

## We're Glad You Could Join Us!

Sometimes it's not easy or safe riding a bike on New York's streets. Thanks to people like you, for a few hours on the last Friday of every month, **Critical Mass** transforms choked streets in nearly 400 cities on six continents into rolling festivals. By riding a bike, you help. You're not endangering other folks, you're not hogging more space than you need, you're not wasting energy, you're not contributing to greenhouse gases, and you're not crying for more roads. Together, we can envision a more bike-friendly city and together, we can have fun making it happen. It's your Mass!

## Some Things You Should Know

*Who's in charge here?* We all are but it's crucial for you to remember: you're responsible for your own actions. We're all responsible for **Critical Mass** being fun and safe so if you see someone doing something you think is wrong, talk with them. They may tell you to stuff it but Hey! This is New York and it's your Mass!

*Where are we going?* Wherever we feel like going. Friendly chats amongst riders at the front of **Critical Mass** usually help decide where we go. If you'd like to have a say, get to the front and offer your suggestion. It's your Mass!

*What's our route?* You'd better re-read the preceding answer.

**Critical Mass** works best when it's tightly bunched, not strung out and scattered: *keep together and always keep moving forward*. If you see the ride thinning out, if you see gaps, or if the front of the Mass rides too fast, shout out. Call out to people in front to slow down so the ride can re-group. If you're at the back of the Mass, don't be a snail. We don't set a fast pace so everyone: please keep up. Don't dawdle. You undermine our strength, our Mass. Help keep the ride tight, coherent, and safe. The power of the Mass lies in its numbers and in staying together. Stay with the Mass! Don't be a hero. You're not invincible. If you're reasonable, not threatening or abusive, you shouldn't have any problems. Relax, enjoy the ride, and encourage others to do the same. It's your Mass!

<http://www.critical-mass.org/>

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*Is it okay to scream at car drivers?* **Critical Mass** imagines a possibility in which anger and violence don't rule the road. If you're itching for aggravation, provocation, confrontation, an argument, a fight, or a riot, please, *please* curb your rage during the ride. Smile. Wave to the silly drivers. Remember, you're having fun, right? It's your Mass!

*Okay, should we share the road?* Always yield to emergency vehicles. We should also open a lane for busses: folks who ride public transit are our allies. And even if pedestrians do bone-head things right in front of your bike and you're sure their skulls are filled with dead insects, pedestrians are our friends too. Let's yield to them as cars should yield to us. Help by reminding other riders. Hassling pedestrians and drivers is no fun for anyone. Smile, wave, and talk to drivers and pedestrians when you have a chance. Hand them flyers explaining **Critical Mass**. If a light turns red and you're in the middle of the ride, you should probably keep going. If you're at the front of the ride, stop. Watch how others deal with traffic -- and learn. It's your Mass!

*But what about the cops?* In the past, several riders have been arrested during **Critical Mass**. If cops come along for the ride, try not to clash with them. Why give the police an excuse to stop our ride or to bust anybody? Confronting the police and going out of your way to obstruct other traffic could get you arrested. Keep together, learn from others, and remember: *you're responsible for your own actions.* It's your Mass!

*Why are you riding?* **Critical Mass** is a blank slate. Some of us are just riding from *here* to *there* ... on bikes, skates, and skateboards. Some of us ride to encourage other cyclists, promote bicycle commuting, and advocate bicycle world domination, but mostly, we ride to bring people together in the open air to have fun. Invent your own reasons for riding. Wear a costume if you'd like. Bring your own flyers to hand out to other riders or to folks we meet along the ride. Have an excellent time. It's your Mass!

Most important, come back, help us, and join us again: 7pm, last Friday of every month, Union Square Park. Bring water (you'll get thirsty), lights (it gets dark), and noisemakers. Dress for the weather. We usually end up someplace where the fun can continue so bring a lock. **And bring friends!**

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