

THE  
**METRO VANCOUVER  
CYCLISTS**  
HANDBOOK



**VANCOUVER AREA  
CYCLING  
COALITION**  
*The Lower Mainland's Cycling Advocates!*



**MOSAIC**

# Cycling is low cost, healthy and easy.

Join over 275,000 Metro Vancouver residents who ride a bicycle at least once a week because it is low cost, healthy and easy.

Cycling is for everyone!

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# independence

A bicycle lets you travel where you want to go, when you want to go and is often quicker than public transit or a car.

# safety

Bicycles are popular on Metro Vancouver's roads. Lanes reserved just for bikes and traffic laws that protect cyclists make cycling safer for adults and children.

# low cost

When you own a bicycle your travel costs are almost free – hundreds of dollars less than the cost of transit and thousands of dollars cheaper than a car.

# healthy

Exercising regularly on your bike will make your mind and body feel better and give you more energy.

# fun

Exploring Metro Vancouver's neighbourhoods, beaches and parks with family and friends is one of the many ways to have fun on your bike.



### **before riding your bike**

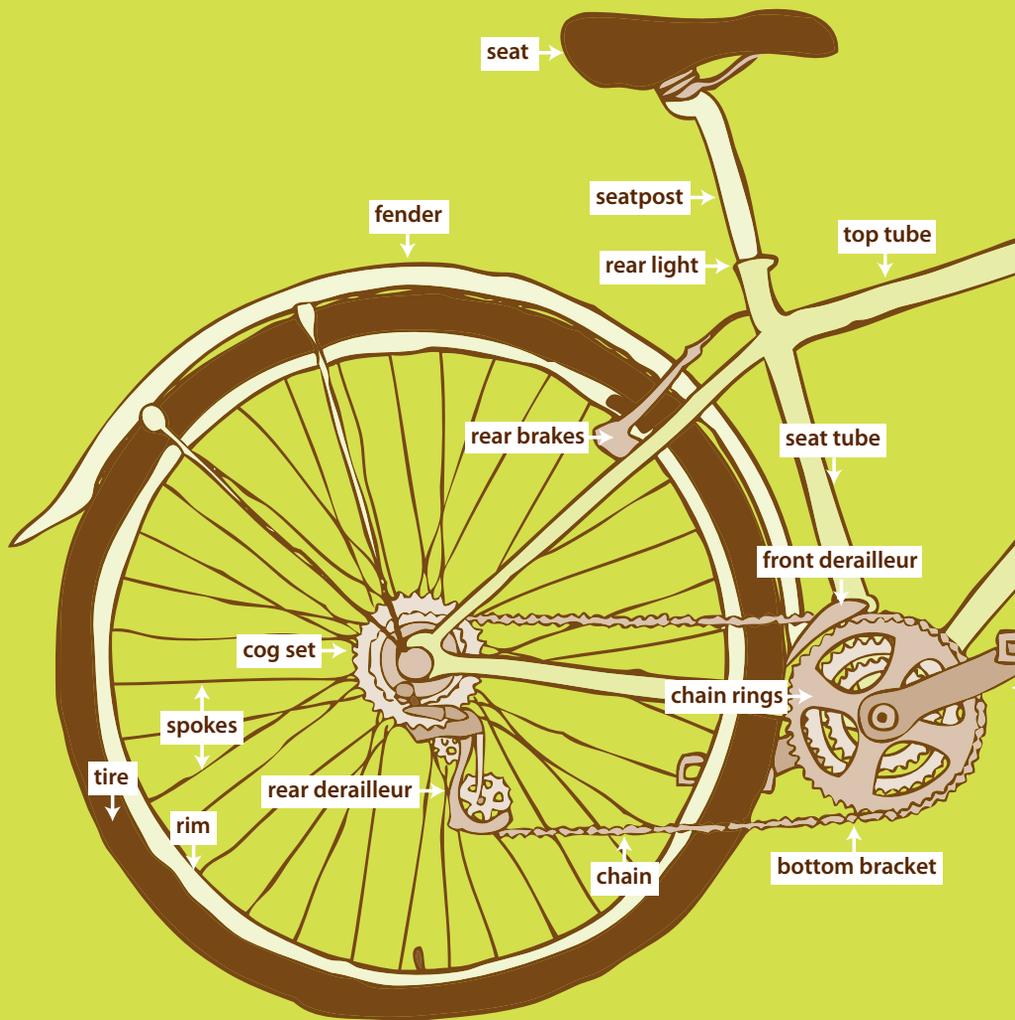
You'll feel safe, comfortable, able and happy if you have a bicycle that fits properly, is regularly fixed, and has the right things on it.

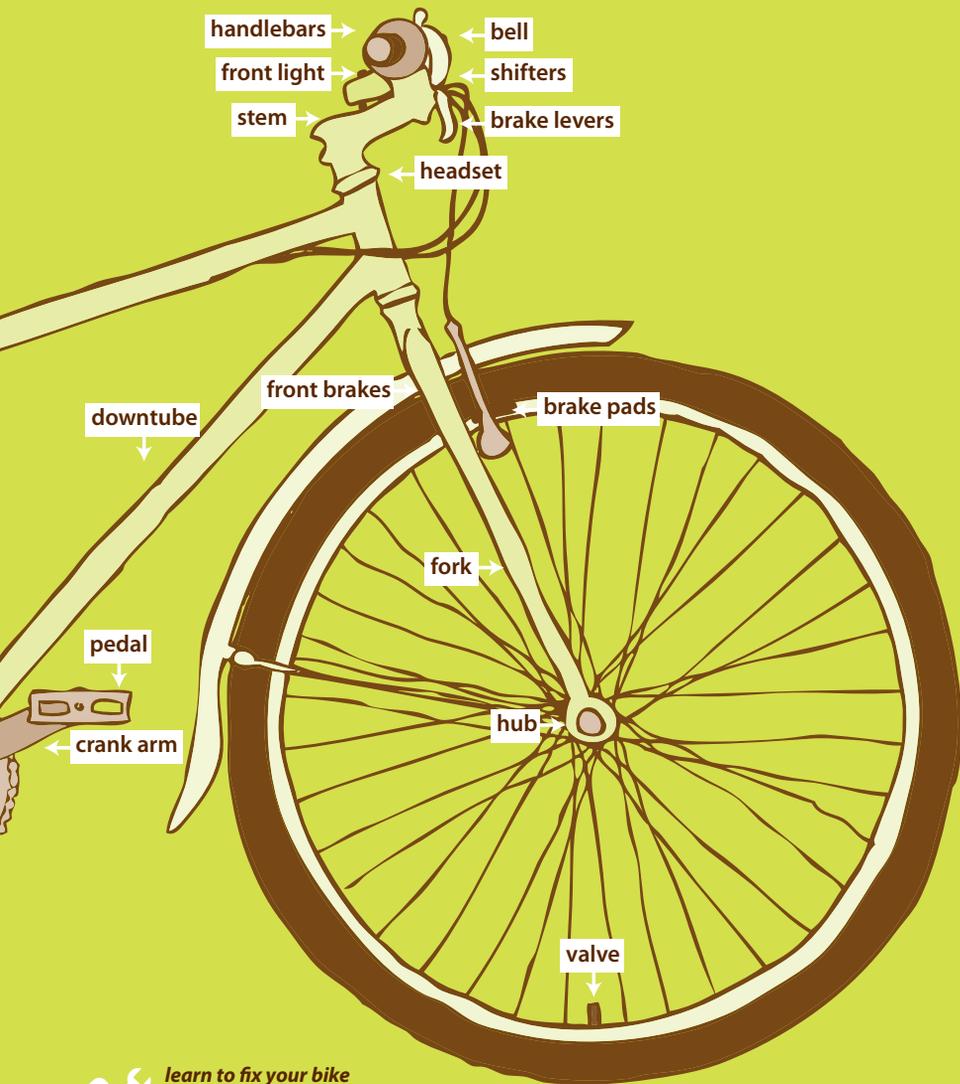
**fix your bike** Check regularly that your brakes work and allow you to stop quickly and your pedals do not move back and forth. Make sure your tires are full of air. This helps prevent flat tires and makes it easier to pedal.

**your bike should fit** Make sure you can stand over the crossbar of your bike. When sitting you should comfortably reach the handlebars and your leg should be slightly bent while touching the pedal at its lowest point.



*The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition website at [vacc.bc.ca](http://vacc.bc.ca) is a good general resource that offers the latest cycling news as well as information on programs, education and events*





**learn to fix your bike**

The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition offers a variety workshops on how to fix your bike from basic to advanced skills. [vacc.bc.ca/streetwise](http://vacc.bc.ca/streetwise)

**be seen, stay safe** BC law requires that cyclists use a front white light and a rear red light after dark and that bicycles must have a bell or horn. Lights, reflectors and bright clothing help drivers see cyclists at night.



*a cyclist is easier to see in the daytime*



*at night you become invisible*

*with lights & reflectors you can be seen again*

**wear a helmet** A properly worn helmet will protect your head in a fall. In BC, cyclists are legally required to wear one.



*correct position — lookin' good*



*too far forward,  
strap too loose*



*too far  
backwards*

**small children** By law, small children must be seated in an approved child's bicycle seat or bike trailer. It's illegal for two people to ride on a bicycle in BC unless it's a tandem.

## watch for people walking

Stop while people are on crosswalks and let them go first. When passengers are getting on and off Translink buses or school busses, cyclists must stop a reasonable distance from the doors and allow them to safely cross the road.

## stay safe beside cars

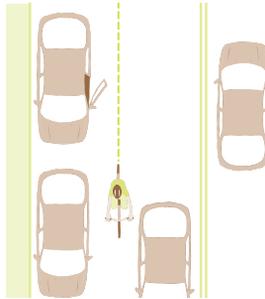
Always keep control of your bike and be aware of cars and people walking. Look around you and ride in a straight line or signal if you are turning or changing lanes.

**pay attention** Pay attention around cars because they don't always look for bicycles. Watch the road for holes or car doors opening ahead of you in your path.

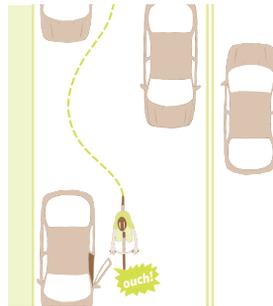
**follow traffic laws** You must stop at red lights and stop signs and always ride in the same direction as cars. Under BC law, the slowest moving vehicles ride on the road closest to the curb.

## ride in a straight line

Drivers will understand what you are doing if you ride in a straight line and away from parked cars. Do not swerve in and out between cars. Look over your shoulder before you change lanes.

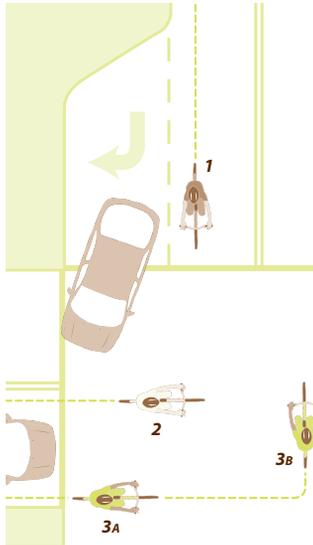


✓ keep a good distance from parked cars



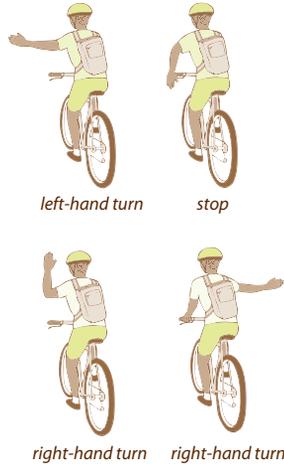
✗ do not ride into gaps

**intersections** When going straight through an intersection try to make eye contact with drivers. Your bike is allowed to take the whole lane if that is the safest thing to do.



- 1 do not enter right-turn lane if going straight
- 2 left-hand turn from left of lane
- 3 two-part left-hand turn from right of lane

**signal your turn** Signal before you want to change lanes by using hand signals or pointing. Go slow when you turn, especially if the road is wet.



**stay away from large vehicles** Don't get close to trucks, buses and other big cars. Don't pass them in an intersection. Sometimes they make wide turns.



**Take a safe cycling course**

The VACC's Streetwise cycling courses for young cyclists and adults will boost your skills, safety, and cycling pleasure: [vacc.bc.ca/streetwise](http://vacc.bc.ca/streetwise)

## cyclists and the law

Riding a bicycle in Metro Vancouver does not require a license or special permit. However, cyclists must follow traffic rules and obey signs and signals or face fines.

**Motor Vehicle Act** BC's Motor Vehicle Act (MVA) specifies how all road users – including cyclists – must behave. Cyclists must obey all regular traffic laws as well as some regulations specific to bikes.

## traffic laws & police

Police can stop cyclists they believe have disobeyed a traffic law. If stopped, cyclists must give their correct name and address.

**no penalty points for cyclists** Cyclists do not receive penalty points on their driver's license for tickets issued while riding their bicycle.

## List of select MVA offences and fines

cycle without required bicycle helmet	\$29
ride cycle after dark without lights	\$109
ride cycle on sidewalk	\$109
disobey stop sign or fail to stop	\$109
fail to signal for stop or turn	\$109
careless cycling	\$109



### find legal resources

*Bike Sense, the British Columbia Bicycle Operator's Manual, contains comprehensive information about bikes and the law, the rights and responsibilities of cyclists, as well as cycling safety advice: [bikesense.bc.ca](http://bikesense.bc.ca)*



### **stay off the sidewalk**

You are not allowed to ride your bicycle on the sidewalk or in crosswalks. Always let people walking go first. It may be best to get off your bike and walk.

**tickets** Police can give tickets to cyclists for breaking laws like not stopping at a red light or for not having a light or bell on their bike. Most tickets cost \$109.

**accidents** If you get in an accident, you may be able to get money to replace your bicycle and pay your doctor's bills, even if you caused the accident. Make sure the police are called and get the information of the driver, cyclist, or person walking. If it is a driver, get their license plate number and insurance information.

## getting around your city

More than 60% of Metro Vancouver residents own or have access to a bicycle. The region's climate is not too hot and not too cold, making bicycle trips to shop, meet friends, or travel to school or work possible in all seasons.

**ride to work** Nearly two percent of Metro Vancouver workers travel to work or school by bicycle. Trips by bicycle are a smart, low cost, and quick way to get places.

## choose the best route

The Metro Vancouver Cycling Map will help you choose a route using bicycle lanes, paths through parks, waterfront trails or side streets without trucks and speeding cars. Try a new route on a Sunday to experience it without busy weekday traffic.

## bike routes and bike lanes

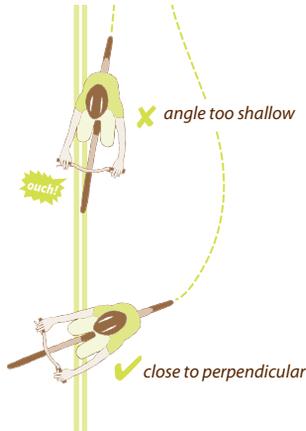
Metro Vancouver has hundreds of kilometres of bicycle lanes on the road and paths through parks, and beside beaches and streams.

## ride with someone who knows

If you are a beginner, bring someone who knows how to cycle safely with cars to help you.

## beware of railway tracks

Railway tracks are dangerous because narrow tires can get caught in them and they are very slippery when wet. Try to cross tracks at a right angle.



### cycling map

view the Metro Vancouver Cycling Map as well as local area cycling maps on-line: [translink.ca/en/Cycling/Cycling-Routes](http://translink.ca/en/Cycling/Cycling-Routes)



### dress for the weather

Wear whatever you feel comfortable in. Layers of light clothing that can be added or removed as needed help in colder weather. Waterproof jackets and pants will also keep you dry when it rains.

### transit with your bicycle

You can take your bicycle on the Sky-train anytime except during morning rush hour (7-9am) westbound and afternoon rush hour (4-6pm) eastbound, Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays). Translink busses have bike racks and bikes are also allowed on SeaBus and West Coast Express.

**lock your bike** Always lock your bike frame and both wheels to prevent theft. A U-lock fixed to a post-and-ring or bike rack works best or try a secure post or pole. Use a second lock for extra security.



*lock your front wheel & frame to the post, not ring*

Start your journey to

# health, happiness and freedom

Riding a bicycle keeps us healthy and happy, and gives us unlimited freedom of movement. Explore your city with thousands of others and enjoy cycling for life.



TravelSmart showcases smarter options for traveling in Metro Vancouver: choices as simple as cycling to work or to shop, ride-sharing with a car full of friends to school or events, taking transit, or using a carshare membership. For more information on smart travel choices that create benefits for yourself, your community, and the environment, visit

[travelsmart.ca](http://travelsmart.ca)



The Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition is a regional non-profit society working to improve conditions for cycling in Metro Vancouver. The VACC's mission is to make cycling an attractive choice for everyone, through local advocacy, cycling education, and community events. There are many benefits to joining.

[vacc.bc.ca](http://vacc.bc.ca)



MOSAIC is a multilingual non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees in the course of their settlement and integration into Canadian society. We support and empower immigrant and refugee communities, guided by our vision of equality, social justice, equal access, and democracy.

[mosaicbc.com](http://mosaicbc.com)

For more copies, email [admin@vacc.bc.ca](mailto:admin@vacc.bc.ca)



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