

# A Strava post from a new TDC rider on how they felt starting out and the reality

When I do something like this it always makes me laugh as it's like I know what I am talking about. But here goes...

## • How to survive TDC training for dummies, but also written by one •

Step 1, Just turn up. It may not sound hard but it really is for some. It doesn't matter what level you're at or if you don't have all the gear (and no idea). The riders you see who appear to be 'scared of holding back' started out clueless themselves back in the day, they weren't born that good at riding! They get it and know you're all in this together, you're only going to get better one way.

Step 2, Kit and equipment. I'm going to be the first to say I turned up with not one but two dead lights at a training ride not that long ago. Get yourself some lights (and make sure they're charged!) which flash but also give a solid light setting. (There's a difference between lights that 'make you see' versus 'be seen') No flashing lights allowed in a peloton. Aside from a bike which is suited to you and kept in good nick, it's also worth checking your tyres for pressure and general wear and tear as flats can happen - also me turning up with a flat on a training ride last year. As far as kit goes try and be sensible with the weather. What the temperature is outside at 5:30am won't be the same mid ride and how you're feeling at 7:00am. It will take a bit of time to get used to how your body adjusts to temperature when riding but you'll get there. Don't be afraid to be in the mindset to take something off mid ride, but also that it fits nicely in your jersey pocket. I've been known to over dress for the cold and then have mad bulging pockets and clothing spilling out for the rest of the ride.

Step 3, #sometimesfood There isn't really a rule of thumb for this, but then some say it is. Everyone's body is different to how energy is maintained. What you eat the night before is for the next day, don't be afraid to carb up, your legs will thank you for it. I personally would suggest to eat



something in the morning a little before the ride too. You don't want a completely empty stomach but don't go mad either as I wouldn't recommend a tactical vom whilst training. It took me ages to learn what nutrition was suited to me when riding, but also what triggers I feel when I need to eat. This heavily depends on what kind of ride you're about to embark on. Again, learn about your body but make sensible choices. You don't want to be seeing what you've just eaten again, believe me.

Step 4, We're getting deep now, your ride leaders. This lot (usually the ones with radios) will ultimately have your back. Yes they are there to help you achieve goals to become a stronger/faster/better rider, but safety really is their top priority. They will ask every rider for calls and signalling but also safe riding etiquette. If you've been asked to keep left, stay left, pretty simple. If you remember and apply what you've learnt throughout training on every ride it will make their lives a whole lot easier and not mention keeping the peloton safe. Aside from leaders they are real people too! They may be guns for riders but that isn't why they're there. Bring your good chat, banter, gags and bad jokes, they love it! Maybe not singing too much, but it depends who you get. They are also extremely approachable on and off the bike as they give a damn about you and what questions or concerns you have. I learnt this the hard way but by asking those 'silly questions' or voicing those 'stupid concerns' turned out to be a better solution than not saying anything and over thinking things in my head. That anxiety will soon fade as soon as it's out, I mean they're out for a fun training ride too.

Step 5, no not rule 5. #HTFU

The attitude you bring. A positive attitude will go a long way. This goes towards yourself but also the others around you. Aside from being that safe rider you're learning how to be, being a rider that people like being around also helps heaps. Riding in a peloton with like-minded individuals will push you harder to get results than just going out riding on your own. Again, don't be afraid to break out a random funny story, some news or a few gags, it gets you and everyone else through the ride. But most importantly don't be afraid to laugh at yourself. Yes we ride for a cure for cancer, but we're also here for mental health, fitness and to have fun!

Enjoy your training!