



Foothills Miata Club
Drive Event
Safety, Procedure & Etiquette

Introduction:

Foothills Miata Club was founded upon the idea of sharing with others who enjoy these marvelous little cars, the incredible roads, scenic vistas and the great sense of friendship that, when combined, create “The Miata Experience”.

As the proud owner of your own Mazda Miata, we already know that you appreciate a well behaved, great handling sports car. One of the joys of ownership, that we share, is the easy access to miles and miles of more miles of roads considered to be among the best variety of driving conditions to be found anywhere in the world. The best part of it all is that these amazing roads are within a single fun day’s drive from your garage door. This brings us to the reason for publishing the following information. This document is intended to help prevent individual confusion, frustration and potential personal injury or worse. We want everyone to enjoy our Drive Events and to arrive safely back home, with a huge smile solidly planted on your face. By observing the following guidelines, the chances of achieving this result will greatly increase. Our aim, with just a wee bit of help from you, is to enhance everyone’s Miata driving experience.

We thank you in advance for your participation and cooperation,
Foothills Miata Club

Driver Safety:

- As the driver in charge of your car, you are expected to operate it in a safe and responsible manner. Never exceed your personal abilities or skill levels. We much prefer a driver who chooses caution instead of over exuberance. No one will think badly of you if, at any time, for any reason, you feel a need to leave a drive.
- Avoid letting the actions of another driver control your drive. It is very easy to find yourself “driving someone else’s drive.” Avoid this by maintaining a pace and spacing that is within your personal comfort zone. Just because another driver is

doing something dumb, does not mean you should too. When in doubt, choose on the side of common sense and personal safety.

- Any driver exhibiting signs of alcohol or other chemically induced impairment will not be allowed to participate in any Foothills Miata Club Drive. Hangover driving also has no place behind the wheel of a car. Anything that impairs judgment, increases reaction time or reduces attention span puts the whole group at risk. Please inform the Drive Leader or a club officer, should you have reason to suspect something is amiss.
- Stay in your lane. Passing, crossing over or driving on a double yellow line indicates that you are not in proper control of your vehicle and are driving beyond your ability. It also greatly increases chances of injury or death, due to head on collision. Be aware that motorcyclists often lean across the dividing yellow line, dangerously exposing their head and upper body to impact from an oncoming Miata.
- Pass only when the broken yellow Line is in your lane and traffic conditions safely allow it. As annoying as a stray SUV invading the group can be, they will often give way or turn, if given time. Exercising patience is often the best solution. When passing, please do so with an eye to keeping the group together. Passing at the wrong moment can be the cause of trailing drivers becoming lost.
- Rural secondary roads are often quite narrow and have no painted center Line. Using the right side edge of the road as a visual guide will help you stay in your lane. Proper caution is advised, since oncoming traffic also suffers from the same lack of visual references. Be prepared to give way to oncoming vehicles, for the sake of safety.
- Maintain a safe distance between you and the car in front of you, especially when driving on curvy roads. Allow room for reacting to sudden unexpected condition changes or road hazards. The car in front of you could be stopped on the far side of the turn, behind which he just disappeared.
- Seat belts are a proven safety device. State laws dictate that they be worn when operating a motor vehicle. We ask that you and your passenger comply with these laws.

Planning and Organization

- The on-scene Drive Leader is the final authority concerning issues of safety, etiquette and protocol. While we hope that it is never necessary, he or she can elect to ask any participant to leave a drive for failure to comply with these guidelines. His or her decisions are the final say on these subjects.

- The Drive Leader establishes the date, times, rendezvous locations, schedule, route, waypoints, destination and duration of a drive. These are subject to modification, as needed to accommodate changes in weather, road conditions or other unexpected circumstances.
- The Drive Leader posts an announcement of his or her planned drive on the club's Meetup web site, requesting that you RSVP. He or she might choose set a limit on the number of participating cars. This can be due to any of several factors, such as limited seating and parking or perhaps personal comfort levels in managing a group of vehicles.

A waiting list is provided for those who miss getting on the roster for an event. This list is not an assurance of getting a slot. It simply offers a second chance, if someone already registered, drops out. The Drive Leader may, at his or her discretion, choose to add additional slots. Failure to honor a RSVP limitation can and often does create problems with restaurant service. It can also contribute to making a drive more difficult to manage.

- The Drive Leader appoints or asks for volunteers for supporting positions (ie: Sweeps, additional group leaders) He or she may also choose to divide larger events into smaller groups, for better control. Some Drive Leaders may choose to assign you a specific position within a group. We suggest you trust his or her judgment, but please feel free to adjust your position, within the group if needed. Radios may be provided to those appointed to assist the Drive Leader, for ease of communication.
- The Sweep is a key position in the group. He or she is there to assist the Drive Leader in keeping the group together, as well as seeing to everyone's safe arrival at planned destinations. Only the Sweep drives with headlights on. This is to help the Drive Leader see the last car in line. Use of running lights is highly recommended, but optional. The Sweep is responsible for assisting other drivers, as needed. It is officially his or her job to be the last and slowest driver in the group. If you are leaving the drive early, please make sure the Sweep knows, so that he or she will no longer watch for your car.
- The Drive Leader holds a Driver Meeting to provide specific information concerning the day's drive. This will include a safety review, plus any last minute changes to the drive's planned itinerary. A sign in sheet, which includes a club liability waiver, will also be passed around.

Driver Responsibilities:

- We ask that you RSVP for scheduled events. We need to know you are coming, so we can provide the restaurant or other venue with a head count. It also helps us determine how to structure the drive and how many crew members are needed.

- You are responsible for attending the driver meeting and safety briefing. We ask that you arrive at the rendezvous location on time, with a full tank and an empty bladder. Coffee is optional. Keep in mind... depending on the planned route, the next rest stop could be an uncomfortable distance away. This is also where the latest details of where, when and what lunch will be, are revealed.
- You are responsible for seeing that the driver behind you is aware of any change of direction. You are charged with making sure he or she sees your turn signal. This might require waiting at an intersection, roadside turnout or median until the car behind you is within visual range and has applied their signal, in acknowledgement. Should this cause you to become separated from the group, remember, the car in front of you will be doing the same for you, should there be another change of direction. This proven process is essential to maintaining group integrity and preventing lost drivers. We also regroup as often as needed, when the group gets separated.
- If the pace of a drive is uncomfortable, feel free to make adjustments, as required, to get comfortable. Often times, moving back closer to the rear of the pack is the most effective solution. The sweep doesn't mind... it's actually their official job to be the slowest driver in the group. He or she will readily accommodate your preferred pace.
- If the driver in front of you is less experienced or is simply mismatched to your own driving style, please feel free to move ahead of the car, at the next stop. This will often make things more enjoyable for both of you. We prefer having newer drivers exercise caution, rather than driving unsafely. This reshuffling allows them to more easily do so.

Tips, Tidbits and other Bits and Bobs:

- A inexpensive set of hand held "Walkie Talkies" or a CB radio can greatly enhance your driving experience, simply by including you in the information loop. It's always easier and much more fun when you know what is happening, while it is happening. Foothills Miata Club uses CB channel 7.0 as the default frequency for drive communications.
- As silly as it might sound...Do not pass the Drive Leader. He or she is the only one who really knows the exact intended route and time table. Doing so will result in the group waving goodbye, as you drive out of sight. You will be a topic discussion at lunch and an example for years to come. It will also assure that you are excluded from future drives. Yes... it has been attempted.... not just once, but twice. Ego is a strange thing.

Long experience, gained through much trial and error, has helped us establish these common sense protocols in order to make group drives more manageable and enjoyable. Trust us when we tell you that getting lost from the group is no fun for anyone....be they seasoned veteran or the new guy. By following the guidelines

presented here, everyone will be far more likely to remain together, have a good time, arrive at the planned destinations on time and with a minimum of stress, plus no one gets lost.

Quite a lot of unseen preparation has gone into planning the upcoming drive that you are going to be a part of. Very often, the Drive Leader and crew have repeatedly driven the route, establishing the time required to travel each segment. A time table is then established for any planned function, be it a stop for photos, rest stop, a rendezvous spot to add more drivers, reservations for lunch and when to end the drive. In short... these guys put a lot miles, time, and brain sweat into seeing that you get to have fun. All they ask is that you work with them, so it can all unfold successfully and enjoyably as possible. Being aware of these protocols and following them will make that possible.

***Thank you,
Your Drive Leader and Crew***