

# Rules of the Road: Cyclists

Courtesy of League of American Cyclists

Bicyclists are required to follow the same road rules as motorists. This is important for your personal safety. A major concern many bike commuters have is the potential dangers of riding in traffic. Fact is, 85% of all serious bicycle crashes don't even involve a moving car. Among the remaining accidents, the vast majority are avoidable. Cyclists who learn and obey the rules of the road have 80% fewer collisions than those who do not.

Here are essential safety tips:

- **Wear a helmet.**
- **Ride on the right** - Riding against traffic is a major cause of bicycle accidents.
- **Be predictable** - Avoid sudden swerves and stops.
- **Be visible** - Wear bright, reflective clothing. Use lights and reflectors in low-light conditions.
- **Follow and obey signs, signals, and pavement markings.**
- **Signal when you are turning or stopping** - Look over your left shoulder for traffic before you make a move. This also signals motorists.
- **Yield to pedestrians.**
- **Watch for road hazards such as broken glass, gravel, and potholes.**
- **Position yourself appropriately** - On wide roads, ride 3-4 feet to the right of cars in the traffic lane; on narrow roads, stay just inside the traffic lane so vehicles must partly cross the middle line to pass. (This removes the temptation to squeeze by you. You can move over a little just as the car gets beside you.) For turns, work your way into the proper lane 150 feet early; if you can't get in by 40 to 50 feet before the turn, go straight and double back or use the crosswalk. Stay at least a foot away from the curbs, where debris accumulates. Always allow enough room for a car door to open when passing parked vehicles, and never weave in and out of traffic between parked cars. Hold your line as if you are next to a parked car. This is better for visibility and predictability.
- **Ride defensively and respectfully** - Watch for people who may not be looking for you, and be courteous to other users of the road.