when everyone has made the turn or has not been able to get through traffic lights in busy areas.

As the tour leader approaches a slower four door vehicle on a four lane highway, he / she will ask the sweep to grab the left lane. The sweep will make sure no other vehicles are approaching, then move into the left lane. Once he / she is in the left lane, they will announce "the lane is yours" over the CB. Now the rest of the group can safely pull out to pass the slower moving vehicle.

The leader will pass at a constant speed and remain in the left lane long enough to allow the group to pull back in front of the four door.

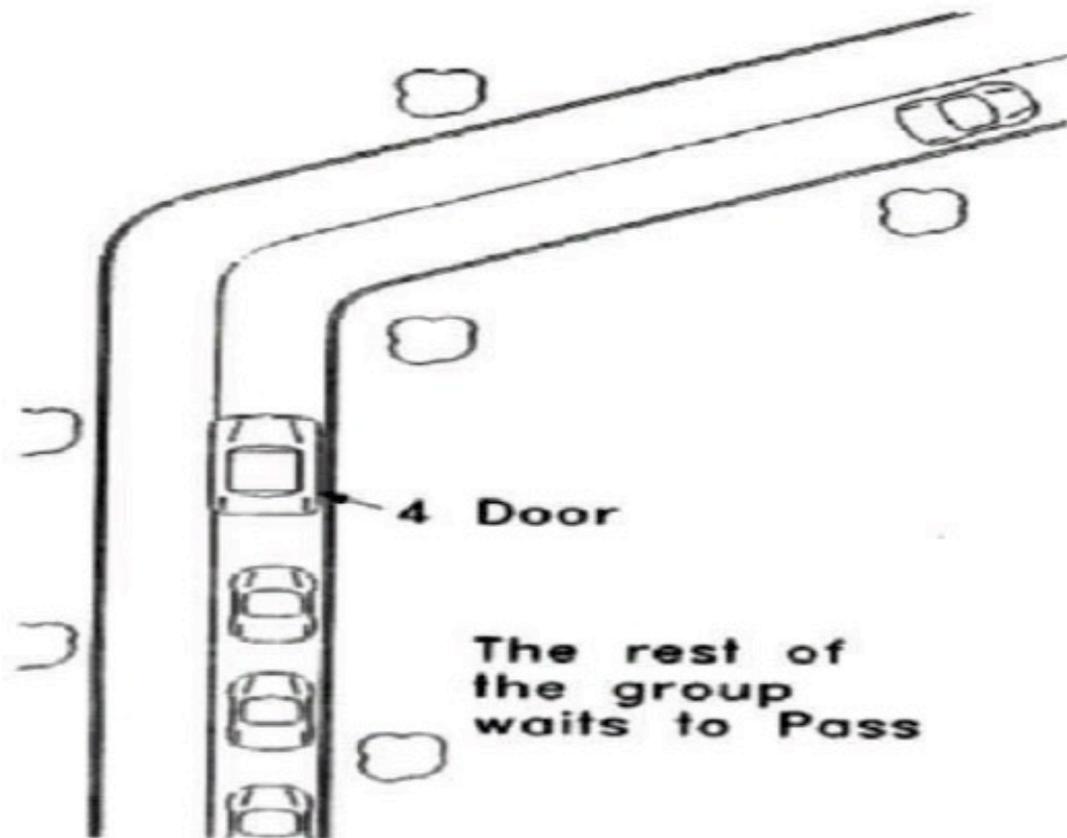


PASSING ON TWO LANE HIGHWAYS

On regular two lane highways, all the usual rules apply. Do not pass blindly on curves or hills and don't pull out to pass without a shoulder check to ensure no one is about to pass you. Even though you are part of a group, you are still vulnerable to all traffic hazards.

Never use your CB to advise group members behind you that it is safe to pass. Everyone should pass only as visible road conditions allow.

Even in remote areas, there is always the change of a logging truck or a camper coming out of nowhere. Consider the people in other vehicles - they don't know we are tied together with CB radios. They can only fear that they will end up in the middle of a head on collision as we scurry past them on the crest of a hill or around a blind curve.



PASSING TRANSPORT TRUCKS

The tour leader will not follow too closely behind a transport truck. Their tires carry 100 pounds per square inch of compressed air. If one of the tires blows, it could be treacherous for people in an open sports car. Rolling up your passenger side winder will afford some measure of protection against flying rubber.

As you pass a transport, stay well left for the same reason. By staying well left, you are out of the range of the driver's mirrors. Make sure the driver is not about to pull left to pass someone as you are passing the transport.

Look for shadows on the road ahead of the transport indicating the presence of a slower vehicle that's out of your sight.

The tour leader will continue well on past the truck before pulling back into the right lane to allow the group to get into the right lane and to leave plenty of space between the last car and the transport.

Don't pass a transport truck and then slow down - especially if he's taking a run at a hill. Also, don't pass him then stop up the road to make a turn off the highway. Transport trucks, for an example, weigh 130,000 pounds - they cannot stop as fast as other vehicles.

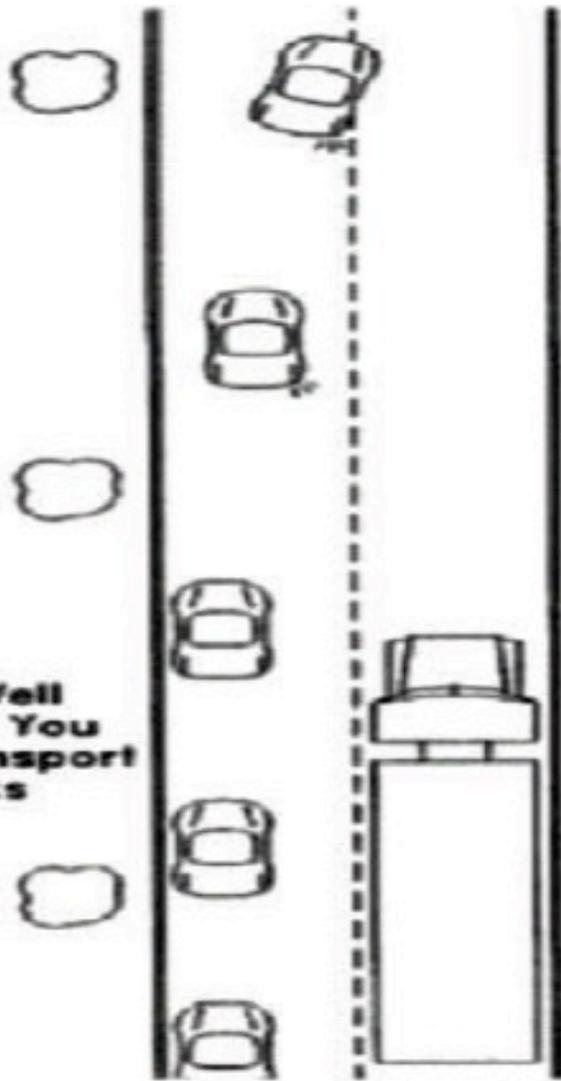
When the sweep sees a transport bearing down on the group on a down grade, he will advise the group to move over and give him room. The transport driver may be saving his brakes in case he really needs them.

Respect transport trucks. They are a lot bigger than we are and the driver has plenty to preoccupy him / her. They are constantly monitoring brake booster pressure, oil pressure and temperature, volts, amps, transmission oil pressure and their tires (up to 26 tires). All this while they're double clutching through 15 gears.

A good test to ensure you are leaving enough room between you and the transport truck: if you can see the full grill in your rearview mirror, he can see your car. If you can't see the full grill, he may not be able to see your car.

Also, if you can see the transport's mirrors (on either side), the driver should be able to see your Miata.

**Stay Well
Left As You
Pass Transport
Trucks**



**Tour Leader Leaves
Plenty of Room For
The Group To Get
Back In**



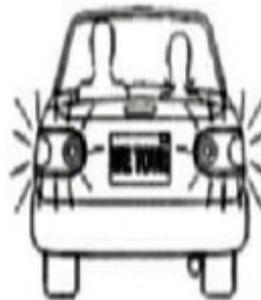
BRAKING

Group touring in sports cars involves a lot of gearing down to negotiate curves, especially on the type of roads we seek out for our tours.

Sometimes as we gear down, our reason won't be apparent to cars behind us. For example, we are cresting a knoll towards a downhill run, so we gear down. The car behind us may not see the pending downhill and needs some warning that you are gearing down.

To alert them, just tap your brakes. The flashing brake light is the signal that you are going to slow down a bit.

Many times during a tour, the tour leader encounters surprises such as someone backing out a driveway, people walking on a narrow road or construction. This results in everyone standing on the brakes. To warn the car behind you that you are braking harder than normal, raise your hand to get their attention.



**Tap Your Brakes
To Indicate You
Are Gearing Down**

A common navigational hazard is road kill. To warn the car behind you of its presence, give one flick of your directional signal as you move sideways to avoid it.

Quite frequently, the tour captain will be leading the group through unfamiliar territory. This may necessitate slowing down to watch for the next turn. They will raise their hand to alert the group that a turn or a stop may be just ahead.

**Raise Your Hand
To Indicate
Hard Braking**



TOURING IN SWITCHBACKS

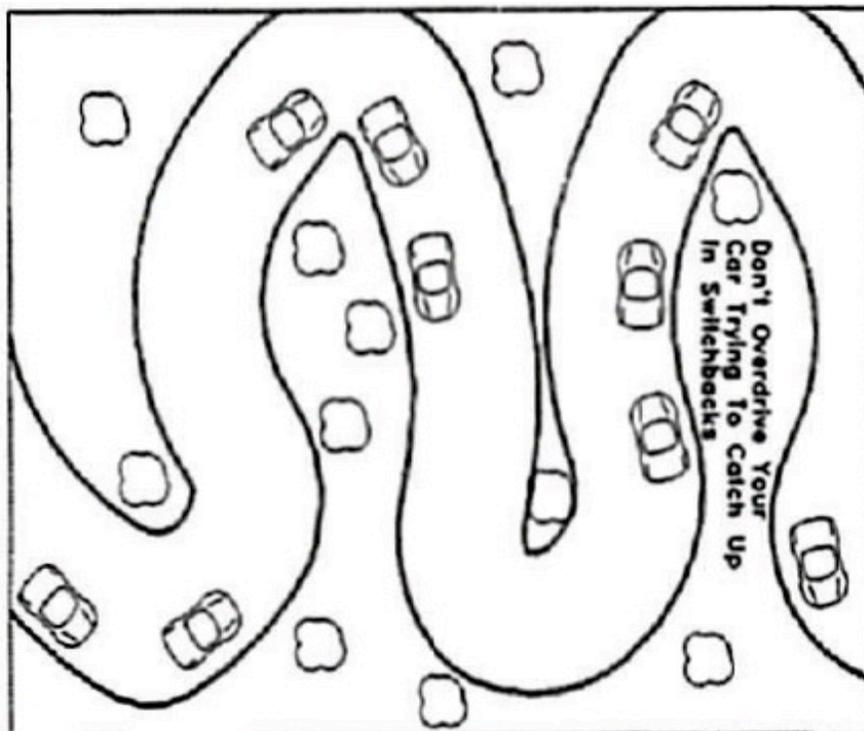


A switchback by definition is a very tight “U” turn usually climbing or descending a steep hill. They are more commonly encountered on our weekend tours throughout the northeastern United States.

Generally speaking, these roads would appear to have been designed for sports cars and motorcycles. There is a tendency towards a more “spirited” driving pace as we negotiate mountain passes and run the valleys.

Larger groups result in an accordion effect between the cars as spacing is continually altering because of braking and accelerating to catch sight of the cars up front. Smaller groups are inherently safer as they don’t tend to get “strung out” for miles with drivers getting anxious that they will be left behind. Always drive your car at your comfort level and if you find the pace a little too quick, call the group leader or tour captain on the C.B. and tell him / her you need to slow down a bit.

The further back you are in a group, the more catch up you will experience. The group leader needs your feedback to ensure safety within the group. You will NEVER be criticized for suggesting a safer speed on a club tour.



ON RAMPS

A tour will typically include a wide mix of city and highway driving.

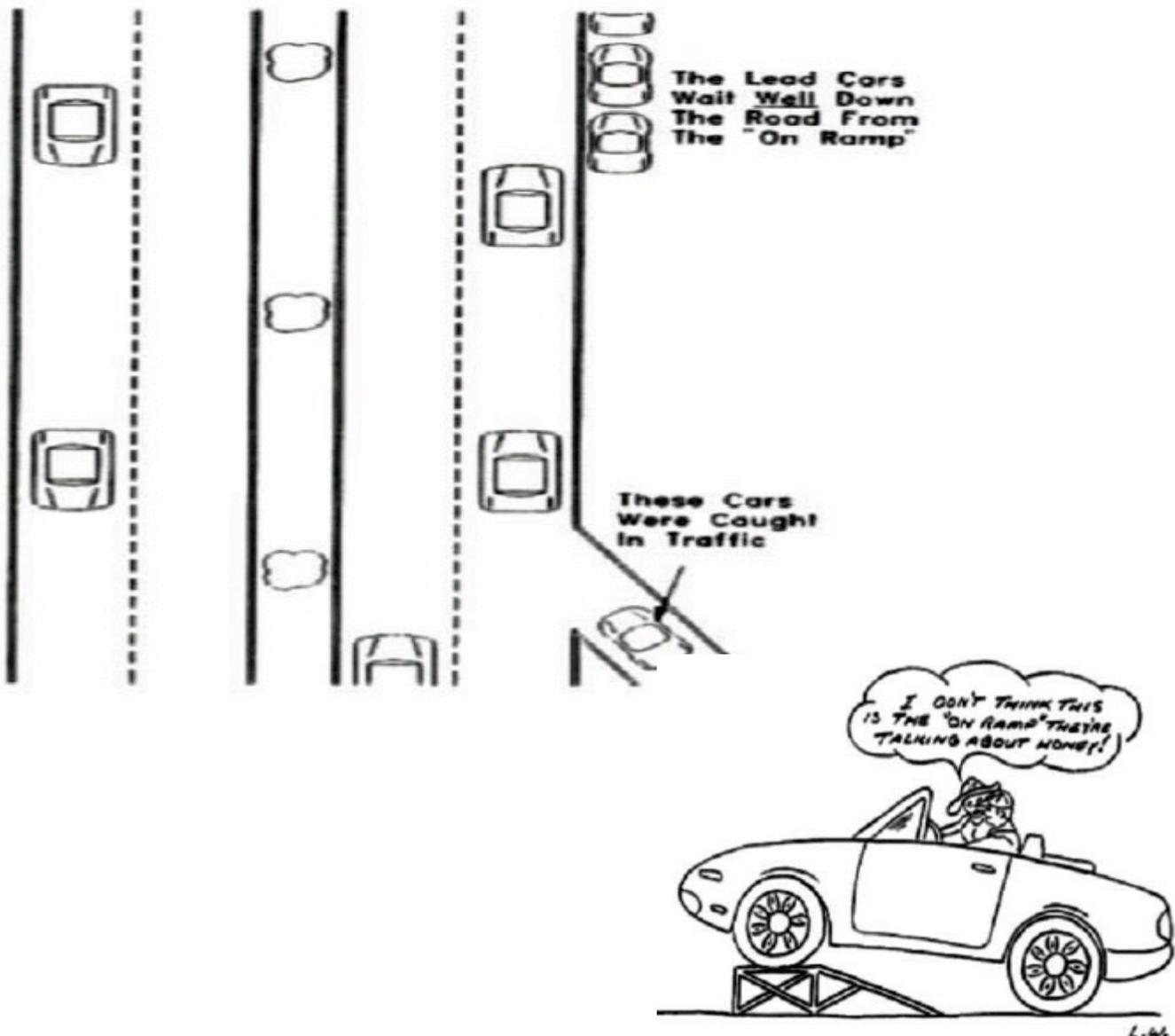
Trying to get a group of cars through a series of traffic lights to a “super slab” often results in one or two cars getting caught back at the lights.

The group leader will carry on to the highway but wait a safe distance down the road from the on ramp.

Once the last couple of cars (which will include the sweep), approach the on ramp, they should advise the group of their position.

This gives the group leader a chance to get the group rolling again so the last few cars can rejoin them without having to suddenly brake on the highway or speed to catch up.

The C.B. radio is very effective in coordinating this type of maneuver.

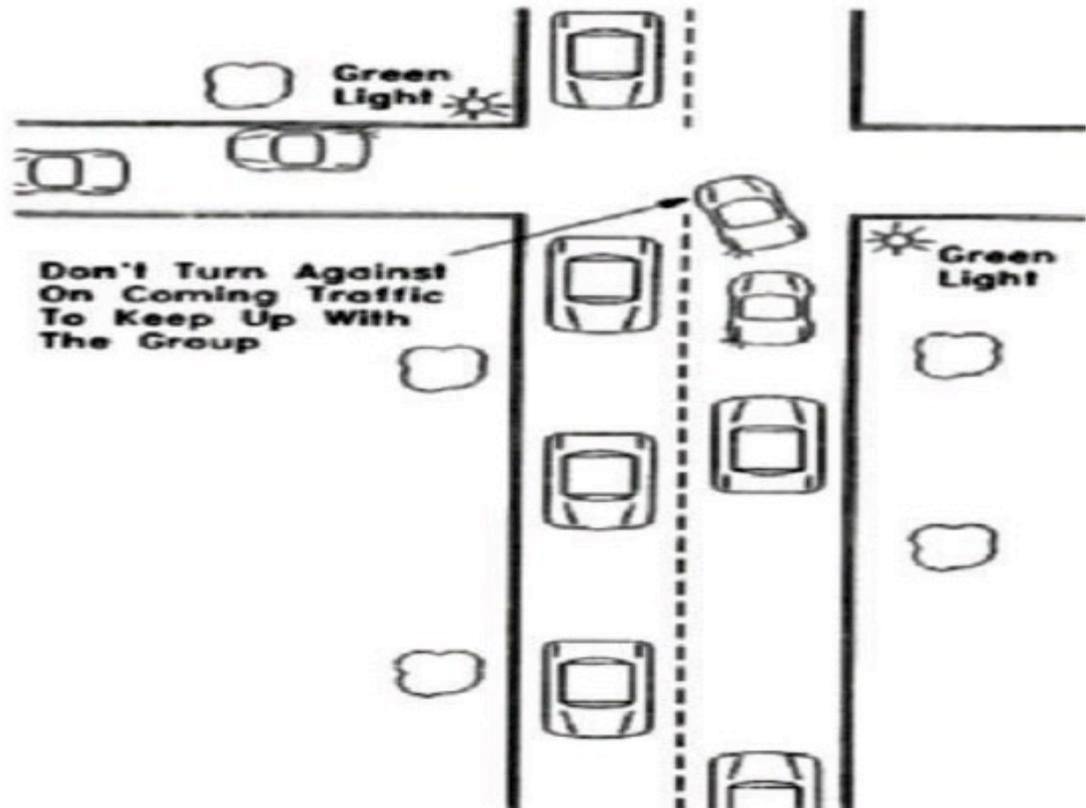


DON'T BE A LEMMING

When you're turning left against oncoming traffic while on a group tour, don't blindly follow the car in front of you regardless of oncoming traffic.

The same goes for intersections. Don't run a red light to keep up with the rest of the group. They'll wait for you at a safe place ahead.

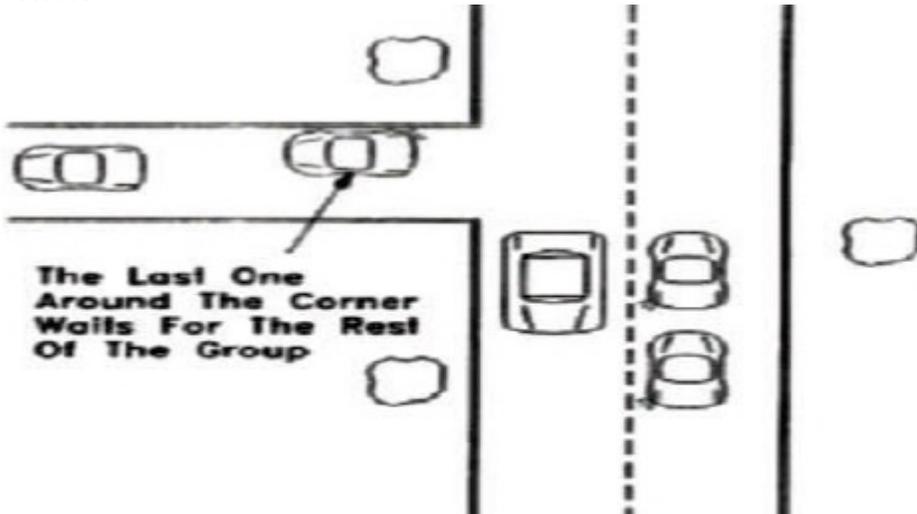
Avoid "Convoy Mentality". We DON'T own the road - safety first.



THE BUDDY SYSTEM

Always look out for the car behind you in busy areas. When the group makes a turn, stop at the corner until the car following you gets a chance to see where you are going. Do it safely. If there is no place to stop because of traffic or lack of a shoulder area, keep going until you can stop. If everyone practices this, no one will get lost.

The sweep will advise the group leader when everyone has successfully turned the corner.



Another example of the buddy system - other members cleaning Liz's car 😊

L.W.



C.B. CHATTER

The advantages of a C.B. Radio on a club tour are many. It provides a measure of safety as the group leader communicates his / her intention to the group. It also provides a link between the group leader and the sweep and of course, it promotes camaraderie among the tour participants.

The group leader will choose one specific C.B. channel for the group. Occasionally, the group will encounter heavy C.B. traffic in some built up areas. If it becomes difficult to communicate among the group on the specified channel, the group leader will ask up to go to another channel.

In busy areas, passing through towns or highway interchanges, it's important to keep the C.B. channel open so the leader or sweep can advise of unusual traffic situations or the need to turn, etc. Not that we want to discourage the good natured C.B. banter that always enhances a club tour, remember there may be times when you shouldn't be reciting your genealogy from the year 1975 in case the tour leader or sweep needs to get the group's attention.

In Ontario, the law states hands free devices must be used by the driver. Consider asking your passenger to control the CB during tours if you don't have a hands free CB.



Try To Avoid Too Much C.B. Chatter

