



bike

MS[®]

TEAM
CAPTAIN
GUIDE



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WELCOME TO BIKE MS[®]!

Thank you for leading a team at Bike MS.

Get ready for a ride of a lifetime!

We're so glad you're up for the challenge as a Bike MS Team Captain. Whether it's your first or fifth time as a captain, this Team Captain Guide will help you build your team, get them organized and keep them motivated to fundraise...while having a lot of fun in the process.

LET'S RIDE!

For more information, visit bikeMS.org or call 800-344-4867.

WE ARE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT MS NOW.

ABOUT MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Multiple sclerosis is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. There is currently no cure for MS. Symptoms vary from person to person and range from numbness and tingling to mobility challenges, blindness, and paralysis. An estimated 1 million people live with MS in the United States. Most people are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50 and it affects women three times more than men.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL MS SOCIETY

The National MS Society, founded in 1946, funds cutting-edge research, drives change through advocacy, and provides programs and services to help people affected by MS live their best lives. Connect to learn more and get involved: nationalMSSociety.org, [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly known as [Twitter](#)), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) or 1-800-344-4867.



CHANGING THE WORLD FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY MS.

Collectively, Bike MS® and other fundraising efforts have helped accelerate research breakthroughs that change lives and will end MS forever.

- We are increasing investments in wellness research, including diet, exercise and complementary and alternative therapies.
- We fund more research than any other MS organization in the world.
- MS activists work to ensure people with MS have access to treatments, information and support to make the best decisions for themselves and their families.
- There are more therapies specifically approved for treating and managing MS, and more potential MS therapies in development today than at any other time in history.
- MS is more quickly diagnosed, enabling early and sustained therapy to slow disease activity.
- There is much greater awareness of the many symptoms of MS and ways to address them to improve quality of life.
- Scientists are making breakthroughs in identifying risk factors that can increase a person's susceptibility to MS, which will help lead to ways to prevent the disease.





Step 1:

GET STARTED

Get registered. Pick a team name and register as the captain. Then click on “Start A Team” button. Are you already registered? Great!

Next step, it’s important to **SET UP YOUR TEAM PAGE.**

Log in to your **Bike MS® Fundraising Center** using the username and password you created when you registered. Once logged in, you’ll be able to create your own customized Team Bike MS Page. This is where you’ll recruit new team members via email — from templates we supply or emails of your own. It’s also where you’ll manage your team’s fundraising efforts, like setting your team fundraising goal, monitoring progress, kick-starting your team’s fundraising with a donation, sending donation requests and thank you notes by email, and recording any cash or check donations you receive.

Your team page is your invitation to become involved in the MS movement. We’re here to help you reach your goals, so please let us know how we can help. By setting up a team page, you are setting up your team for success. Here are a few hints to help make your page one to remember:

- **Make it personal:** Put in a picture of you or your team. Write the story of your team and how you are training and fundraising. While there is sample text available, nothing is more compelling than your own words.
- **Change it often:** Keep your page current to generate interest. Provide updates on how your training is going or how close you are to your goal.
- **Create your team page URL shortcut:** By doing this you will be able to easily direct people to your team page. For example, put a link to your fundraising page in the signature of your email.

Step 2: SET GOALS



Establishing a goal is an easy way to maintain motivation as well as give you and your team a benchmark for success. We encourage team captains to set goals for themselves and their teams, while keeping these tips in mind.

TIPS FOR TEAM SPIRIT

- **Goals should be realistic, but significant:** If it requires hard work to attain, it will be a source of more pride for your team.
- **Don't arbitrarily set a goal without input from the team:** Having them believe in the goal from the word "go" will make your job as team captain that much easier.
- **Don't forget to set both personal & team fundraising goals:** Lead by example. Share your fundraising goal with your team.
- **Set a goal for team size as well as collective fundraising:** Recruiting more team members can mean more substantial fundraising!
- **Don't keep your goal a secret:** Use email, team pages, and even internal company intranets and newsletters to communicate goals — and how close your team is to attaining them.
- **Large corporate teams:** If you are part of a large corporate team, have departments set their own goals to create some fun internal competition.
- **If you would like more suggestions and guidelines** for goal setting, or would like to request goal setting worksheets, please contact your local National MS Society office.

10 GREAT THINGS ABOUT OUR ONLINE TEAM TOOLS

1 POST YOUR
TEAM PICS
ONLINE



2 INCLUDE YOUR
COMPANY'S LOGO



3 SET UP A
SIMPLE URL
FOR YOUR TEAM PAGE

4 SET A
FUNDRAISING
GOAL

THAT EVERYONE
CAN SEE & SUPPORT



5 DOWNLOAD
YOUR TEAM ROSTER

6 EMAIL YOUR
ENTIRE
TEAM
AT ONCE



7 TRACK YOUR
TEAM MEMBERS'
FUNDRAISING
PROGRESS



8 SEE YOUR
REAL TIME
FUNDRAISING
TOTAL

9 TRACK TEAM
GIFTS & SEND
THANK
YOU EMAILS



10
EASILY
UPDATE

YOUR PAGE & PHOTO





Step 3:

RECRUIT TEAM MEMBERS

Whether your team is currently 1 or 100 riders strong, it can always be stronger.

Recruit, recruit, recruit.

At Bike MS®, “the more the merrier” has never been more true. Recruiting takes some work, but the added camaraderie and greater fundraising potential make it well worth the effort.

Who to recruit?

Team members can be anyone: friends, family, coworkers, neighbors ... pretty much anyone you can think of. And here’s the thing, they don’t even have to be cyclists. Teams can always use additional support along the way from the team’s non-riders. And be sure to check with your local office as there are always riders looking to join a team. There’s no limit to how big a team can be, so get out there and start recruiting today!

Use our online tools.

Our online tools help make the recruiting process easier than ever. No need to collect paper or spend hours on the phone. New team members you recruit can quickly and easily register themselves online. Once your team page is set up, send new recruits there to join your team, or use the Fundraising Center tools to send a team registration link via email. You can also download your email program’s contact list into the recruiting tool. Not only will this simplify the process of inviting more people to join your team, the tool also allows you to track when emails have been opened by a recipient.

GET HELP

Recruit others to help you. Jobs can include:

- **Recruiter:** Gets cyclists to register and monitors online team roster report.
- **Fundraising Champion:** Teaches members to fundraise and exceed the ride average of raising \$750 per cyclist. Also reminds team of important fundraising deadlines.
- **Party Planner:** Plans kick off, sign-up days, fundraisers and post-event celebrations.
- **Coach:** Holds training rides and instructs members on how to prepare for the ride.
- **Safety Champion:** Reminds members of the rules of the road during training, recruits cyclists to participate in group riding skills courses and promotes responsible cycling to the team.

Step 4: FUNDRAISE!



Simple steps to online success:

1. Fundraise Online

Now for the fun part. Once your team page is set up, our online tools make it simple for your supporters to donate online to keep you moving toward your fundraising goals and a world free of MS. After sending a personalized email to all your friends, family members and colleagues, you can follow an up-to-the-minute fundraising tracker.

2. Encourage Team Members to Use their Online Personal Pages

Once you see what the tools can do for you, encourage your team members to follow your lead. Make it fun by giving incentives to your team members to fundraise online — a pair of movie tickets to the team member that raises the most in a week, or a gift card to every team member who gets at least five gifts online. Be creative and ensure that your team not only reaches their goals, but has fun along the way.

3. Social Networking

Create a Facebook fanpage for your team. You can also post tweets on X (formerly Twitter) for your group and videos on YouTube. Be sure to include your team pictures, inspirational videos of your team training or fundraising.



FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Listed below are some unique ideas from other team captains, but feel free to add your own!

- **Offer to do something unusual:** (i.e., shave your head, sing karaoke in a costume of the team's choice, etc.) if your team reaches or exceeds its fundraising goal.
- **Set up a drawing for the team:** With each \$50 raised netting you another chance to win a prize (for friends: a special home-cooked meal for the winner and their family; for employees: a day off.)
- **Lunch with the president or reserved parking spots:** For company teams, reward the top fundraiser with lunch with the president or give the person who recruits the most additional team members a reserved parking spot for a month.
- **Pin-up sales:** If you work somewhere with lots of foot traffic, ask about Bike MS® pin-up sales — an easy way to quickly raise money for your team.
- **Silent auction:** Hold your own silent auction — with food and entertainment.
- **Garage sale:** Clean out the attic and basement with a garage sale — donate the proceeds.
- **Fundraise through Facebook:** Fundraise through the boundless fundraising tool available on your personal page.



Step 5:

TEAM SPIRIT AND AWARDS

TEAM JERSEYS

Show your team spirit by wearing custom designed team jerseys. We are proud to have Primal Wear as the official jersey of Bike MS®. As a part of their commitment to the National MS Society, Primal will donate 15% of your custom apparel order back to your teams' fundraising account!

Visit bikeMS.org.



PRIMAL

TEAM AWARDS

A little *friendly competition* among teams can build camaraderie and increase results. In fact, teams are the fastest growing group of fundraisers in the MS movement. The difference they are making in the lives of people with MS is nothing short of amazing. So who has the most team spirit? Who has the biggest team?

And, most importantly, who will make the biggest impact to create a world free of MS? Contact your local office to learn about all of the team prizes and awards your team can win!





CORPORATE TEAMS

Teamwork is the key to your success. Forming a corporate team is a great way to get your company involved in Bike MS®!

Why is the team program important for my company?

- Develops team spirit and boosts morale
- Increases the company's visibility and shows its commitment to the community
- Offers employees a chance to bond outside the office
- Unites you with other local companies who have committed to creating a world free of MS

How do I recruit?

- Company support: Announce your team in the company newsletter or intranet
- Corporate Sign-Up Days: Ask your Bike MS team coordinator to come out to your organization to promote the ride and take registrations

How can my company support the team?

- Ask about matching gifts. This is the easiest way to double your fundraising efforts
- Ask your employer to sponsor your team registration fees, donations or jerseys
- Recruit an executive champion to lend his/her name to your recruitment efforts

Safety starts with you

Cyclists need to possess basic bike-handling skills and safety knowledge in order to keep themselves and others around them safe, especially while participating in group cycling activities, like Bike MS®. Our focus is to provide a high-quality, safe and fun cycling experience.

Remember to always carry:

- Identification
- Insurance card
- Emergency contact information
- Any important health information

Headphones (including AirPods), cell phones, radios and similar devices **are not permitted** while riding.

All cyclists are responsible for keeping their riding equipment in good working order, so get into the habit of checking your equipment before every ride. Small adjustments can make a significant difference in your experience.

THE BASICS OF RIDING IN A GROUP

Group riding takes practice. Riding with other cyclists all around you may cause you to feel trapped. Relax. It is most important to create your own safety zone. This may vary depending on the speed and ability level of the people you are with, so be flexible. Let others know of your anxiety — they may also be new at this.

HYDRATION

Knowing how to optimize your fluid intake is critical to successfully completing a Bike MS Ride.

- One bottle per hour: The rule of thumb is to consume a bottle of liquid every hour, and that every second bottle is a sports drink. Also, remember to eat small snacks frequently during the ride. If you find that you experience extreme fatigue, the inability to recover your energy, or frequent muscle cramps, seek assistance from first aid — you may have the early signs of dehydration.
- Seeking medical assistance: If you find that you experience weight gain/bloating with progressive symptoms such as swollen hands and feet, confusion, throbbing headache, dizziness or nausea, please seek assistance from first aid.

HELMET SMART

Head injuries are of special concern for cyclists. Even falling at a slow rate of speed can cause a serious head injury. **Helmets must be worn and strapped while riding in Bike MS — no exceptions.**

HELPFUL TIPS

On Bike MS® rides, our active route support team works to make the ride safe. Here are a few additional suggestions to help keep everyone safe on the ride:

- **Thumbs down for help:** SAG vehicles and motorcycle escorts will stop for you if you are off the road, off your bike, and giving a “thumbs down” sign or holding your helmet in the air.
- **Rest-stop etiquette:** All cyclists who enter a rest area must pull over, dismount and move completely away from the road and rest-stop entrance. When exiting, move beyond the rest area and proceed with caution on the right side of the road before merging with faster cyclists.
- **Passing:** Passing others and being passed occurs continuously during the ride. Call out “passing on your left” and allow time for the cyclist being overtaken to move to the right — then pass safely.
- **Mechanical problems:** Examine mechanical problems and change flats completely off the road. If you have a problem you cannot fix yourself, flag down a SAG van and seek a mechanic at the next rest-stop.
- **Be courteous:** Bike MS participants are fortunate to ride on many trails as well as public roads. Be courteous and use no more than half the trail so as not to block the flow of other users.

TEAM CAPTAIN GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Team Name: _____

Captain: _____

Co-Captains: _____

When setting your team’s goals, look back at your team’s performance from last year (if applicable). The average Bike MS® cyclist raises \$750.

PREVIOUS YEAR'S RESULTS	THIS YEAR'S GOALS
# of team members: _____	# of team members: _____ (i.e.: 20% increase = number of previous year cyclists x 1.2)
Amount raised: \$ _____	Minimum goal: \$ _____ (i.e.: team member goal x previous team member average)
Average team member amount raised: \$ _____ (Dollars raised ÷ number of team members)	Suggested goal: \$ _____ (i.e.: number of team members goal x \$750 Bike MS average)

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1. Appoint team co-captains

Due date: _____

People to ask:

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Customize team web page (visit your participant center)

Due date: _____

3. Team kick-off announcement to all previous team members and/or company employees

Due date: _____

4. Recruitment activities

ACTIVITY	DATE	\$ GOAL

5. Fundraising activities

ACTIVITY	DATE	\$ GOAL

6. Email to all team members announcing goals and activities

Due date: _____

7. Thank you note to all team members

Due date: _____



THE
LARGEST
ORGANIZED
CYCLING SERIES
IN THE COUNTRY

*Don't just ride,
Bike MS*

BIKEMS.ORG