

# BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS



- In Michigan if you ride in the street, you must follow all traffic laws just as if you were a motor vehicle. If you ride on the sidewalks, you must follow the same laws that pedestrians do. Some communities may outlaw riding in the street, or riding on the sidewalk, so be sure to check the law in your community.
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, even when riding only a short distance. Thousands of deaths and serious head injuries are prevented every year through the use of helmets by riders of all ages.
- Always use hand signals when you're going to turn. Don't make drivers guess what you're going to do next. Use your left hand to make all hand signals.
  - Left arm and hand extended straight out means you're going to turn left.
  - Left arm extended straight out, with the hand pointing up, indicates a right turn.
  - Left arm extended straight out, with the hand pointing down indicates you're going to stop.
- Never share a lane with a motor vehicle. Pulling beside a motor vehicle is asking for trouble. The driver may not see you, and turn right into a driveway or side street. If a vehicle pulls into your lane and stays beside you, slow down until you are behind them.
- Always follow the appropriate signal. If you're riding in the street obey all traffic lights and signs, just as if you were driving a motor vehicle. If you're riding on the sidewalk, obey all crosswalk signals, and walk your bike across the street.
- Keep an eye ahead for debris, potholes or other objects in your way. Sudden maneuvers to avoid them can cause accidents and injuries. Instead of veering suddenly to the left, stop and be sure its safe before changing lanes.
- Use a mirror. If your bike doesn't have one, get one. Never change lanes without carefully checking behind you for oncoming traffic.
- Visibility saves lives! At night, the law requires you to have head lamps, tail lamps and side reflectors. If your bike doesn't have them, either get them or don't ride at night. If drivers can't see you, you're asking for trouble. During the day, wear brightly colored clothing to make yourself more visible.





- Young children should not be allowed to ride in the street without adult supervision. Traffic moves faster than most children can see oncoming danger, assess the risk, and react safely. One bad decision can result in serious injury or death.
- Discuss the Rules of the Road with your children, and then let them know that you expect they will follow them at all times when riding their bikes. If you see them do something unsafe, talk with them about why it was unsafe, and what the consequences could have been. When your children realize

ize that you take bicycle safety seriously, they're more likely to ride safely even when you aren't watching.

- Make eye contact with drivers. Assume that they don't see you until you're sure they do. Many drivers are distracted by cell phones, radios, passengers or fatigue and don't pay close enough attention to what's going on around them. Use your horn, bell or yell if you need to in order to get their attention.
- Make sure you have all basic safety equipment before you ride in the roadway: A horn or bell, a helmet, reflectors, headlamp, tail lamp, and a mirror. Safety equipment is much cheaper than the medical bills that can result from bicycle accidents.
- Make sure your bicycle is in good condition before you ride. Your tires should be in good repair and be properly inflated. Your brakes should be adjusted to stop your bike safely. Your seat should be properly adjusted for your height. If your bike has been damaged, don't ride it until it has been properly repaired.
- Never "ride-double" unless your bicycle was built to handle two riders. Passengers can easily fall from the bike or become entangled in the spokes, or shift their weight and cause you to fall or have an accident.
- Be aware of automobile occupants who may suddenly open a car door into your path. Keep a safe distance from cars parked at the side of the road.
- Approach every intersection safely and slowly, and don't count on drivers to always do what they're supposed to. Watch for drivers who run red lights, who turn in front of you, or who refuse to give you the right-of-way.
- If you're riding in the street, always ride with - not against - the flow of traffic. The law requires it, and it is safer for you. Be sure to follow the lane markings for the lane you're in. If its a right-turn-only lane, you must turn right just like a motorized vehicle would.
- If the street has a bike lane, use it and remember to follow all traffic signals, signs and other rules of the road.

