

BICYCLE SAFETY

SEVEN SMART ROUTES TO BICYCLE SAFETY

- Protect your head – wear a helmet
- Assure Bicycle Readiness – ensure proper size and function of bicycle
- Ride Wisely – learn to follow the rules of the road
- Be Predictable – act like a driver of a vehicle
- Be Visible – see and be seen at all times
- Ride with care – share the road
- Stay Focused – stay alert.

IMPORTANT SAFETY REMINDERS

All bicyclists should wear properly fitted bicycle helmets every time they ride. A helmet is the single most effective way to prevent head injury resulting from a bicycle crash. Statistics support this statement.

Bicyclists are considered vehicle operators; they are required to obey the same rules of the road as other vehicle operators, including obeying traffic signs, signals, and lane markings. When cycling in the street, cyclists must ride in the same direction as traffic.

Driver of motor vehicles need to share the road with bicyclists. Be courteous – allow at least three feet clearance when passing a bicyclist on the road, look for cyclists before opening a car door or pulling out from a parking space, and yield to cyclists at intersections and as directed by signs and signals. Be especially watchful for cyclists when making turns, either left or right.

Bicyclists should increase their visibility to drivers by wearing fluorescent or brightly colored clothing during the day, dawn, and dusk. To be noticed when riding at night, use a front light and a red reflector or flashing rear light, and use retro-reflective tape or markings on equipment or clothing.

Taken from the NHTSA'S National Center for Statistics and Analysis

STATISTICS

Statistics and other little known facts

- The first automobile crash in the United States occurred in New York City in 1896, when a motor vehicle collided with a cyclist.⁽¹⁾
- In 2008, 716 cyclists were killed and an additional 52,000 were injured in traffic crashes. ⁽¹⁾
- Cyclist fatalities occurred more frequently in urban areas (69%), at non-intersection locations (64%), between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. (28%), and during the months of June (9%) and September (12%).⁽¹⁾
- Cyclists *under age 16* accounted for 13 percent of all cyclists killed and 25 percent of those injured in traffic crashes in 2008. By comparison, cyclists under age 16 accounted for 30 percent of all those killed and 44 percent of those injured in 1998.⁽¹⁾
- About one –seventh (12%) of the cyclists killed in traffic crashes in 2008 were between 5 and 15 years old. The cyclist fatality rate for this age group in 2008 was 2.01 per million population – 14% lower than the rate for all cyclists which was 2.35 per million. ⁽¹⁾
- The injury rate for this age group was 293 per million population, compared with 172.3 per million population for cyclists of all ages.⁽¹⁾
- About 540,000 cyclists visit emergency rooms with injuries every year. Of those, about 67,000 have head injuries, and 27,000 have injuries serious enough to be hospitalized.
- Non-helmeted riders are 14 times likely to be involved in a fatal crash than helmeted riders.
- Head injuries account for more than 60 percent of bicycle-related deaths.
- A very high percentage of cyclists' brain injuries can be prevented by a helmet, estimated at anywhere from 45 to 88 percent.
- Direct costs of cyclists' injuries due to not wearing a helmet are estimated at \$81 million each year, rising with health care costs.
- Indirect costs of cyclists' injuries due to not wearing a helmet are estimated at \$2.3 million each year.

1 – National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis

2 – Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute

"cyclist" refers to bicyclist, riders of two-wheel nonmotorized vehicles, tricycles, and unicycles.