Texas Guide to Safe Bicycling

Safety Tips for Bicycling in Texas

Texas Department of Transportation
Bicycle/Pedestrian Program

Texas Department of Transportation

3rd Edition

Town Lake Trail, Austin, TX

Texas is a Great Place to Live, Work and Play.

Riding a bicycle is a healthy and fun option for experiencing and exploring Texas. Bicycling is also an attractive transportation choice for getting to and from work, running errands and going to school. **Bicycles are legally considered vehicles on Texas's roadways**, so be sure you know the rules of the road and are respectful of all road users.

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) encourages you to take a few minutes to review this booklet and share information with family and friends. This bicycling safety guide explains the rules of the road, provides tips about biking and shares with you the basic guidelines about cycling on Texas roadways.

Bicycle safely and share the road!

Cover Photos: Left to Right, Town Lake Trail, Austin, TX; Texas Loop 375, El Paso, TX; Town Lake Trail, Austin, TX; FM 170, The River Road, Brewster County, TX; Parker Road Station, DART, Plano, TX

Contents

Safety Tips for Bicycling in Texas	1
Rules of the Road	2
Equipment and Accessories	9
Share the Road	14
Bicycling with Children	15
Crash Information	18
Bicycles and the Law	20
Glossary of Terms	24
Resource Directory	25

This guide is based on information that was available at the time of publication. It is your responsibility to be in compliance with current state and local laws and regulations.

Safety Tips for Bicycling in Texas

In Texas, a bicyclist has the same rights and responsibilities as a driver of a motorized vehicle. Bicyclists, like motorists, can be ticketed or penalized for not obeying vehicular traffic laws.

- Wear a helmet
- Dress appropriately for the type of riding you are planning; whenever possible, wear bright clothing
- Obey traffic signs and signals
- Ride with traffic, never against traffic
- Ride as far to the right, in the right lane, as practicable
- Use paved shoulders and bike lanes when available and always be on the lookout for road hazards or debris
- On narrow roads without bike lanes or shoulders, play it safe and ride single-file
- Ride no more than two abreast when traveling in a shared roadway lane; return to riding single-file if riding two abreast impedes the flow of traffic
- Use hand signals (discussed in detail on page 4) to indicate what you intend to do: left or right turns, slowing or stopping
- When riding early in the morning or at night, use a headlight, taillight and reflectors
- Use caution when riding at sunrise and sunset; the bright sunlight can make bicyclists difficult to see
- Make eye contact with drivers whenever possible; never assume motorists see you or that you have the right-of-way
- Never catch a ride by holding onto or attaching your bicycle to another vehicle
- Keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times
- Do not wear headphones - they block other sounds you need to hear
- Always expect the unexpected; stay aware and remain focused on your surroundings - your safety and the safety of those around you is your first responsibility

Rules of the Road

Ride on the right
Riding on the right doesn't mean hugging the curb or edge of the road. It means riding as far right as practicable and still being safe from obstacles, debris and traffic.

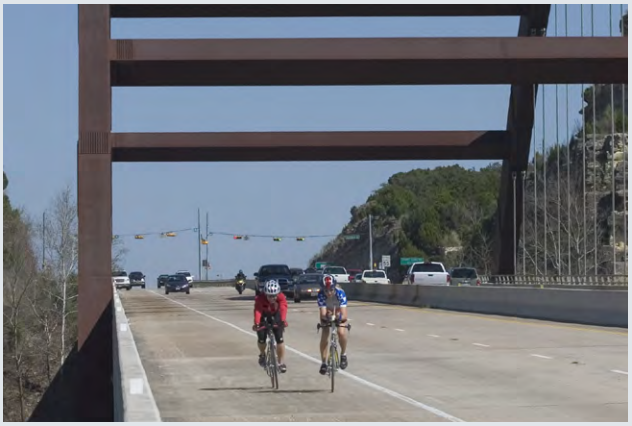
When to take a lane
A bicyclist may take the travel lane in the following situations:

- If traveling the same speed as other traffic
- When passing another vehicle moving in the same direction
- When preparing for a left turn
- To avoid a hazard
- When traveling in a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and motor vehicle to travel safely side by side (share the lane)

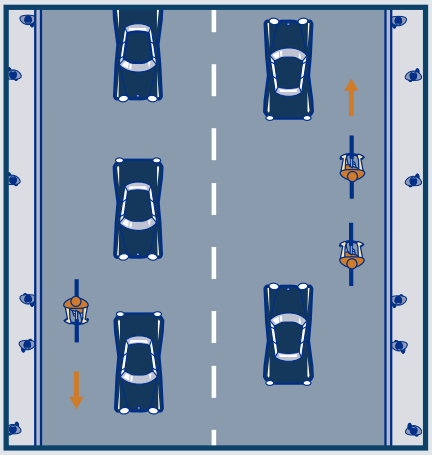
Always look first before taking a lane. When you move to the center of the lane, it establishes your position and prevents motorists from passing until there's enough room. Be considerate of others.

Ride Single File
Play it safe and ride single file. This provides more room to avoid hazards and allows other bicyclists and motorists to pass. However, you may ride two abreast if you are not impeding the normal flow of traffic; or when you are riding on a designated bikeway.

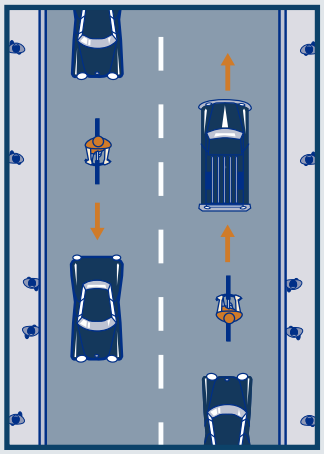
Review Texas laws on pages 20 - 22 of this guide.



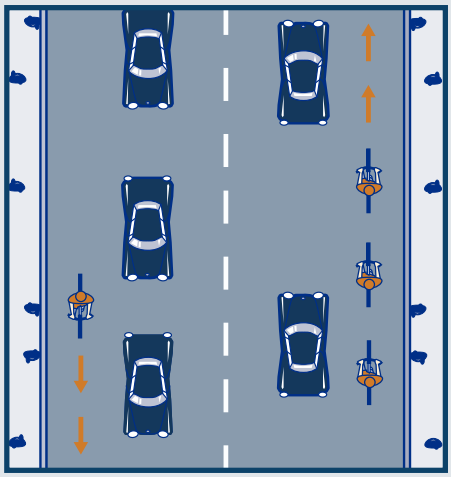
Pennybacker Bridge, Loop 360, Austin, TX



Ride in straight line.



Know when it is appropriate to take a lane.

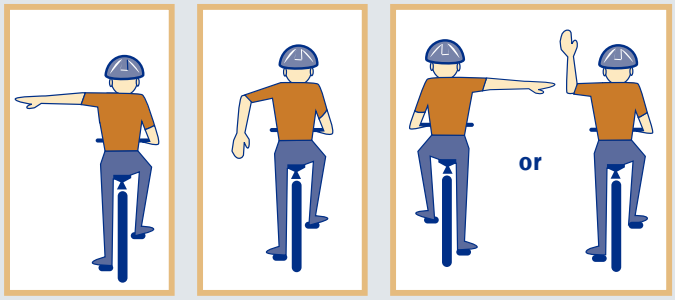


Play it safe, ride single file.

Use Hand Signals

Use the proper hand signals for left or right turns and for slowing or stopping.

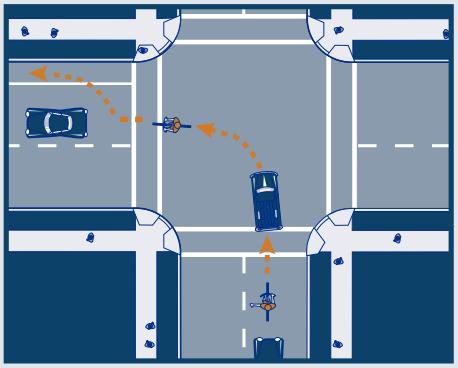
When turning, you must signal continuously at least 100 feet before the turn, unless use of your hand is needed to control your bicycle.



Left Slow/Stop Right

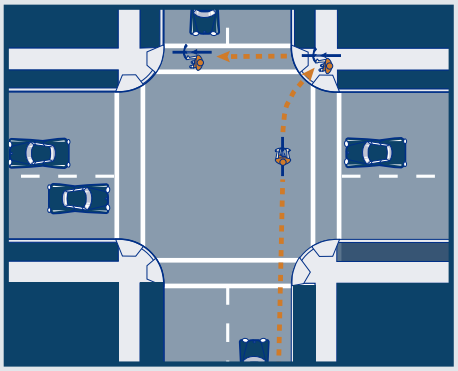
Making Left Turns

1. **Vehicular-style left turn**
   - Signal left
   - Look behind you
   - Move into the left lane or the center turn lane
   - Yield to oncoming cars before turning
   - Where a bike lanes exists, move to the bike lane



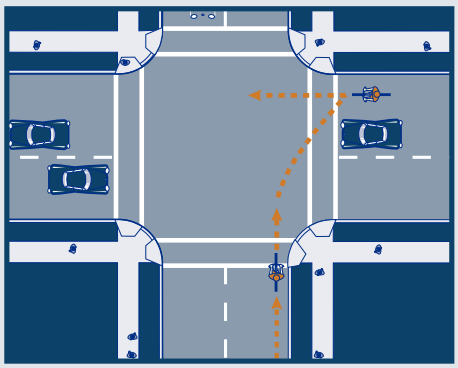
Vehicular-style left turn

2. **Pedestrian-style left turn:**
   - Ride straight through the intersection to the far crosswalk
   - Stop, dismount and position your bicycle in the new direction
   - Yield to oncoming traffic or if you are at a signalized intersection, wait for the green or WALK signal before crossing
   - Walk your bicycle across the crosswalk



Pedestrian-style left turn

3. **90 Degree or inverted L:**
   - Ride straight through the intersection to the far corner of the right travel lane
   - Stop and position your bicycle in the new direction
   - Yield to oncoming traffic or if you are at a signalized intersection, wait for the green signal before crossing
   - Ride your bicycle across the intersection



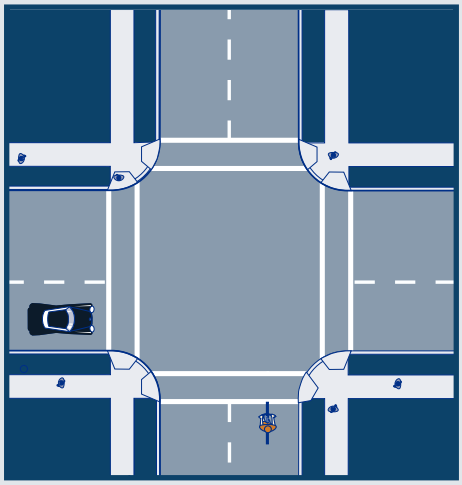
Left turn at 90 degrees or inverted L

Right-of-Way

Never assume you have the right-of-way. Your first responsibility is to avoid a crash.

When approaching a non-signalized intersection at the same time as another vehicle, the operator of the vehicle on the left must yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right. Don't change lanes if another vehicle must slow down for you to enter the lane. Always look behind you and signal before changing lanes.

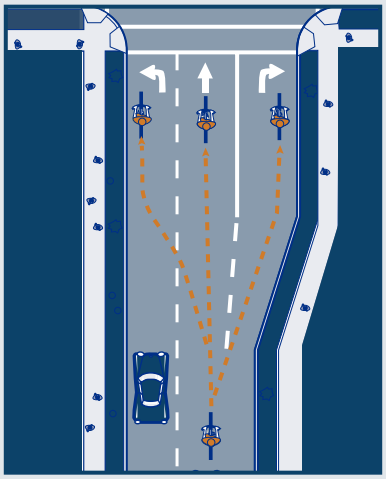
Bicyclists should yield to pedestrians.



The vehicle on the left must yield the right-of-way to the bicyclist on the right

Follow Lane Markings

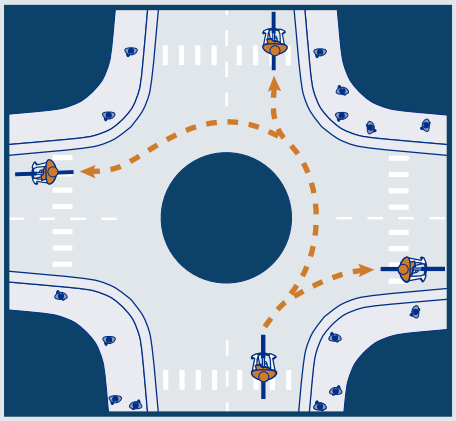
Like other vehicles, when you approach an intersection with several lane choices, choose the lane appropriate to your travel direction and follow the pavement markings.



Follow lane markings

Roundabouts

When approaching a roundabout, bicyclists should merge to the center of the lane (take the lane). Vehicles entering the circle yield the right-of-way to traffic already in the circle. Traffic proceeds in a counter-clockwise direction around the circle, even when making a left turn. All vehicles should yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Motor vehicles should not speed up to pass bicyclists.



Navigate a roundabout by traveling in the center of the lane

Road Hazards

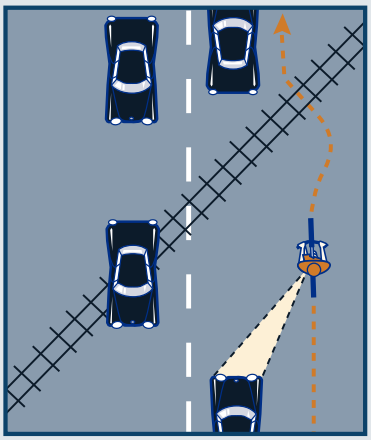
Road hazards can cause you to lose control. Common road hazards to look out for:

1. **SEWER OR CATTLE GRATES**
   Be aware of pavement conditions; your wheels can get caught in sewer/cattle grates.

2. **PARKED CARS**
   Whenever possible, ride a car door's width away from parked cars to avoid unexpected door openings and be alert.

3. **SURFACE CONDITIONS**
   Be aware of ice, ponded water, loose gravel, uneven pavement and rumble strips.

4. **RAILROAD TRACKS**
   Cross railroad tracks perpendicular to the rails (straight on) between 60 and 90 degrees.



Cross railroad tracks at a 60-90 degree angle

Always stop and move out of the roadway when using hand-held electronic devices, like cell phones.

Equipment and Accessories

No matter how safely you ride, an unsafe bicycle can put you at risk.

The first step is knowing that your bicycle is mechanically sound; check your brakes, steering, tires and drivetrain regularly. Texas law states that the bicycle must be equipped with a working brake or brakes that will enable you to stop on dry, level, clean pavement.

Select a bicycle based on your primary use. There are many types and styles of bicycles to choose from. Visit your local bicycle shop and try different types/styles to find the right fit and function.

Make regular visits to your local bicycle shop for mechanical tune-ups. If you acquire a secondhand or used bicycle, take it to a bicycle shop for a safety check. A mechanic can advise you on what service your bicycle needs, to prevent damage to components and/or to enhance mechanical performance.

CHECK YOUR BICYCLE REGULARLY

- Tire pressure, wear and damage
- Chain-drive cleanliness
- Brake and gear shifting performance
- Head and tail lamp batteries

Preventative maintenance is recommended to increase your satisfaction and confidence when you ride. If you like to do mechanical work, take a bicycle maintenance class. Maintaining your own bicycle can be very satisfying.

Always carry identification with you. Having appropriate identification will enable you to receive prompt medical care if you are involved in a crash and for others to contact your family when necessary. It is also wise to keep some cash on your bicycle in case of an emergency.

Helmets

About sixty percent of all bicycle rider fatalities are the result of head injuries. The best protection is an approved bicycle helmet. Wearing a helmet will reduce head injury risk by 85 percent and could save your life. Helmets are inexpensive and come in a multitude of styles and colors.

The best helmets have a smooth plastic outer shell over a foam liner. The outer shell helps prevent sharp objects from penetrating the helmet and the foam liner protects your head by absorbing much of the force of an impact. The extra soft foam pads that come with your helmet are for exact fit and comfort. The very best helmet is one which the rider likes and wears on every ride.

Helmets that have several openings in the front and air channels inside allow for better air flow. Helmets also provide protection from the sun.

Take time to select a helmet that is the right size for your head. A helmet needs to fit snugly. A bicycle helmet should not move around on your head when riding or come off your head if you crash. Adjust the helmet straps to fit around your ears and under your chin. The helmet should be worn over the forehead and not tipped back. The front edge of the helmet should be positioned approximately one inch above the eyebrow. It is a good idea to have an experienced bicycle shop employee assist you in properly fitting you with a helmet.

Helmets have a limited life; check with the helmet manufacturer on when to replace your helmet

A crash can happen at any time.
Wear your helmet every time you ride!

Correct Fit | Wrong | Wrong

Some municipalities require the use of helmets. This could include requiring helmets for all bicyclists or only for children. Check the local ordinances.

Tire Pressure

Tire pressure should be maintained as written on the tire sidewall. The correct tire pressure increases the life of your tires and decreases the effort needed to pedal. Check the tire tread and sidewalls for cuts and scrapes.

Flat Prevention

To prevent flats, use tires that are appropriate for their intended use. Always carry a pump that fits your tire valve stem (Schrader or Presta), patch kit, spare inner tube - and know how to use them.

Cleaning and Drying

Keeping the chain drive clean will reduce grime that causes destructive wear. A clean chain drive will help protect your clothing from stains and makes your bicycle easier to pedal. Select a quality lubricant designed to reduce grime attraction. Non-aerosol lubricants should be directed only to the part of the chain that requires lubrication. Wipe the chain down after lubrication to avoid accumulating damaging grime.

When you ride in the rain, it is important to allow your bicycle to dry completely (including the bearing assemblies).

Bicycle maintenance is relatively inexpensive compared to auto repairs. Don't put yourself at risk, always ride a well-maintained bicycle.

Water Bottle and Cage

In Texas's hot climate, it is important to stay hydrated. Attach a water bottle and cage to your bicycle. Make it a habit to sip water throughout your trip, even if you are not thirsty.

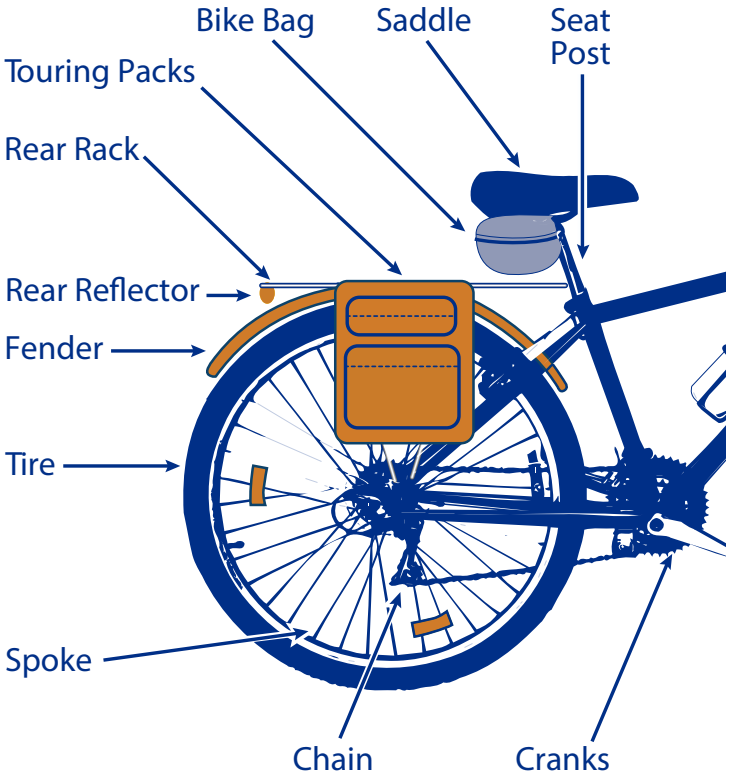
Reflective Materials

You cannot have too much reflective material, especially at night. Wear it on your helmet, shoes, arms, legs and torso. Reflectors and reflective materials are important even with good lighting because bicyclists are hard to see and motor vehicle drivers may not be thinking to look-out for you. Be safe. Be seen.

TOOLS FOR THE ROAD

There are few tools every bicyclist should have in their tool kit. They include:

- Tire levers (for changing a tire)
- Tire tube
- Tire pump
- Hex wrench
- Lubricant



NIGHT RIDING EQUIPMENT

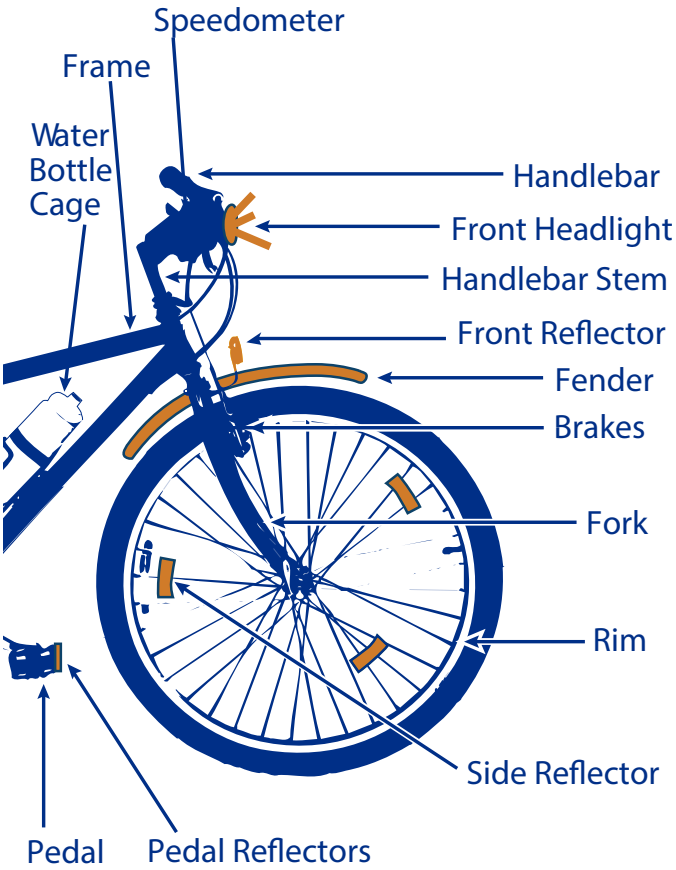
Lights and reflectors will help you see and be seen during night-time riding and times of poor visibility. Texas law states that if you are operating a bicycle at night you must have a lamp on the front of the bicycle that emits a white light that is visible at least 500 feet in front of you. You must also have either a rear red reflector or red light visible from at least 500 feet behind the bicycle.

Bells and Horns

A good way to announce you are passing is with a bell or pleasant sounding horn that will not startle or anger anyone. Sound your horn or bell or say, "Hello up there, passing on your left," before you pass.

Electric Bicycle Speedometers

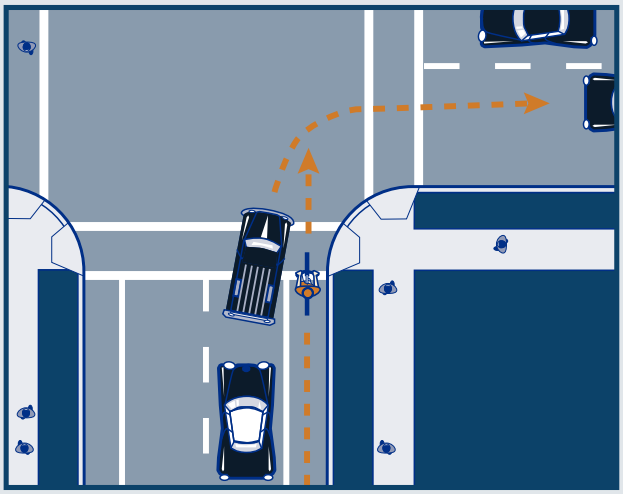
Class 3 Electric Bicycles (750 watt motors with top speeds between 20 and 28 mph) must have speedometers (TTC 664.004). Lower powered electric bicycles have no such requirement.



Share the Road

In Texas, on most roadways, motorists and bicyclists are expected to share the road. Both have equal rights and responsibilities to obey all traffic laws.

Bicyclists who violate traffic laws will be subject to the same penalties as motor vehicle drivers.



Check for motorists making right turns.

BICYCLE SHARE
Bicycle share programs exist in a number of Texas Cities. Bicycle share can be an excellent option for individuals who do not want to maintain their own bicycle. Options include smart phone-based bicycle share rentals charging users on a per-minute basis or annual/daily membership programs. Bicycle share is great if you are visiting a city or commuting to work and don't want to bring your own bicycle. For more information on availability, search app stores or the Web for "bicycle share."

Town Lake Trail, Austin, TX

Bicycling with Children

What Parents Should Know

The first bicycle safety education children receive will be from their parents and other adults. Since children perceive traffic situations differently than adults, it is important for adults to teach children about the dangers of traffic. With proper training, bicycle riding can be a safe, healthy, fun activity for the whole family to share. Here are some things to keep in mind when educating children about bicycle safety within the roadway:

- Young children lack well-developed peripheral vision
- Children often have trouble determining the source of a sound; they may hear a car coming, but look the wrong way
- Until about eight years of age, children typically lack a sense of danger and they don't really understand how vulnerable they are
- Children have trouble evaluating cause and effect
- It's difficult for children to identify dangerous situations
- Children have trouble judging the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles
- Children are often restless and eager to go; it's hard for them to stop and wait for traffic
- Children focus on things that are most interesting to them; an ice cream truck may take their attention from another approaching vehicle

(What parents should know cont.)

- Children often mix fantasy with reality; they may see cars as friendly creatures or think they can ride faster than a car
- Children often believe grown-ups will look out for them; they may think that because they can see the car, the motorist can see them
- Children are very vulnerable to peer pressure and follow the lead of their friends; many crashes happen when one child takes a risk and a second follows and is hit by a vehicle

When Should a Child Begin Riding a Bicycle?

Let the child's motivation and motor coordination be your guide. Schedule this event when you can provide the necessary time to train your child. Training wheels only support the rider. Balance is learned on two wheels.

There are many sources to help teach your child safe riding. Contact the League of American Bicyclists, BikeTexas or a certified trainer in your area. Several local service groups, schools and police departments may also provide bicycle training.

One Size Does Not Fit All

In sizing bicycles for children, they should be able to comfortably straddle the top bar of the frame while standing flat-footed. This should provide a size for good control yet large enough to allow for growth.

When is a Child Ready to Ride on the Street?

The most effective and fun way to teach your children safe bicycle riding habits is to ride with them. At first, let them follow you as in follow the leader. As they become more able, let them lead while you observe and instruct.

In most instances, a child is ready to ride on the street when they can demonstrate the necessary cycling skills, alertness to traffic and appropriate decision making skills. Until that time, bicycling should be limited to sidewalks, parks and bike paths.

When training your child, give special attention to children's high-risk behaviors.

Make sure they:

1. **Ride on the right in the same direction as traffic.**
2. **Stop before riding out of the driveway into the street. Help your child understand that entering the roadway from your driveway can be dangerous.**
3. **Stop at all stop signs and red traffic lights.**
4. **Ride predictably. Ride in a straight line and signal all turning movements. Teach children to use hand signals (as shown on page 4), look to the rear and then turn.**

Transporting Children

The two most common methods of transporting children by bicycle include a bicycle-mounted child seat and a bicycle trailer. Bicycle trailers may be a better choice for a number of reasons. Bicycle trailers are generally more stable than a child seat and tend to remain upright if the bicycle falls over. A trailer should be well reflectorized on the back and sides; a tall orange safety flag and two rear mounted red flashing lights will make a trailer more visible in traffic.

When using a child seat, a bicycle may become harder to manage because of the extra weight of the child and the higher center of gravity. Children risk having their feet caught in the rear spokes and must be taught to hold still because rocking back and forth in the seat makes balancing the bicycle difficult. Load and unload the child by leaning your bicycle against a fixed object. When stopped with a child on board, remember to hold on to the bicycle firmly and maintain good balance by straddling the bicycle.

Crash Information

We hope that you are never involved in a crash; however, a crash is an unfortunate possibility to consider as a bicyclist.

What To Do if a Crash Occurs

The instructions below apply to both bicyclists and pedestrians in Texas. Consider clipping the crash checklist from the next page and tucking it in your tool kit or bike bag. If you are in a crash, pull out the checklist and follow the instructions.

When to Call Police

Always call the police when:

- An injury or fatality is involved
- The vehicles cannot be moved
- You suspect one of the drivers is intoxicated
- One of the drivers has no insurance
- One of the drivers leaves the scene

When to File a Crash Report

If a law enforcement officer is not investigating the crash, you must file a Driver's Crash Report (CR-2) with TxDOT within 10 days from the date of the crash if any of the following conditions apply:

- There are injuries or a fatality
- You suspect property damage of at least $1,000

These procedures may be necessary to validate an insurance claim.

Bicycle Crash Checklist

- ☐ Call (or ask someone to call) 9-1-1 and ask for the police. Do not hesitate to ask for an ambulance if you are hurt.
- ☐ Move your bicycle out of the roadway to a safer place.
- ☐ If a motor vehicle is involved, ask the driver to provide his or her address, phone number, vehicle identification number, vehicle license plate number, insurance information and drivers license information.
- ☐ Get names and phone numbers of any witnesses — the more the better. A business card is great.
- ☐ Stay at the scene until the police arrive. If the driver leaves, he/she may be guilty of hit and run, which is a serious crime. Be prepared to describe the driver.

When the Police Arrive

- ☐ Request that the police take an accident report. A report is required if the crash involves serious bodily injury, death or if more than $1,000 of total property damage occurs. Below that amount, a report is optional under the law, but you should insist that one be completed. Sometimes, the officer will give you the form to fill out and mail in.
- ☐ Get the reporting officer's name, badge number and department and agency.
- ☐ If you are hurt, go in an ambulance to a hospital or at least see a doctor to evaluate the severity of your injury.

Bicycles and the Law

Below is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) regarding laws that apply to bicycles:

What traffic laws apply to bicyclists?
What traffic laws do not?
Generally, bicycles are entitled to all rights and obligated to all duties of the road that apply to a motor vehicle. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.101, see also Tex. Transp. Code § 541 - 600.

Unless a specific statutory right or duty is altered by Texas Transportation Code Chapter 551, or a right or duty applicable to a driver cannot by its nature apply to a person operating a bicycle, the same laws that apply to an operator of motor vehicle apply to a person operating a bicycle.

A person operating a bicycle, if moving slower than traffic, shall generally ride as near as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.103. By definition, roadway does not include the shoulder of the roadway. Tex. Transp. Code § 541.302(11).

A person operating a bicycle shall ride only on or astride a permanent and regular seat attached to the bicycle. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.102(a).

A person may not use a bicycle to carry more persons than the bicycle is designed or equipped to carry.
Tex. Transp. Code § 551.102(b).

A person operating a bicycle may not carry any object that prevents the operator from keeping at least one hand on the handlebars. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.102(c).

A person operating a bicycle, coaster, sled or toy vehicle or using roller skates may not attach either the person or the bicycle, coaster, sled, toy vehicle or roller skates to a streetcar or vehicle on a roadway. (Tex. Transp. Code § 551.102(d).

Bicyclists must use hand signals to signal their intent to stop, turn left or turn right. Tex. Transp. Code § 545.104-.107.

Every bicycle must be equipped with a brake capable of making a braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.104(a).

A person may not operate a bicycle at nighttime unless the bicycle is equipped with the following:

- Headlamp – a lamp on the front of the bicycle that emits a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet in front of the bicycle
- Red Reflector/Red Lamp – A bicycle must be equipped with either a red reflector which is visible from a distance of 300 feet from the rear of the bicycle or a red lamp visible from a distance of 500 feet from the rear of the bicycle. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.104(b).

Is there a state law prohibiting riding a bicycle or an electric bicycle on sidewalks?
No. However, some local governments may have local ordinances prohibiting bicycles on sidewalks. Bicyclists should contact local law enforcement for more information and be aware of posted signs.

Also, a person may stop, stand or park a bicycle on a sidewalk if the bicycle does not impede the normal and reasonable movement of pedestrians or other traffic on the sidewalk. Tex. Transp. Code § 545.302(d).

Is it legal to park a car in a bike lane?
There is no general prohibition. Whenever parking a car, the driver should check local signs and ordinances. However, an operator may not stop, park or leave standing an attended or unattended vehicle on the main traveled part of a highway outside a business or residential district unless the following is true:

- Stopping, parking or leaving the vehicle off the main traveled part of the highway is not practicable
- A width of highway beside the vehicle is unobstructed and open for the passage of other vehicles
- The vehicle is in clear view for at least 200 feet in each direction on the highway

Tex. Transp. Code § 545.301.

Is it legal to place a recycling container, trash container or other objects in a bike lane?
A person commits an offense if, without legal privilege or authority, he intentionally, knowingly or recklessly: obstructs a highway, street, sidewalk, railway, waterway, elevator, aisle, hallway, entrance or exit to which the public or a substantial group of the public has access, or any other place used for the passage of persons, vehicles or conveyances, regardless of the means of creating the obstruction and whether the obstruction arises from his acts alone or from his acts and the acts of others.

"Obstruct" means to render impassable or to render passage unreasonably inconvenient or hazardous. An offense is a Class B misdemeanor. The maximum fine is $2,000, or 180 days in jail, or both. (Texas Penal Code § 42.03)

Does a city or state have a responsibility to maintain a bike lane, path or sidewalk (for example, street sweeping or trimming vegetation)?
Generally, it is the duty of the entity with authority over the highway or road to maintain the roadways on their system. The entity with authority over such lanes, paths or sidewalks should have the same duty.

TxDOT may remove personal property from the right-of-way or roadway of the state highway system if TxDOT determines the property blocks the roadway or endangers public safety. TxDOT may remove the personal property without the consent of the owner or carrier of the property. Tex. Transp. Code § 472.012.

Are bicycles permitted on interstate highways in Texas?
The Texas Transportation Commission, by resolution or order recorded in its minutes, may prohibit the use of a limited-access or controlled-access highway under the jurisdiction of the commission by a parade, funeral procession, pedestrian, bicycle, electric bicycle, motor-driven cycle or non-motorized traffic.

If the commission adopts a rule prohibiting the use of bicycles on such a roadway, TxDOT shall erect and maintain official traffic-control devices on the portions of the limited-access or controlled-access highway to which the rule applies. Tex. Transp. Code § 545.065.

If there is an off-road bike path adjacent to the roadway, does a cyclist have to use it or can they use the roadway?
A cyclist is not required to use an off-road bike path adjacent to the roadway and may use the roadway. Provided the cyclist adheres to all the discussed rules of the road and bicycle laws, bicycles are entitled to all rights of the road that apply to a motor vehicle, including access. Some local governments may have local ordinances prohibiting electric bicycles if a path has a natural surface tread and is not open to motorized vehicles. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.106.

When is it allowable for a cyclist to "take the lane," and when is it not?
A person operating a bicycle on a roadway who is moving slower than the other traffic on the roadway shall ride as near as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway. However, under the following conditions bicyclists may take the full lane of travel:

- The bicyclist is passing another vehicle moving in the same direction
- The bicyclist is preparing to turn left at an intersection or onto a private road or driveway
- When there are unsafe conditions on the roadway, including fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, pedestrians, animals or surface hazards that prevent the bicyclist from safely riding next to the curb or edge of the roadway
- The lane is of substandard width (less than 14 feet in width and not having a designated bicycle lane adjacent to that lane) making it unsafe for a bicycle and a motor vehicle to safely travel side by side

Note: When on a one-way street you can ride to the far left instead of the far right.

Additionally, persons operating bicycles on a roadway may ride two abreast. Persons riding two abreast on a laned roadway shall ride in a single lane. Tex. Transp. Code § 551.103. Persons riding two abreast may not impede the normal and reasonable flow of traffic on the roadway. Also note, you can't make passage of traffic "unreasonably inconvenient." Texas Penal Code § 42.03.

If there is a bike lane does a cyclist have to use it or can he or she use the general travel lane?
See the previous answer. Because a bicycle is required to stay to as far right as practicable, this could be interpreted to mean if there is bike lane, a bicyclist would be required to ride in it, as it would be the far right side of the road. However, if one of the exceptions listed in the previous answer exist, they would be excused from the 'far right' requirement.

Where is it appropriate to use shared lane markings (sharrows)? Where is it not?
The use of sharrows are evaluated on a case by case and project basis by the entity with authority over the highway or road. The 2009 edition of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) includes a provision for shared lane markings with guidance that the markings should be placed at least 11 ft from the curb face or the edge of the pavement on a street with parallel parking.

On streets with no parking and an outside lane less than 14 ft wide, the centers of the shared lane markings should be placed at least 4 ft from the curb or edge of the pavement. The MUTCD also states "The Shared Lane Marking should not be placed on roadways that have a speed limit above 35 mph." Many cities and states have started implementing shared lane markings to encourage the safe coexistence of bicyclists and motorists.

When is a crash report required and when it it not?
The operator of a vehicle (bike) involved in an accident resulting in injury to or death of a person or damage to a vehicle to the extent that it cannot be normally and safely driven shall immediately by the quickest means of communication give notice of the accident to the local law enforcement. Tex. Transp. Code § 550.026.

A law enforcement officer who in the regular course of duty investigates a motor vehicle accident shall make a written report of the accident if the accident resulted in injury to or the death of a person or damage to the property of any one person to the apparent extent of $1,000 or more. Tex. Transp. Code § 550.026.

If the accident is not investigated by a law enforcement officer and the accident resulted in injury to or the death of a person or damage to the property of any one person to an apparent extent of $1,000 or more the operator of a vehicle involved in an accident shall make a written report of the accident. Tex. Transp. Code § 550.026.

Therefore, if no injury or death occurs and damage to vehicle(s)/bike(s) is less than $1,000 a report would not be required. Additional requirements after accidents:

The operator of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury to or death of a person or damage to a vehicle shall:

- Immediately stop the vehicle at the scene of the accident or as close to the scene as possible
- Immediately return to the scene of the accident if the vehicle is not stopped at the scene of the accident

The operator then has a duty to give information and render aid such as:

- Give the operator's name and address, the registration number of the vehicle the operator was driving, and the name of the operator's motor vehicle liability insurer to any person injured or the operator or occupant of or person attending a vehicle involved in the collision
- If requested and available, show the operator's driver's license to that person
  Provide any person injured in the accident reasonable assistance, including transporting or making arrangements for transporting the person to a physician or hospital for medical treatment if it is apparent that treatment is necessary, or if the injured person requests the transportation.

Tex. Transp. Code § 550.021 – § 550.023.

What is TxDOT's policy on building sidewalks and bicycle accommodations?
TxDOT is committed to proactively plan, design and construct facilities to safely accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. It is critical that bicycle and pedestrian accommodations be considered and discussed as the need and purpose of a project is defined during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, taking into consideration existing and anticipated bicycle and pedestrian facility systems and needs. Plans, specification, and estimates (PS&E) shall also ensure that proposed designs are constructed according to Americans with Disabilities Act standards, American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, and TxDOT's Roadway Design Manual.

The inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall be considered when the project is scoped. Public input, when applicable, as well as local city and metropolitan planning organization bicycle and pedestrian plans shall be considered.

Glossary of Terms

BICYCLE
A device that a person may ride that is propelled solely by human power and has at least two tandem wheels one of which is at least fourteen inches in diameter.

BIKE LANE
A portion of a roadway or shoulder designated for preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists. A bike lane is distinguished using pavement markings and may include route signage.

BIKE ROUTE
A system of bikeways designating preferred routes for bicycle use by signage, with appropriate directional and informational route markers.

BIKEWAY
A generic term for any road, street, path or way which, in some manner, is designated as being available for bicycle travel.

ELECTRIC BICYCLE
A bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor fewer than 750 watts that assists the rider with or without pedaling, and has top speeds less than 28 mph.

SEPARATED BIKE LANE
An exclusive bicycle facility that is located within or directly adjacent to the roadway and that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic with a vertical element. Separated bike lanes are differentiated from standard and buffered bike lanes by the vertical element. They are differentiated from shared use paths (and sidepaths) by their more proximate relationship to the adjacent roadway and the fact that they are bike-only facilities. Separated bike lanes are also sometimes called "cycle tracks" or "protected bike lanes."

RIGHT-OF-WAY
The right of one vehicle operator or pedestrian to proceed in a lawful manner in preference to another vehicle operator or pedestrian approaching under such circumstances of direction, speed and proximity as to give rise to danger of collision unless one grants precedence to the other.

ROADWAY
The portion of a highway ordinarily used for vehicular travel, not including sidewalks or shoulders.

SHARED USE PATH
A bikeway physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier. Shared-use paths will also be used by pedestrians, skaters, joggers or other non-motorized users (ex: bike path or trail).

SHOULDER
The portion of roadway next to the travel lane that accommodates stopped vehicles, emergency use and provides roadway base. Shoulders, where paved, are used often by bicyclists.

TRAIL
Any paved or unpaved off-street facility specifically designated as being open to bicycle travel and may be shared with other users such as pedestrians, equestrians, skaters, etc.

Resource Directory

TxDOT Bicycle Pedestrian Program
BikePed@txdot.gov
www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/modes-of-travel/bicycle.html

BikeTexas
512-476-RIDE(7433)
mail@biketexas.org
www.BikeTexas.org

Bicycling in Texas State Parks
https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/parks/things-to-do/biking-in-state-parks

League of American Bicyclists
202-822-1333
www.bikeleague.org

National Center for Biking and Walking
info@bikewalk.org
www.bikewalk.org

Pedestrian and Bicycling Information Center
www.pedbikeinfo.org

National Center for Safe Routes to School
www.saferoutesinfo.org

Federal Highway Administration's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program
https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/

Notes

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