

Code of conduct for bicycle riders

Information update
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Tips and rules for safe bicycle riding, particularly when commuting.

Riding safely

Be aware of your bicycle riding ability, and choose your riding environment and route carefully. Consider other road users and your own safety.

Be predictable

Ride predictably and obey the road rules. Before changing lanes or turning, always scan behind you and signal your intentions to other road users. Make eye contact and use your bell or warning device if necessary.

Be visible

Make yourself visible to other road users. Wear bright and light coloured clothing, and wear something reflective or retro-reflective at night.

You must use a front and rear light at night or in conditions where visibility is poor, this helps you to be noticed during daylight too. Take extra care when cycling at night – it is harder for motorists to see you and for you to see hazards.

Ride within your limits.

Before you ride, always consider the distance and your riding ability. If you need to, combine on-road and path cycling to make your ride safe and comfortable. Choose a safe speed, so that you can observe and react to other road users easily.

Riding in traffic

Listed below are some tips that will increase your enjoyment and safety when riding.

Plan your trip

Think about using local roads parallel to main roads, slower speed roads and off-road paths, where the traffic is lighter and not travelling so fast. Local Council maps highlight local bicycle routes.

See the VicRoads web page: [Bicycle and walking route maps](#) : [VicRoads](#) for a range of Council maps.



Read the road

It is vitally important that you scan the environment around you. By being aware of your surrounding environment you will increase your level of safety.

Eye contact

This is important as it helps make drivers aware of your presence.

Blind spots

Be aware of a driver's blind spots particularly at the side of their vehicle and next to their rear doors. The larger the vehicle, the larger the blind spots. Trucks can have blind spots at the front too. Keep clear of blind spots, particularly when the vehicle is turning.

Other road users

Be alert for vehicles approaching from behind or pulling out in front of you. Be aware of car doors opening by spotting drivers and passengers inside parked or stationary cars.

Be particularly aware of pedestrians on shared paths, and always give way to them.

Positioning in traffic

Don't weave in and out of traffic. Ride a metre out from the kerb and parked cars and maintain a straight line. You will be more visible to other motorists and it will deter other traffic from squeezing past.

Bus lanes

Bicycles can ride in bus lanes, but be mindful that they are primarily for buses, ride in single file to let them get past you easily.

Be predictable

Give a clear indication of where you are going, use hand signals to indicate the direction you intend to travel.

Sharing the road means obeying the road rules, being predictable and respecting the rights of others to use the road.

Bike boxes

A bike box allows you to get to the front of a queue of traffic and store at the front so that you can easily be seen. You can filter down the kerb side to access a bike box, if space allows, but watch for turning vehicles.

Do not sit in front of a truck in a bike box, many trucks cannot see directly in front of their cab.

Bicycle paths and shared paths

Bicycle paths and shared paths provide off-road options and are a great way to commute. However, paths can be quite busy, so watch out for other path users of all ages and abilities.

You must give way to pedestrians, slow down when passing pedestrians and other bicycle riders, and use a bell or your voice to warn others you are passing them. Travel at a safe speed, so that pedestrians and slower bicycle riders feel safe as you pass by.

Footpath cycling

Children up to the age of 12 and those accompanying them can ride on the footpath. Those with a medical certificate can do so too. Be careful at intersections where bicycle riders must dismount to cross. Always give way to pedestrians.

Earphones and Ear buds

Do not use these devices while riding. You need to be aware of your environment and be able to hear what's going on around you when riding.

Road Rules

Bicycle riders need to obey road rules relevant to drivers as well as some specific to cycling.

Signs and signals

A bicycle rider must obey traffic control signs and signals including red lights, stop and give way signs.

Turning right and hook turns

Always scan behind and do an arm signal before moving across the lane to turn right. Alternatively using a hook turn to turn right is an option at any intersection for bicycle riders (unless signed otherwise). Using a hook turn stops you from having to cross into the middle of the road to do a right turn, which can be easier and safer.

Bicycle helmets

A bicycle rider and any passenger must wear an approved bicycle helmet. The helmet must be securely fitted and fastened.

Equipment

A bicycle rider must use a front light, rear light and a red rear reflector when riding at night or in conditions where visibility is poor.

Lights are also a safety benefit in daylight too.

Riding two abreast

Bicycle riders can ride two abreast (two bicycle riders riding next to each other) but may not ride more than two abreast unless overtaking.

Bicycle riders riding two abreast must not ride more than 1.5 metres apart.



Riding two abreast can be a safer option as you increase your visibility to other road users. However you may choose to ride single file to let others pass by, when safe to do so. It helps everyone get to where they want to go, particularly if the road is narrow or busy in both directions.



Lane markings

A bicycle rider must use the bicycle lane if there is a bicycle lane on a length of road going in the same direction.

Moving into the path of other road users

A bicycle rider must not cause a traffic hazard by moving into the path of a driver or pedestrian.

Left turning vehicle

A bicycle rider must not ride on the left side of a vehicle that is already in the process of turning left and is indicating left at an intersection, you may be in their blind spot and the vehicle may stop to let pedestrians cross the road.

Trams

A bicycle rider must stop when a tram is stopped at a tram stop and the tram doors are open, or a pedestrian is crossing between the kerb and the tram.

If you need to cross tram tracks, try to approach them at a right angle (to avoid getting your tyres stuck). Using a hook turn to turn right at an intersection can make crossing tram tracks easier and safer.

Car Doors

Car occupants must not cause a hazard by opening the car door. They should check for others, including bicycle riders, before opening their car door.

Bicycle riders should allow at least one metre clearance when riding past parked cars or stopped cars, wherever possible.



Mobile phones

Using a mobile phone is prohibited, except to make or receive a phone call or to use its audio/music functions provided the phone is used hands free:

- is secured in a commercially designed holder fixed to the vehicle, or
- can be operated without touching any part of the phone, and the phone is not resting on any part of the riders' body but can be in a pocket.

Using a phone as a navigational device/GPS while riding is prohibited unless it is secured in a commercially designed holder fixed to the vehicle.

All other functions (including video calls, texting and emailing) are prohibited.

Your bicycle

Bicycle size

Having a bicycle that is the right size is very important. A bicycle that is too big or too small can be difficult to control and dangerous.

Make sure all controls are within easy reach and comfortable to use, and that the seat can be adjusted to suit you.

Your bicycle must have at least one working brake, a rear red reflector, and a bell or warning device.

Look after your bicycle

Check your bicycle regularly to make sure everything is in full working order, including tyres, wheels, chain, brakes and lights. This makes your bicycle easier and safer to ride.

For further information

More information on the road rules and sharing the road is available on the VicRoads website: vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/cyclist-safety