



Your Cycling Connection



Bike Basics 101

Bike Size & Type

Whatever bike you have, the most important thing is that it fits you, and that it feels good.

A bike that is too small will be cramped and very difficult to pedal. A bike that's too big will be unsafe if you can't stand while straddling the top tube. If your bike is uncomfortable, it probably doesn't fit right

- When standing over the frame with feet on the ground, there should be a couple of inches between you and the top tube
- When sitting on the seat, feet should be just able to touch the ground.
- New riders may want to have feet fully on the ground, but encourage a higher seat. This makes it easier to pedal and is better for your knees.

Wheels & Tires

Mountain bike tires (knobby tires) are better for off-road and increased control. Street tires are thinner, have less or no knobs, and are faster on paved surfaces. Either way – make sure there is enough air in the tubes! Keep wheels pumped up to minimize the chances of getting a flat.

A Bicycle in Good Repair

To ensure that a bicycle is safe to ride, make sure:

- The brakes work to stop the bike.
- The tires are inflated properly.
- The wheels are securely attached – check quick release mechanisms to ensure they are tight.
- The chain runs smoothly and stays on the chain rings under normal circumstances

Lights

After dusk, you must legally have a front and rear light. If you're commuting in the city, a small white LED light will suffice. Brighter lights are best if biking in the rain or on busy streets, or for added safety. Visibility is a big part of safety, especially when riding in low light. Rear lights should be red, and the small LED lights also come in red and are quite affordable. They can attach to your bike or helmet.

Clothing

If you are comfortable riding in something then you can wear it to ride! But here are some things to keep in mind:

- If riding in low light, wear bright colours to help keep you visible.
- Beware of loose items on the rider that might get caught in the spokes or pedals.
- A pair of gloves and rain jacket are ideal to be prepared for wet or cool weather

Bell or Horn

It's a good idea to have some sort of noisemaker on your bike. The bell is our first pick because it's friendly, and in Vancouver it's required by law!

Helmet

Always wear a helmet when riding – it's the law! Both sport and bucket helmets will help protect you equally, provided they're certified for cycling. Ensure you're wearing it properly!



2 fingers distance from helmet to brow



V-Shape straps around both ears



1 finger between chin and strap

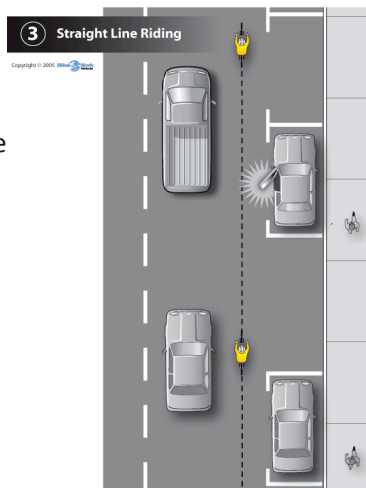
Carrying Your Things

There are a few options for carrying your supplies while riding a bike. Ideally your stuff can be on the bike, which takes the weight off your shoulders:

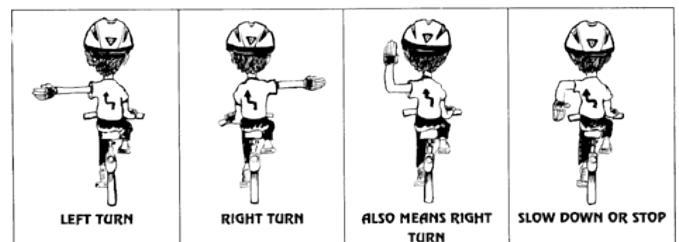
- **Rack:** If you have a bike rack you can strap things to it, or get panniers, special bags designed to carry your stuff on your bike.
- **Basket:** install a basket and through your gear in there.
- **Back:** wear a backpack like normal when riding a bike!

Tips for Cycling Safely on the Road

- **Obey traffic rules.**
Bikes and cars obey the same rules because bikes are considered vehicles. Stop at all stop signs and lights, and yield at traffic circles.
- **Be safe and predictable.**
Don't weave, race or stunt-ride in traffic.
- **Always ride with traffic.**
Keep to the right and ride single file in a straight line.
- **Beware of parked cars.**
Leave about 1 meter of space when riding past parked cars to stay out of the door zone!



- **Pedestrians always have the right of way.**
Ride slowly and yield to pedestrians when riding on paths or walkways. Walk bikes in crosswalks.
- **Shoulder check.**
Before turning look ahead all ways. Shoulder check on the side you are turning, and signal before turning.



- **Beware of roadway hazards.**
Stop and look all ways before first entering a roadway, driveway or alley. Slow down, apply brakes early and be careful. Avoid riding over potholes, cracks and railroad tracks.
- **Route planning is essential.**
Plan a bicycle route that includes safe crossing points at busy collector or arterial streets, and try to choose a route that primarily includes quiet residential streets and bike paths.
- **Stay alert.**
Keep eyes up and moving, listen carefully without earbuds in, and make your own decisions when riding in a group. Avoid following the person in front of you without checking for yourself if it is safe.