

Tips for safe riding

Traffic regulations

- Everyone must wear a helmet, and straps should be adjusted correctly.
- Observe all traffic laws. Your bicycle is legally considered a vehicle, so you're subject to the same traffic laws as the drivers of motorized vehicles.
- Use hand and voice signals when turning or stopping.
- Ride with traffic. Motorists don't look for bicycles going the "wrong way."
- Don't wear headphones while you're cycling. It's dangerous and, in some places, it's illegal.
- When riding at night use a white front head lamp and a red rear reflector, each visible from a distance of 500 feet. It's also a good idea to have a red taillight or blinker and to wear reflective clothing and safety vests to increase visibility.

Hazards

- Make eye contact with drivers so you know that they've seen you.
- Cross railroad tracks at a 90° angle.
- Look ahead for road hazards (glass, potholes, wide cracks, metal grates, gravel, and so on), and point them out to other riders. This is extra important when the road is wet.
- Check for traffic yourself. Scan the road in front of you, behind you, and around you.
- Watch for car doors opening in your path.
- Use voice and hand signals to communicate with other riders, especially when you're riding close together.
- Wear visible clothing. If you are riding in rain or fog, lights are also a good idea.

Courtesy

- Take a full lane when safety dictates. If you're delaying five or more vehicles, pull off the road at the next turnout to allow them to pass.
- Ride single file when cars are passing or the shoulder is narrow.
- If you stop for any reason, move yourself and your bicycle *completely* off the road or trail.
- On multi-use trails and sidewalks, yield to pedestrians. Slow down when other people are present, and slow to a walking pace if safety dictates.
- Pass on the left, and use a bell or your voice to alert others that you're passing.
- Wave your thanks to drivers who are polite and wait for you or even drivers who are a little rude.

Other good ideas

- Wear an ANSI- or Snell-approved bicycle helmet. (Required by law in some places.)
- When there's traffic behind you, ride single-file so cars can pass.
- Limit pace lines to eight or fewer.
- Before every ride, make sure your bike is in good condition.
- Bring a pump, spare tube, patch kit, tire irons, and a full water bottle.
- Eat before you're hungry, drink before you're thirsty.
- Have fun!

Finally, a quick safety check for your bike: ABC Quick Check

- A=Air in tires
- B= Brakes working
- C=Chain lubed and crank in good shape
- Quick=Quick releases tight
- Check=Make sure everything else seems OK