

Road Rules

Tips on traveling in a Group
By Jim Werner

Here is the expanded edition of my Road Rules for organizing a Healey Tour.

1. Start at a Gas station/food mart. Get there early and gas up.
2. We leave at the designated time. We don't wait for people who are inconsiderate by being late. Actually on my last tour I kept everyone waiting because one couple who are never late were. Turns out they did have car trouble. It's a judgment call but starting on time solved the habitual late arrivals problems. Having always been on time before made us wait for someone who was late because of car trouble.
3. CB radios start on channel 3 and always stay between 1 and 5. That way if you signal to someone your new channel you can do it with one hand. I avoid channel one for the obvious reasons.
4. Slow cars in front, fast cars to the back. The slower drivers are usually less confident and want the support of a lot of people following them. Fast cars to the back since I can feel confident leaving them at traffic lights, etc, knowing they will catch up. If you feel the need to drive really fast have another two cups of coffee and leave fifteen minutes behind us and see if you can catch up.
5. Written directions with a map and the rules. Everyone gets a copy printed on card stock so it is easy to handle in the wind. Written directions alone won't work because if you go off course you have no idea where you are.
6. In case of another person's breakdown just safely pass them by. Wrecks happen when everyone tries to stop. A limited number will stop and the group will stop up the road somewhere safe, maintain CB contact and regroup as required.
7. After each rest stop I call the time of the next stop. That way no one has to raise their hands and be embarrassed to ask for a restroom stop. I just say it's now 1 pm and we will be stopping at 2:30.
8. Pick fuel stops for the number of toilets not the number of gas pumps because that is where you lose time.
9. Pick restaurants like Cracker Barrel and march in and tell them you have 30 people and you will take any seating combination they have. Every time you try to get a table

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So, moral of this tale is, If you really want to "caravan" -- one of the joys of vintage touring -- define your route and rules ahead of time, and don't change them on the fly.