

Bike safely – for kids

Safety tips and useful information about bicycles and cycling. Share this book with your family and friends.



MANITOBA
PUBLIC INSURANCE

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TOP 10 RULES OF THE ROAD

- 1 Wear your helmet.
- 2 Use hand signals.
- 3 Obey traffic rules.
- 4 Keep to the right.
- 5 Shoulder check.
- 6 Turn carefully.
- 7 Be careful near parked cars.
- 8 Watch out for moving cars.
- 9 Know where to ride.
- 10 Be seen.



Before you ride

Wear your helmet!

It's the law that anyone under 18 years of age in Manitoba must wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet while cycling.

Use a helmet that:

- Is marked with an approved Canadian safety standards symbol. If your helmet doesn't meet Canadian safety standards, ask your parent or guardian to get you one that does.
- Is a bright colour, fits snugly and is something you like.
- Is less than five years old and has not been hit or damaged. If your helmet gets hit hard, you will need to get a new one.
- Has adjustable straps that you **always buckle**.
- Doesn't wobble or fall off when you shake your head — even when the straps are undone.

Follow the 2V1 rule



"2" fingers between your eyebrows and the edge of your helmet



Straps form a "V" under your ears



"1" finger between the strap and your chin

Your helmet protects your head and your brain!

Do's and Don'ts

- Do** wear your bike helmet **every time you ride**, even if you are only going for a short ride.
- Do** make sure your helmet fits you properly. It should be level and cover your forehead.
- Do** the buddy helmet-check. Before riding with a friend, check to make sure each other's helmet is on correctly.
- Don't** wear a hat underneath your helmet as your helmet may slip off.

What's the correct size bike?

Just like your shoes, bikes need to fit properly. You'll be more comfortable and in control. If your bike is too big or small for you, it will be difficult to ride and could pose a danger to you and others.

Here's how to check if your bike is the right size:

1. Straddle the top tube with your feet flat on the ground. You should be able to lift your bike at least 2–3 cm (one inch) off the ground.
2. Adjust your seat height so that you can touch the ground with the balls of both your feet.
3. While you are sitting on your seat, check to see that the leg on the pedal closest to the ground is slightly bent at the knee.
4. When you're seated, you should be able to reach the handlebars with only a gentle lean. You shouldn't need to stretch too far in order to reach them. You should also check to make sure the levers on the handlebar brakes are adjusted for your size.
5. Make sure when you buy a bike that you ask the salesperson to show you how high the seat and handlebars can be raised. This will help you understand how the bike can change and adapt as you grow!



Make your bike legal and safe!

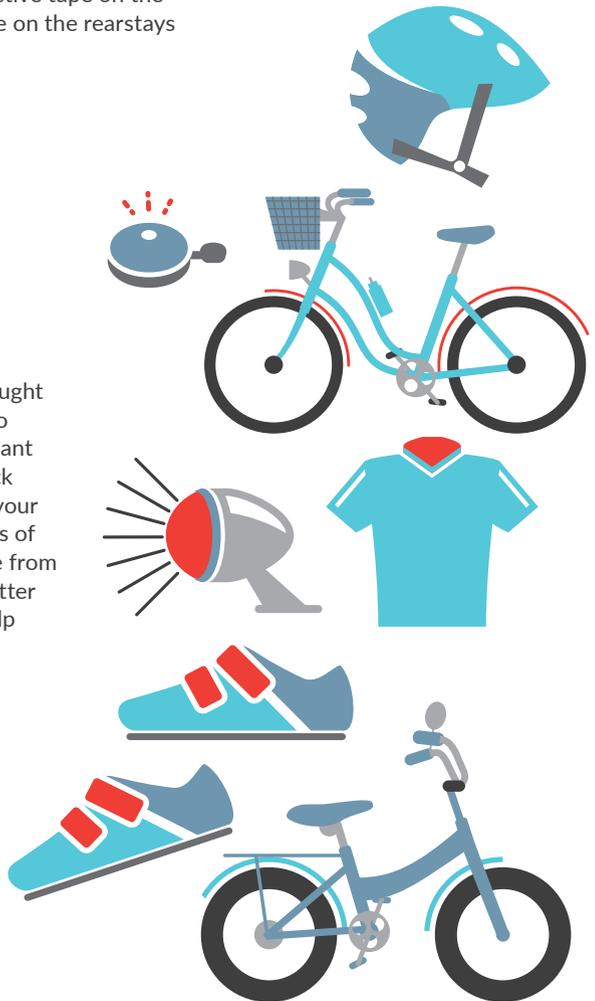
Equipment required by law:

1. **Helmet:** Cyclists under 18 must wear a helmet. Helmets are strongly recommended for cyclists over 18.
2. **Lights and reflectors:** White light mounted on the front of the bike and red reflector on the back for riding at night.

Recommended equipment and clothing:

- Bell or horn
- Reflective tape: white reflective tape on the forks and red reflective tape on the rearstays
- Rack or basket
- Water bottle in a holder
- Red light on the back of the bike for riding at night
- Bike lock
- Shoes that cover your toes
- Bright-coloured clothing to be more visible

Make sure nothing can get caught in your chain and cause you to lose your balance, like loose pant legs or shoelaces (you can tuck them in). Running shoes grip your pedals better than other types of shoes and keep your feet safe from scratches. Gloves give you better grip of the handlebars and help protect your hands if you fall.



A-B-C Quick Check

The A-B-C Quick Check is something you should do every time you ride your bike. It only takes a few minutes and can help tell you if there is something on your bike that needs to be fixed. All you have to remember is A-B-C!

A = Air

It is always important to check your tires to make sure you have enough air in them. Get an adult to help you use a bike pump if you think the tires need more air.

To check the air, make a “thumbs up” sign and then press down on your tire with the thumb. You should be able to press down a little bit – but if you can push down a lot, your tire needs more air.



B = Brakes

Brakes are very important because they help you stop. You need to make sure your brakes are working properly. Make sure both brake levers don't pull all the way back to the handlebars. You should be able to slide your hand between the lever and hand grip. Squeeze both brakes and rock your bike back and forth, checking for any loose steering components. Steering should be tight and handlebars aligned properly with the front wheel.



If your bike has coaster brakes (also known as foot brakes), turn the pedals backwards to check if the brakes are working.

Sometimes you may have to stop very quickly. Be careful when applying the front brakes so you don't flip over your handlebars.

Always leave extra space for braking when riding in wet weather.

If you think your brakes might not be working properly, ask an adult for help.

C = Chain

You want to make sure your bike chain is nice and straight at the top and bottom.

Turn your pedals a few times to see if the chain runs without getting caught. Make sure it isn't rusty or dry. If it is, it may need to be cleaned or lubricated. Ask an adult to help you with this.



Quick Check

If you have quick releases on your wheels and seat, make sure they're tight and aren't easy to open.

Before you get on your bike, there's one last step you should take. Simply pick your bike up about 10 cm (3–4 in) off the ground and gently drop it. Did anything rattle or fall off? If the answer is 'no', then you're ready to take your bike for a ride!

Top 10 Rules of the road

1. Wear your helmet

Putting on an approved helmet is the most important thing you can do before getting on your bike. Think of it as a seatbelt for your brain that can protect you in the event you take a tumble or fall off your bike. No matter how short or long your ride is, you should always wear your helmet when getting on your bike.

2. Use hand signals

Hand signals are a cyclist's version of a car's turn signals and brake lights. They show drivers what you are planning to do so that they don't run into you. Remember, the driver of a car can't read your mind.

Make your hand signal early enough so that you give cars enough time to see you and react. An easy way to remember the left and right signals is to point in the direction you want to go. Always make sure hand signals are specific and clear, and that you extend your arm fully.

Signalling requires you to have one hand off your handlebars. Make sure you practice signalling so you can signal without going off course. Signal well ahead of the turn and put both hands back on the handlebars before you make a turn or change lanes.

The proper signalling order is:

1. Shoulder check — is it safe to put your hand out?
2. Make your hand signal.
3. Shoulder check again to make sure it is safe to turn or change lanes.
4. Complete your turn with both hands on the handlebars.



3. Obey traffic rules

When you are riding your bike on the road, obey the same traffic signals, signs and lights that cars do. This includes stopping at stop signs and red lights.



Stop



Crosswalk



Yield



Do Not Enter



Railway
Crossing



Traffic Lights
Ahead



One Way

Don't weave, race or stunt-ride on the road. Never carry riders or packages. Both of these could cause you to fall and be seriously hurt.

Don't wear headphones or ear buds since you may not hear any nearby cars or pedestrians, which can be very dangerous for both you and those around you.



4. Keep to the right

Always ride in the same direction as cars, on the right-hand side of the road. (The right-hand side is the same side as your bicycle chain.)

Ride single file and not side-by-side so that cars don't have to move as far around you. If you fall off your bike, you don't want to fall into your friend or have them fall into you.

5. Shoulder check

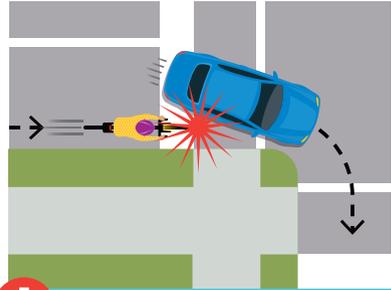
Before turning or changing lanes, always shoulder check first to see if it's safe to put out your hand to signal. Shoulder check a second time to make sure it's safe to turn or change lanes. Put both hands back on the handlebars to give you more control when you turn.

6. Turn carefully

Most crashes happen at intersections. Be careful — look and listen before signalling and going ahead.

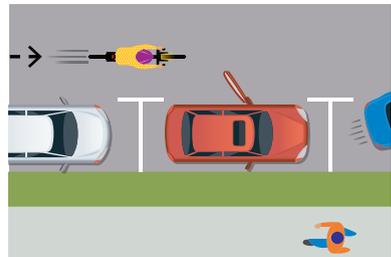
To safely turn left, walk your bike across the intersection until you get more experience.

To make a right turn, watch for other cars turning right. Don't squeeze to the right of a car because the driver may not see you and could turn into you.



7. Be careful near parked cars

When riding near parked cars, be sure to leave plenty of room between you and the car, and always be ready to stop. A door can open suddenly. Watch for drivers who may be pulling into or out of parking spots.



8. Watch out for moving cars

Stop and look in all directions before riding onto the street from the driveway or sidewalk.

Get off your bike to cross at a crosswalk or intersection. Make eye contact with drivers so they see you. Do not proceed unless you feel safe to do so and watch for additional cars that may not have seen you.



9. Know where to ride

Ask your parent or guardian if you're allowed to ride on the sidewalk or on the street. If the tires on your bike are 41 cm (16 in.) or less you can ride on the sidewalk. Remember to share the sidewalk with people walking, small children, dogs or other young cyclists. Call out or ring your bell to let others know you're coming.

If your bike is too big to ride on the sidewalk, use bike paths and quiet streets. Make sure you have parental supervision when you're heading out on the road.

Look for these signs and pavement markings to let you know where it's safe to ride:



Diamond Lane



Bicycles Allowed



No Bicycles Allowed



Sharrow
(Share the road with cars)



Share the Road

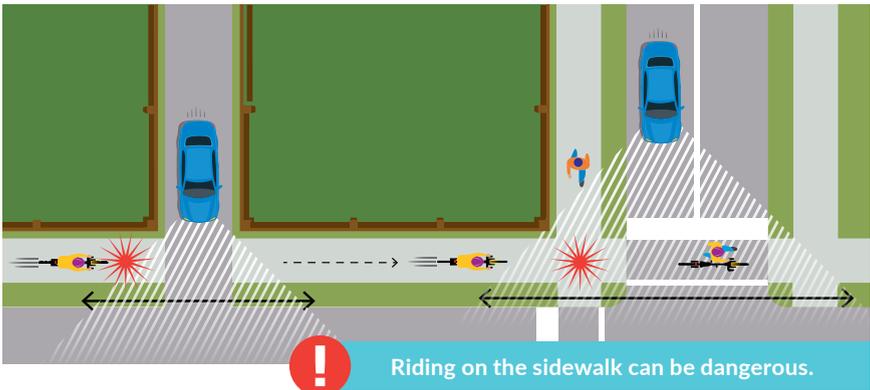


Do Not Enter
Except Buses and Cyclists



Bike Lane

On the sidewalk, you should always be aware of your surroundings, especially where sidewalks intersect with roads, driveways and back lanes, as drivers and pedestrians may not see you.



On the street, keep your eyes ahead and watch for potholes, gravel, glass, drainage grates, puddles and other dangers. Be ready to slow down and go around. Stay away from busy roads and highways. No matter where you ride, be ready to slow down and stop for cars at intersections or pulling out of driveways and back lanes.

10. Be seen

Always wear white or bright clothes to help other people see you. Try not to ride your bike at night. But if you have to, make sure you have a front white light and a red or amber reflector on the back so drivers can see you better.

Resources for parents/guardians

More information on keeping your children safe, helmet fitting, sizing a bicycle, basic traffic and handling skills, required and recommended safety equipment, training opportunities and much more can be found at mpi.mb.ca under Road Safety.

For more information, please contact:

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234 Donald Street, Box 6300
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4A4

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