



# SDMC Member Handbook 2026

**Welcome to the San Diego Miata Club!** We are glad that you are here. Joining fellow Mazda MX-5, Miata enthusiasts allows you to experience San Diego County and beyond in the best way possible -- top down, wind in your hair, and a smile on your face! It is the opportunity to meet thoughtful, supportive, and often hilarious fun-makers and enthusiasts who like to drive, socialize, laugh, eat, and drive some more.

This membership handbook provides an overview of the club, what we do, how we operate, and links to online information. But honestly the best way to learn is to just show up at a monthly meeting, run, or event. Simply say, “Hey, I am new here!” We will take care of the rest.

The evolution of the San Diego Miata Club (SDMC) continues alongside the evolution of the Miata itself. Each new member brings a diversity and enthusiasm that adds to the whole as does each new generation of the MX-5 Miata adds technology, performance, comfort, and enhances the overall experience.

*Inside Mazda* wrote, “Just like the symbiotic relationship developed over time by a horse and rider—*Jinba Ittai*—driving the MX-5 Miata feels like a natural extension of your being. When Mazda released the first-generation MX-5 Miata in the US in 1989, the company ignited an evolutionary revolution.” This is at the heart of what the SDMC strives to imitate. Come and mount up. Enjoy the ride!

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## OUR HISTORY: MAKING THE SAN DIEGO MIATA CLUB

In February 1996, following an impromptu run in the San Diego back country, a group of 11 Miata enthusiasts who had met online, convened at a restaurant to create a new car club. Less than two months later 34 enthusiastic Miata drivers attended the first club meeting where they elected an inaugural board of directors and created a mission statement: *to promote the enjoyment of, and enthusiasm for, one of the world’s most exciting sports cars – the Mazda Miata!*” By May 1996, SDMC published its first newsletter. And just like that, the SDMC was up and running!

Before long SDMC became one of the world’s fastest-growing Miata clubs and one of the largest car clubs in San Diego County. By the end of our first lap around the calendar, the club had grown to 142 cars and more than 200 members. By 2001, membership peaked at over 350 cars and 600 members. An enthusiastic membership introduced the club to a broad array of varied events. Eating became a regular activity at our events, in part to get to know one another and partly to access clean restrooms. The club mantra became “*drive, eat, drive, or eat, drive, eat.*”

## MEETINGS AND EVENTS

### *Monthly and Annual Meetings: The Place to Be*

Members meet at monthly meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month from January to October, and on the third Thursday of the month in November and December. Members begin gathering around 6:00 p.m. for dinner, other members arrive even earlier. The meeting officially begins at 7:00 p.m. and lasts one hour. Visit the club calendar for the most current information. For Zoom meetings, a volunteer emails the login instructions to members subscribed to the Groups.io email list.

Each fall the club holds an annual meeting to provide a report to the membership, honor volunteers, present awards, elect a new slate of officers (president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary), hang out with friends, and, of course, eat lunch. The club also holds an annual summer picnic and a holiday party. These meetings and events provide the best way to meet your fellow club members, ask questions, share stories, and see friends. Come eat and chat with your Miata friends and get the scoop on what's happening in the club. Don't miss the fun!

### **DRIVING FUN: LEAD OR FOLLOW, YOU'LL ENJOY THE RIDE**

Volunteer Miata enthusiasts take active, ongoing, or periodic volunteer leadership roles. One of those volunteer activities includes leading runs, because after all the Miata was made for driving. Volunteering is a wonderful way to make and spend time with friends.

**Runs.** Members organize a variety of runs that focus on driving and fun. Some runs are impromptu while others are destination-oriented runs to museums, car collections, and other interesting venues. Some runs are "spirited" where the exceptional handling of the Miata can put a smile on a driver's face, while other runs may be at a more leisurely pace designed to enjoy the scenery. Some runs are relatively short – less than 100 miles, while others include overnight stays, out-of-state travel, and even travel outside the US.

A run occurs when someone volunteers to plan and lead a run. The run leader prescribes a route to a predetermined destination, typically via non-freeway roads. All runs have both a "run leader" and a "sweep." The sweep brings up the rear of the group and ensures that the group stays together and stays with drivers who stop for any reason. Runs often include a lunch break somewhere along the route.



*Mark and Cathy Booth's Miata Showing off their SDMC Magnetics*

Do you have a favorite destination you would like to share with others? Is there a place you always wanted to go? Then plan a run! Our events coordinator can help you plan a successful run. Members who organize and lead runs may earn the coveted SDMC Magnetics proudly displayed on our Miatas. Information is available online at <https://www.sandiegomiataclub.org/profile/fun-run-design/>.

Impromptu events are “spur of the moment” driving opportunities. These events may arise from someone deciding, on short notice, that they want to have lunch at a specific restaurant or do something non-Miata related and invite club members to join them. Because they are spur-of-the-moment, impromptu events do not involve the degree of planning and documentation as more formal runs.

Over the years, members wanted to travel further away from home and for longer trips. They began organizing weekend-long trips, which then led to multi-week-long road trips. These volunteer-led trips and activities are limited only by our imaginations, sense of adventure, availability, and wallets.

- One-day trips where we explore California, in and outside of San Diego County.
- Weekend trips have taken us to Laguna Seca to celebrate Miata anniversaries, Cambria for a late January getaway, or regional events.
- Multi-day trips have taken us to the Grand Canyon, Yosemite, or events hosted by other Miata clubs around the country.
- Multi-week trips have included a 3-week Route 66 extravaganza, and trips to Key West, Canada, and even Italy to drive Miatas and, of course, eat.

In addition to the runs and social gatherings, members engage in events such as holiday light viewing, car shows and exhibitions, parades, regional and charitable events, indoor go kart racing, autocross, track days, tech days, and more. Our club attendance has made a significant impact at events like *Main Street America* sponsored by the Corvette Owners Club of San Diego where SDMC has won the club participation award for more than 10 years in a row.

**Regional Event.** *Surf’N’Safari*, the club’s first regional and multi-club event, is its biggest undertaking. It requires the leadership and support of nearly 20 enthusiastic members to pull it off. Held in October 1999, the inaugural event, named for its luau (surf) and visit to the San Diego Wild Animal Park, now Safari Park (safari), it offered six runs, a luau, and a banquet. It would be one of the finest multi-club events in Miata club history attracting 140 cars from 8 states, 15 clubs, 2 countries, New Zealand, and the Netherlands, and 20 vendors. The event cemented the club’s reputation as fun people. The club holds the approximately every 5 years. The last one occurred in 2022.

## GOLDEN RULES OF CLUB DRIVING

**#1 KNOW THYSELF.** The run leader establishes the pace for the group, but each driver operates within their own limits. If you find yourself falling behind the car ahead, take up a position toward the rear of the line at the next queue point.

**#2 SAFETY 1st-LAST-ALWAYS; OBEY LAWS.** Use common sense, be courteous and obey the law. Keep the car in your lane. Our line of cars should not dominate the road. If other drivers are trying to pass us, let them. If a member of our group wants to pass you, let them. Pass only when it is safe and legal to do so. When stopping at a queue point or corner, pull completely off the road.

**#3 BREADCRUMB.** If you lose visual contact with the car behind you, slow down or wait at the next straight or turn (change in direction) and allow them to catch up again. When you are sure the car behind you can see your Miata, then continue. This ensures that no one gets lost or falls too far behind. Solo drivers should buddy-up and follow a car with a radio.

**#4 SITUATIONAL AWARENESS.** Watch for hazards and traffic, especially trucks or SUVs that may have difficulty seeing you. Reduce your speed if road conditions, hazards, or weather warrants. Make your own assessment of road hazards and conditions.

**#5 COMMUNICATE, SIGNAL INTENTIONS.** Drivers with portable radios can help maintain good communications up and down the line of cars, when appropriate. If you pass the run leader or if you pull over and wave the sweep car past, you have effectively left the group and are on your own.

**#6 HAVE FUN!** Laugh, giggle, enjoy the wind in your hair, experience the open road. Eat. Repeat.

**Tech Days.** Many members happily work on their Miatas and share their knowledge with others who may prefer to observe or need someone with a deeper skill set. This is the idea behind Tech Days. It is an opportunity for members to come together to help each other at a member's home or other facility. These events transfer knowledge that a member gains to other members who will hopefully pass it on.

If you are interested in hosting an event, please work with Events Coordinator to select a date. Invite others to attend by posting a notice of the event on Groups.io. Keep the project(s) reasonable and don't try to set a record, such as the most shocks installed. Make sure you have the right tools, equipment, and parts to do the job. Make an event out of it by providing refreshments, remember food is a big motivator. After the event, be sure to thank your hosts and memorialize the event by writing an article about the experience for the club website.

## COMMUNICATING THE MIATA CLUB VIBE

Without a doubt, our club members are good communicators both formally and informally. We stay informed of events and other happenings through a variety of mechanisms, including the Groups.io email list, club website, *SDMC Members Only* Facebook group, meeting attendance, participating in runs.

Keep in mind that everyone accesses information differently. Some members are on Facebook and some members are not. Some members read the website and some do not. If you want to connect, use various modes of communications. The membership directory is accessible on the Groups.io website or request it from our membership team at [membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org).

**Groups.io, Group Email List.** The quickest, easiest, and most frequently used form of communication is the group email list through Groups.io. Members post questions on technical issues, ask for recommendations, seek information about meetings and events, and share member news by sending an email to one central address that the system relays to all subscribed members. The system archives the emails, which makes them searchable online. Messages may include hashtags (a word or phrase preceded by a hash sign (#) to identify digital content on a specific topic), which makes searching for information considerably easier.

The software is relatively new to the club. So far, the club is finding membership directory, photo gallery, and file storage features to be useful. Only current dues-paying members have access to the Groups.io. Members must sign up for a free registration to participate in the group. Instructions are online at <http://www.SanDiegoMiataClub.org/for-members>. Alternatively, send an email request to [membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org). In response, you will receive a system-generated email inviting you to join the group; accept that invitation or questions to [webmaster@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:webmaster@SanDiegoMiataClub.org).

**Website: Club News and Info 24/7.** The club maintains an informative website at <http://www.SanDiegoMiataClub.org>, including general information about the club; a list of officers and appointed committees and email links; a calendar providing detailed information on coming events and run instructions; event section with instructions on how to lead a club run and what to expect; information about regalia; technical information about Miatas; radio information; and links to other Miata clubs and Miata-related businesses. If you have questions or suggestions about the website, contact [webmaster@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:webmaster@SanDiegoMiataClub.org).



*Miata Run to Laguna Mountain  
Photo Courtesy of Mark Booth*

**Radio Communications for Runs (Two-Way Radios).** Our goal is to have an enjoyable day driving our Miatas. A compatible two-way radio will enhance your fun. The primary purpose of the radios is to communicate directions, potential road, human, or animal hazards, and logistical information between the run leader and sweep. If the group is large, the run leader will appoint a member to act as a radio relay. The most current radio information on ordering, setup, accessories, and basic radio operating instructions is available at [http://www.SanDiegoMiataClub.org/events/Radio\\_coms.html](http://www.SanDiegoMiataClub.org/events/Radio_coms.html). Before a run contact the events coordinator at [events@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:events@SanDiegoMiataClub.org) to ensure that your new radio is compatible or to borrow a radio during a run.

## REGALIA AND MERCHANDISE

The club offers a selection of merchandise emblazoned with the SDMC logo. Our regalia team keeps inventory at a minimum to avoid undue club costs. The regalia team regularly offers special order items. Email the regalia team at [regalia@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:regalia@SanDiegoMiataClub.org) about placing an order and the delivery and shipping details. Examples of regalia include sweatshirts, t-shirts, hats, visors, hat clips, lapel/hat pins, license plate frames, static-cling decals, and special-edition items.

Name badges may be ordered from the club Treasurer, using the order form available on our website,

Members also may have the club logos custom embroidered on nearly any article of clothing, merchandise you supply, or you may purchase from the selections offered by our vendor. You must place your order in writing to ensure the correct colors and designs. In most cases, you can specify the car color, interior color, the color of the word “Miata,” and the color of the stitching used for your name. Please be specific when stating your car color, such as “Montego Blue” instead of simply “Blue.” For certain combinations of car and garment colors, ask the embroidery shop to make color adjustments for outline stitching, so you don’t get a black outline on a black car on a black jacket.

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Miata enthusiasts donate a substantial number of hours to the club each year. Some members take active or periodic volunteer leadership roles. They organize runs, plan events, host parties and picnics, write articles, support tech days, organize charitable events, orchestrate parade and car show participation, manage the website, prepare mailings, manage regalia sales, and serve

on the board and committees. The club is what we, the members, make of it. Please join us to make our club as fun and worthwhile as possible. Contact the [President@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:President@SanDiegoMiataClub.org) or [VicePresident@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:VicePresident@SanDiegoMiataClub.org) to discuss volunteer opportunities.

## MEMBERSHIP

Any one person or two people from one household may join the club as single or dual members. A member in good standing has paid their annual member dues in full. All memberships expire at the end of the calendar year and renewals are due by January 1st; dues are delinquent 30 days later. Dues renewals not received or postmarked by January 31st are subject to a \$5.00 late fee.

Club Bylaws Article 11.2 states that partial year dues are available to new members only. A member with delinquent dues does not qualify for partial year dues by waiting until July 1st. To qualify for partial dues, the member must have been away from the club for a minimum of one year. Bylaws are subject to change as determined by the board of directors and approved by the members. Bylaws are available online at <https://www.sandiegomiataclub.org/bylaws/>.

Members with delinquent dues are removed from membership rolls, mail, and email list as soon as February 1st. Members with delinquent dues are not eligible to take part in club sponsored activities, including the annual summer picnic or holiday party.

Members must act in accordance with the stated purpose of the club. The board may suspend or revoke the membership of any member whose actions they deemed detrimental to the club. Send questions to [membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org).

## ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Thank you to those members who helped update this handbook and Mark Booth for the use of his photos and serving as the club’s first president. Please submit any questions or suggested edits to [Secretary@SanDiegoMiataClub.org](mailto:Secretary@SanDiegoMiataClub.org). Please refer to the website for the most current information.

Whether you are reading the member handbook for the first time or refreshing your memory, we appreciate your reading it and thanks for being here.

Sincerely,  
2021 Board of Directors  
*Zoom Zoom*

CONTACT LIST	
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>Key Volunteers &amp; Committees</b>
<b>President:</b> <a href="mailto:President@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">President@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>	<b>Event Coordinator:</b> <a href="mailto:events@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">events@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>
<b>Vice President:</b> <a href="mailto:VicePresident@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">VicePresident@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>	<b>Membership:</b> <a href="mailto:membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">membership@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>
<b>Treasurer:</b> <a href="mailto:Treasurer@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">Treasurer@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>	<b>Social Events Coordinator:</b> <a href="mailto:socialeventscoordinator@sandiegomiataclub.org">socialeventscoordinator@sandiegomiataclub.org</a>
<b>Secretary:</b> <a href="mailto:Secretary@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">Secretary@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>	<b>Regalia:</b> <a href="mailto:regalia@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">regalia@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>
<b>Past President:</b> varies from year to year	<b>Webmaster:</b> <a href="mailto:webmaster@SanDiegoMiataClub.org">webmaster@SanDiegoMiataClub.org</a>

## APPENDIX A

### GLOSSARY OF MIATA CLUB TERMS

**Breadcrumbs:** Keeping the cars following you in visual range to help ensure that they see the next turn and do not get lost or fall behind. If the car behind you is stopped by a traffic light or other impediment, you should slow down or stop to ensure the driver knows which way to go.

**Drivers Meeting:** A meeting prior to the run to instruct Drivers and Co-pilots/Passengers on the route, general driving reminders, highlight any hazards along the way, and sign release forms. Directions may be distributed.

**Gap:** The space between cars in the line. Kept to a safe but minimal distance to allow the line to remain intact to reduce the potential introduction of an OTM (Other Than a Miata).

**Hazards:** Any person, bicycle, motorcycle, or item (rock, roadkill) on the roadway that may pose a risk.

**Lane Number:** Traffic lanes are referred to by number. The left or “fast” lane is called the “Number 1 Lane.” The lane to its right, the “Number 2 Lane,” etc.



**Line:** All the cars in between the run leader and sweep.

**NMC:** Used in email headers to indicate emails that contain “No Miata Content.”

**OTM - “Other Than a Miata:”** Any vehicle that has entered the line typically due to too large of a gap or the line broken up by traffic lights and stop signs.

**Oncoming:** Any vehicle coming in the opposite direction to the line while on a narrow road, blind turn, or hill, or when a passing situation arises. Typically called out over the radio as a safety precaution by the run leader or others as situations change.

**Pit Stop:** (aka Bio Break, Restroom Comfort Stop or Potty Stop): A scheduled break while on the run. Typically one every 75 – 90 minutes of driving, sometimes longer.

**Queue Up:** Directing cars to safely line up and await further instructions from the run leader.

**Radio:** Any two-way radio operating on the specified frequency/channel. The lead will announce the channel to be used on the run in the meeting invitation and during the drivers meeting. Used by all Drivers/Co-Pilots/Passengers to alert each other of situations.

**Radio Relays:** Run volunteers who are strategically positioned within the run group to help facilitate radio communications if the run group becomes spaced too far part or an obstacle is preventing clear radio transmission.

**Run Leader or Lead:** The front car leading the run. The run leader Gives directions over the radio.

**Side Traffic:** Any vehicle entering the line from a side road or driveway.

**Sweep:** The car at the rear of the line. Sweep radios to run leader when turns or maneuvers are completed. Sweep chases down cars who make wrong turns or remains behind if a car stops.

**Two (2) Lanes:** Cars driving in a line side-by-side. Useful when passing through a small town or area of congestion where the line can be easily broken up by stop signs, traffic lights and/or side traffic