

DRIVE YOUR BIKE

# Cycling Safely, Predictably and Visibly



## Additional Resources

- [www.mvrpc.org](http://www.mvrpc.org)
- [www.mvrpc.org/bikeportal](http://www.mvrpc.org/bikeportal)
- [www.mvrpc.org/tr/bikePed.php](http://www.mvrpc.org/tr/bikePed.php)
- [www.miamivalleyrideshare.org](http://www.miamivalleyrideshare.org)
- [www.greaterdaytonrta.org](http://www.greaterdaytonrta.org)
- [www.co.greene.oh.us/greenecats](http://www.co.greene.oh.us/greenecats)
- [www.bhsi.org](http://www.bhsi.org)
- [www.dot.state.oh.us](http://www.dot.state.oh.us)
- [www.bikeleague.org/programs/education](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education)



BICYCLE SAFETY

## Bicycle Safety and the Law

In Ohio, a bicycle is considered a vehicle and a bicyclist is deemed a driver. Therefore, every bicyclist is required to follow the same traffic laws that drivers of motor vehicles are. Here are some tips for safe cycling:

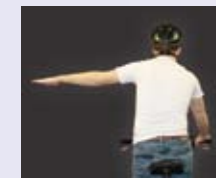
*Use Hand Signals To Indicate Turns, Lane Changes and Stops*



#1 Right Turn



#2 Right Turn



Left Turn



Stop

### Where In The Lane Should You Ride?

The simple answer to this question is ride as far to the right of the lane as is safe. But that doesn't mean you should always hug the curb. Here are some instances when a bicyclist may move out into the lane:



**Left turn.** You may move out near the center line when preparing to make a left turn.

**Hazard.** You may move away from the right side of the road to avoid potholes, drain grates, debris and other hazards.

**Same speed.** You may ride in the center of the lane when you are moving at the same speed as motorized traffic.

**Narrow Lane.** When the lane is too narrow for a bicycle and a motor vehicle to safely drive side-by-side, you may "take the lane." That is, you may ride far enough out in the lane to keep motorists from trying to pass you until the adjacent lane is free of oncoming traffic.

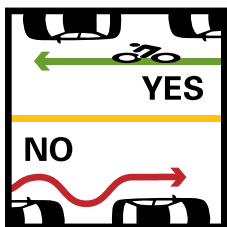


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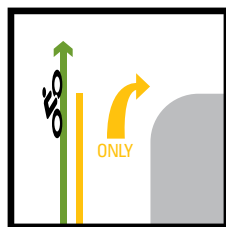
## Be Visible and Be Predictable

The best way to avoid collisions is to make sure motorists know where you are and where you are going. That means follow the rules of the road. Obey traffic lights and stop signs. Wear bright or reflective clothing.



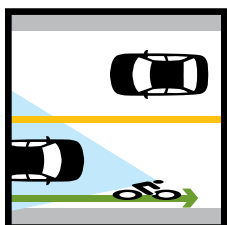
### Ride a straight course.

Don't swerve between parked cars; you'll disappear behind a car, and then suddenly pop out in traffic again. Don't surprise motorists. Ride straight as an arrow.



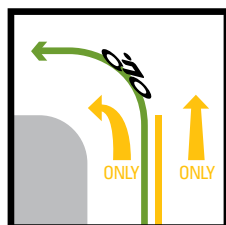
### Right turn only lanes.

Use right turn only lanes only when you want to turn right. Cross an intersection from the through lane, not from a right turn only lane.



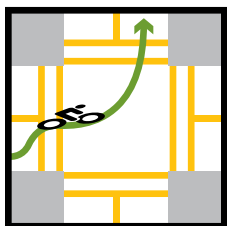
### Look behind you.

Learn to quickly scan the traffic behind you without swerving. Practice in an empty parking lot until it's easy.



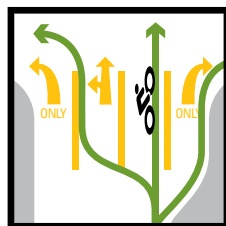
### Left turn only lanes.

If you have a left turn only lane, turn left from the right side of the left turn only lane.



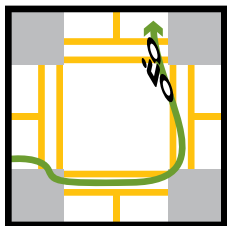
### "Vehicular" left turn.

Signal and look behind you. When there's an opening, merge left and turn from near the center line. (Also see instructions for a left turn only lane.)



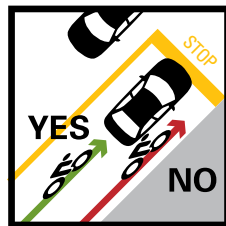
### Multiple lanes.

Generally, ride on the right side of the right-most lane that will get you to your destination. But turn left from the left side of a lane that is also a through lane.



### "Pedestrian" left turn.

When traffic is heavy and it feels unsafe to merge left, you may ride straight through the intersection, stop at the corner and walk your bike across the crosswalk.



### Don't sneak past cars.

Take your place in line behind cars stopped at a light or stop sign. Don't creep up on their blind side; they might cut you off. Think about it: if you make cars pass you twice, you double your risk.

## Negotiating With Motorists

Before you move away from the right side of the lane to make a left turn or to avoid an obstacle, make sure motorists around you know what you intend to do. Signal well before you make your move. Glance over your shoulder. This glance does more than just let you see what's coming: the body language speaks more clearly than a hand signal alone and tells motorists you want to move over. When you see a gap in the traffic, or when a motorist slows to let you in, make your move.

## Never Ride Against The Traffic!

Wrong-way bicyclists are asking for trouble. Turning motorists don't look for traffic coming at them on the wrong side of the road.

## Know Your Skill Level

Skilled adult bicyclists glide down busy roads with ease. Novice bicyclists and children, though, may get overwhelmed in heavy traffic. So choose routes that fit your bicycling skill and comfort level.

Even for skilled bicyclists, some of the in-traffic riding techniques outlined in this brochure work best in light-to-medium traffic with speeds of 35 mph or less. Always use good judgment.

## Passing Walkers and Other Bicyclists

Be courteous and warn pedestrians and other bicyclists when you are about to pass. Ohio bicycles are recommended to use a bell or horn. Remember, pedestrians have the right-of-way.

## Riding At Night

Ohio law says you must have a good headlight on your bike when you ride at night. Also, you must have a rear red light, rear red reflector, colorless front reflector and either reflective rims or spoke reflectors when you ride at night.

For more detailed information on Ohio traffic laws, for a copy of Street Smarts, or a 2007-2008 Map and List of Ohio's Bikeways please contact the ODOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, (614) 752-4685, [www.dot.state.oh.us](http://www.dot.state.oh.us)

Consider taking a class such as the League of American Cyclists Road 1 course. To find more information, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/>