



## **10 Cycling Safety Tips for Cyclists**

### 1. Cycling Citizenship

Along with the right to cycle comes a responsibility. Familiarize yourself with all applicable traffic laws and cycling rules (see Rules of the Road). Motorists will be much more willing to accept cyclist's rightful place on the road if cyclists act lawfully and respectfully. Do not run stop signs or red lights or use the wrong side of the street. It is always best and safest to ride single file. Riding responsibly will do wonders towards easing tensions and fostering a more harmonious environment between motorists and cyclists.

### 2. Right On

As a rule, it is best to ride in the direction of traffic, staying as far to the right as is practical. However, make sure there is room to handle emergencies and that you do not ride so close to the right that you run the risk of hitting the curb and being thrown into traffic. There are times when you simply cannot stay to the far right—whether it's to overtake another cyclist or vehicle, to make a left turn, or to avoid a hazard. Be sure to wait for a safe opportunity and use the proper hand signals when you take a lane.

### 3. Join In

If you are traveling at the same speed as other traffic, it may be safer to jump in and ride with traffic; because, this may make you more visible to motorists. Joining traffic is sometimes necessary because the road is simply too narrow for both a bike and a car. It is a particularly good idea to take a lane and join traffic before an intersection to make your presence known—especially for right-turning drivers who may not see you as they start their turn.

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When you do join traffic, make sure you never pass on the right. This is always dangerous, but particularly so in an intersection. By waiting directly behind a vehicle, you can see a car's signals; otherwise, you never know if the motorist is about to make a right turn and hit you.

### **4. Use Your Head**

Regardless if you're going to the corner store or heading out on a marathon ride, always wear a helmet. Make sure it is properly fastened and fitted. (The helmet should fit snugly and not move when you shake your head).

### **5. Seeing Eye to Eye**

Make eye contact with drivers whenever possible. This ensures that motorists see you and helps you assert your rightful place on the road. This "personal connection" reminds motorists that you are indeed real LIFE in need of attention and protection. Once you make that connection, motorists may give you more respect on the road.

### **6. The Road Straightly Travelled**

Try to ride consistently and predictably. For instance, at an intersection, do not veer into the crosswalk and then suddenly reappear on the road again. Don't thread through parked cars. With such erratic behavior, motorists will not be aware of your presence when you try to re-emerge into traffic. Inconsistent conduct increases your chances of being squeezed out of traffic or, worse, getting hit.

### **7. Playing Defense**

Make sure you are always aware of your surroundings. Know what is behind you and watch out for what is in front of you. Always be on the lookout for road hazards; sand and gravel, glass, railroad tracks, parked cars, snow and slush can wreak havoc on you and your bike. Sewer grates and cracks in the road can catch your wheel and cause you to be thrown from the bike. Watch for parked cars where people may be opening doors on the driver side of the vehicle without looking. Always wait until you have ample time to make your move, whether you

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are changing a lane or turning a corner. Do not expect to be granted the right of way in any instance.

### **8. Flaunt It**

Make your presence felt. Wear bright colour clothing. At night or in inclement weather, it is important to use reflective lights in the front, side and rear that make you visible from all directions.

### **9. Helping Hands**

Emergencies happen. Be prepared. Always make sure you have at least one hand on your handlebars, no matter what. Know and use your hand signals whenever you are changing lanes or making a turn.

### **10. Brake Away**

Make sure your brakes are always in top-notch condition. Be aware of how weather and road conditions can affect your ability to brake.

The above *10 Cycling Safety Tips for Cyclists* has been brought to you by [www.yieldtolife.org](http://www.yieldtolife.org)