

# GETTING FROM **HERE** TO **THERE** SAFELY

A YOUTH AND PARENT SAFETY BOOKLET  
FOR ALL ROADWAY USERS



## **WHAT IS THIS GUIDE ABOUT?**

Walking and bicycling are fun activities that give you freedom to go places. They are good for your body and the planet. This guide focuses on safety tips for pedestrians and bicyclists plus information on bicycle equipment, riding tips, and rules of the road.

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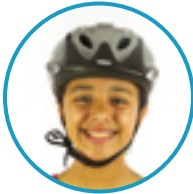
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# USE YOUR HEAD, WEAR YOUR HELMET

The #1 rule when you ride a bike is to wear a helmet **every** time you ride.

**Why? In California, it's the law for children under age 18 years.** Protect your brain, as it's the most important part of your body. The helmet should be the correct size for you, properly adjusted, and worn on its own (no hats underneath).



## SNUG

Adjust the tension at the back of the helmet or replace the pad inserts (if available) until the helmet fits snugly around your head.

If you cannot get a snug fit, your helmet won't protect you in a crash. You may need to purchase a different sized helmet.



## EYES

Place your helmet level on your head so you are able to see the helmet rim when you look up.

There should be no more than two finger widths between your eyebrows and the rim of the helmet.



## EARS

Adjust the straps so they make a "Y" that meets just below your ears.



## MOUTH

Adjust the chinstrap so that no more than two fingers fit between the strap and your chin while fastened.

## CHOOSE THE RIGHT HELMET

There are two types of helmets you can wear. Choose the right one for the right activity.



### **Bike Helmet**

Bicycling  
Scootering  
Skating



### **Multi-Sport Helmet**

Bicycling  
Skateboarding  
Scootering  
Skating

VC 21212 (A) states that a helmet must be worn by those under age 18.



**PARENT TIPS** – Be a “Roll Model” for your child. Wear your helmet every time you ride. If you were in a crash or have a crack in your helmet, replace it.



# RIDE A BIKE THAT FITS

## FRAME SIZE

Choose a bike that is the right size, not one that you have to grow into.

## FRAME LENGTH

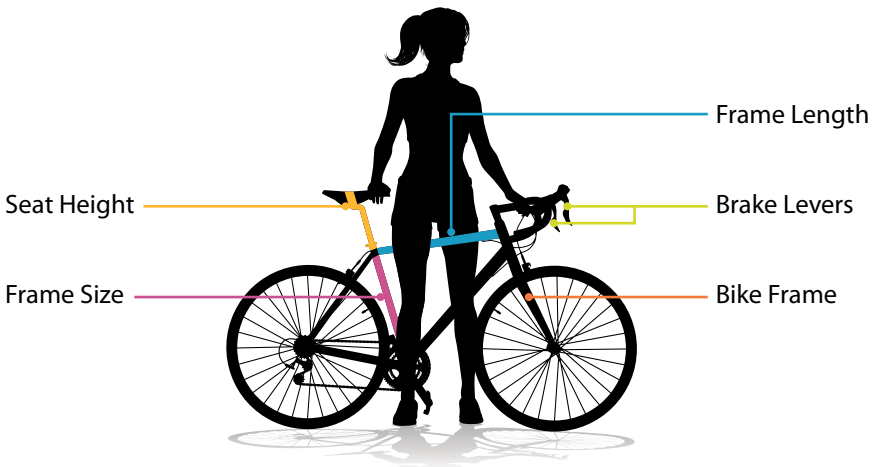
Make sure you can lean in and reach the handlebar. Avoid stretching your back and shoulders.

## SEAT HEIGHT

When standing in front of the seat with hands on the handlebar, you should be able to place the balls of both feet firmly on the ground.

## BRAKE LEVERS

If your bike has brake levers, make sure you can adjust them for your size so that you can reach and pull them strongly.



**PARENT TIP** – Ride a bike that fits. A bike that is too big can't be controlled properly and may be dangerous!



# BEFORE YOU GO – CHECK YOUR BIKE

Prevent any surprises by always checking your bicycle before you ride.

## ABC QUICK CHECK

- A AIR** – Are the tires properly inflated?
- B BRAKES** – Do the brakes work?
- C CHAINS & CRANKS** – Are the chains oiled and cranks secure?



- Q QUICK** – Is the quick-release lever that holds the wheels in place securely closed?
- C CHECK** – Take a quick slow ride around to make sure everything is working properly.

Don't forget to lock your bike in a secure and well lit location after you ride.



**PARENT TIP** – Buy a U-shaped lock, a heavy steel cable lock, or a combination of the two.

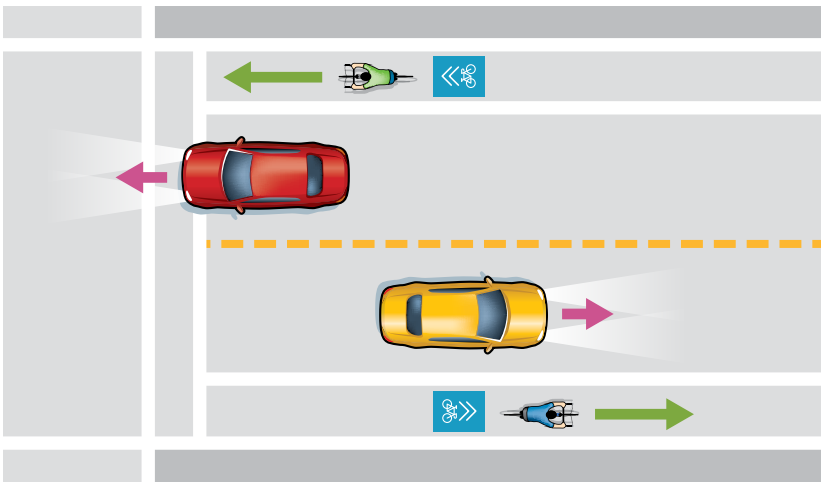


# LEARN THE RULES OF THE ROAD

## BICYCLISTS

Follow the same rules of the road as drivers of cars. This is California law. (VC21200)

- ✓ **RIDE IN THE SAME DIRECTION AS CARS:** Bicyclists should be on the right side of the road. Drivers are not looking for wrong way bicyclists.

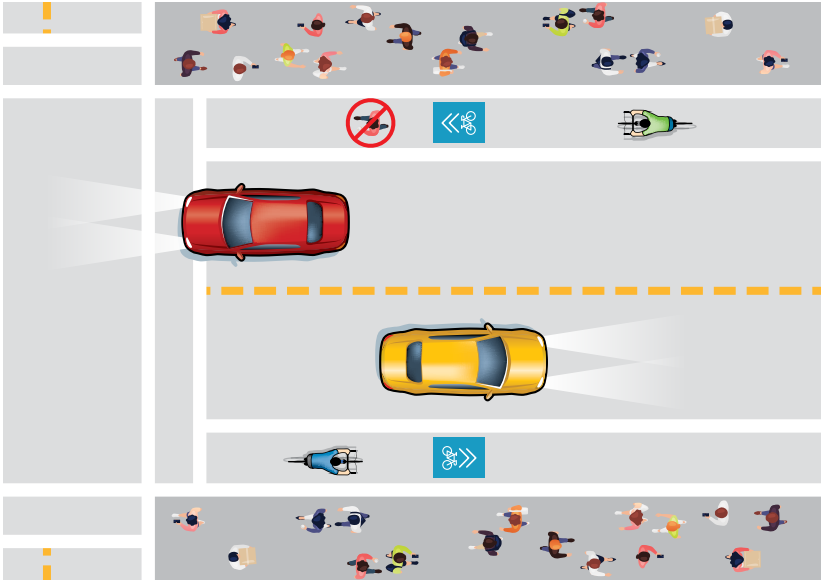


- ✓ **RIDE ON THE ROAD:** Sidewalks are for pedestrians and those going walking speed.
- ✓ **DON'T HITCH ON CARS:** Hitching rides on a car is against the law for bicyclists, scooters, and skateboards. (VC21203)
- ✓ **DON'T DOUBLE RIDE:** Each rider of a bicycle must have a seat; double riding is not allowed.
- ✓ **EARPHONES:** It is illegal to ride with earphones in both ears. (VC27400)
- ✓ **STAY ALERT:** Try to anticipate what motorists may do.



## PEDESTRIANS

- ✓ **USE SIDEWALKS:** Walk on the sidewalk. Don't walk in the bike lane if there is a sidewalk available. (VC21966) If there is no sidewalk, walk on the left side facing traffic.



- ✓ **OBEY SIGNALS:** Follow all signs and signals. Start walking only when "Walk" or white pedestrian is showing. If the red hand is flashing, you may continue to cross if already in the crosswalk, but don't start.
- ✓ **CROSS AT CORNERS:** The safest place to cross is at a crosswalk or from corner to corner. (VC21954 (a)) Crossing mid-block where drivers are not expecting to see you is the most common cause of pedestrian injury.
- ✓ **RIGHT OF WAY:** Pedestrians do not automatically have the right of way, even when there is a crosswalk. Pedestrians must give cars enough time to stop before entering the street. (VC21950(b))



**PARENT TIP** – Be sure to make eye contact with the driver before crossing.

## SCOOTERS AND SKATEBOARDERS

- ✓ **WEAR A HELMET:** Every skateboarder, and those using scooters or skates must ALWAYS wear a helmet.
- ✓ **WEAR CLOSED-TOED SHOES:** Wear padding and closed-toe, slip resistant shoes while skateboarding or using a scooter.
- ✓ **WEAR OTHER SAFETY ITEMS:** Wear wrist guards, elbow pads and knee pads for safety.

Specific guidelines for where you may legally ride a skateboard vary from city to city. Check with your local law enforcement agency.

## MOTORIZED SCOOTERS

- ✓ **RIDERS MUST BE 16 YEARS OLD:** Riders must have a license or instructional permit to operate a motorized scooter.
- ✓ **SPEED LIMIT 15MPH:** The motorized scooter speed limit is 15 mph.
- ✓ **USE THE ROAD:** Scooters are not allowed to be ridden on the sidewalk. Scooters may be ridden on a street with a speed limit of 25 mph or less.
- ✓ **USE REFLECTIVE GEAR AT NIGHT:** A front light, side and rear reflectors are required when riding in the dark.
- ✓ **WEAR A HELMET:** Don't forget – helmets are required when riding scooters too!



**PARENT TIP** – A bike, scooter, or skateboard is your child's first vehicle for getting around and gaining independence. Remind your child that while on wheels, they need to follow the same rules and laws that drivers do!

## WHEN RIDING AT NIGHT

- ✓ A white light in the front and a red reflector or flashing light on the back is required
- ✓ Reflectors on pedals and/or shoes
- ✓ Wear light colored or reflective clothing
- ✓ Be visible at all times, don't assume motorists can see you



**PARENT TIP** – Pedestrians need to be seen too.



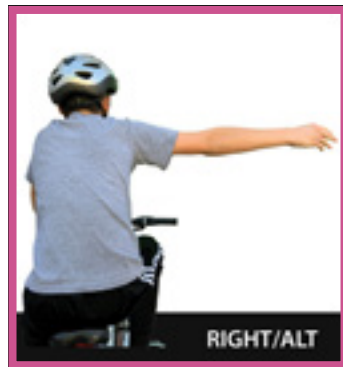
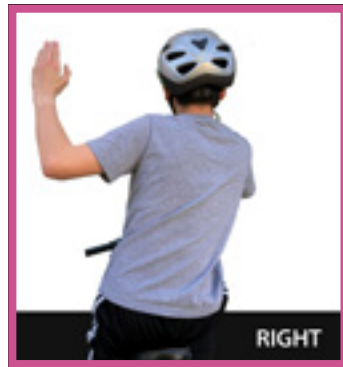
# IMPORTANT CYCLING SKILLS

## HAND SIGNALS

Use proper hand signals to let drivers and others know which way you will be moving. (VC 22111) Be predictable to all roadway users: motorists, pedestrians, and other bicyclists.

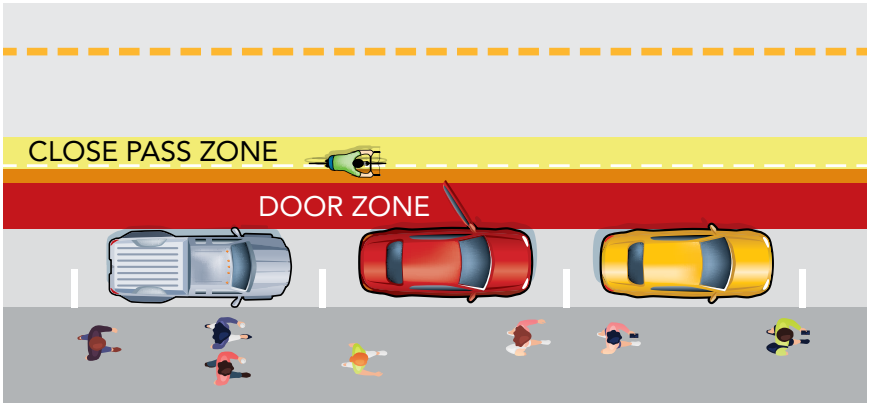
There are two ways to signal a right hand turn. See the diagram labeled Right/Alt for the second way used only by bicyclists.

Signal in advance in order to prepare other roadway users.



## DOOR ZONE

Ride in a straight line and stay out of the DOOR ZONE. Ride far enough from parked cars so you can avoid suddenly opened doors.



## RIDE IN A STRAIGHT LINE

Don't weave between parked cars. Riding in a straight line allows others to anticipate what you are likely to do. Drivers may not see you when you move in and out of traffic.

## RIGHT TURNS

Stay in the right lane, glance behind for other traffic before making a right turn.

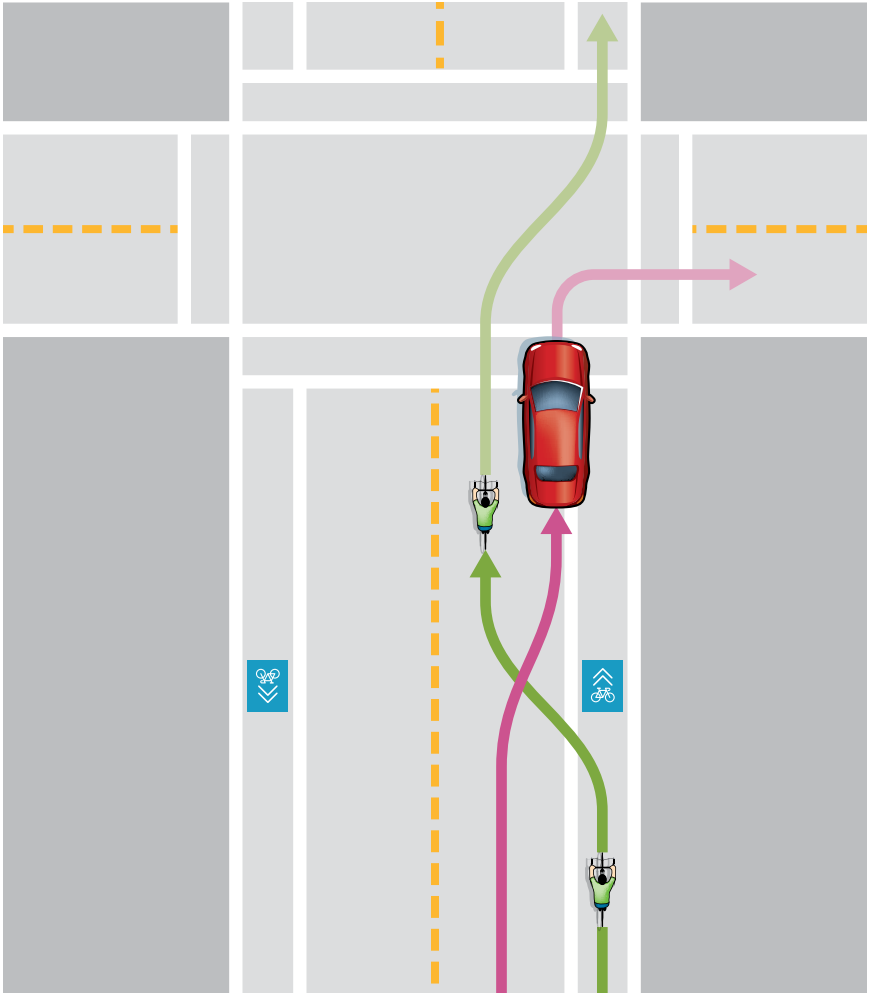


**PARENT TIP** – Practice safe cycling in places where there are few cars.

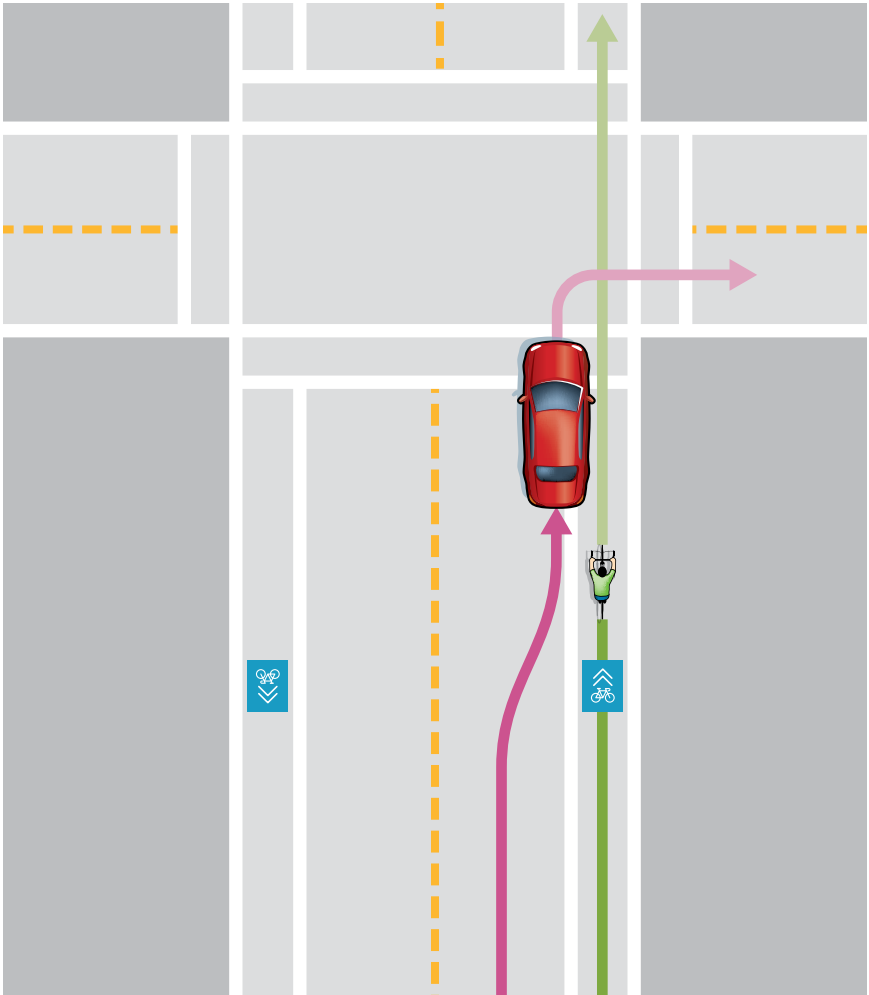
## IF GOING STRAIGHT, AND CARS ARE TURNING RIGHT

There are two options for riding straight safely. Be alert for cars that may turn right across your path. The bicyclist should look before s/he merges.

1. Carefully merge a few feet to the left when approaching the intersection.



2. Continue to stay in the bike lane, but watch for cars that may be turning right in front of you. Look out for a car's turn signal to anticipate what motorists might do. Remember that not everyone uses their turn signals.

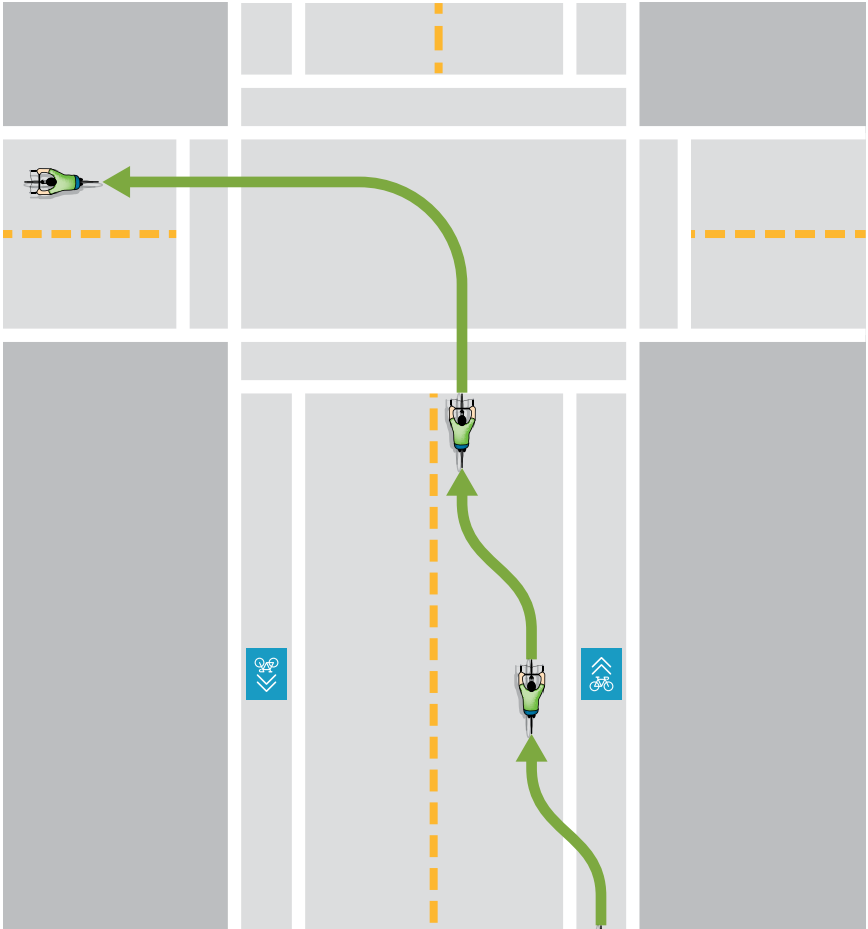


## LEFT TURNS

**For new riders:** Use the crosswalk like a pedestrian, and walk the bike across.

**For experienced riders:** signal and move to the left side of the lane and turn left from the left lane.

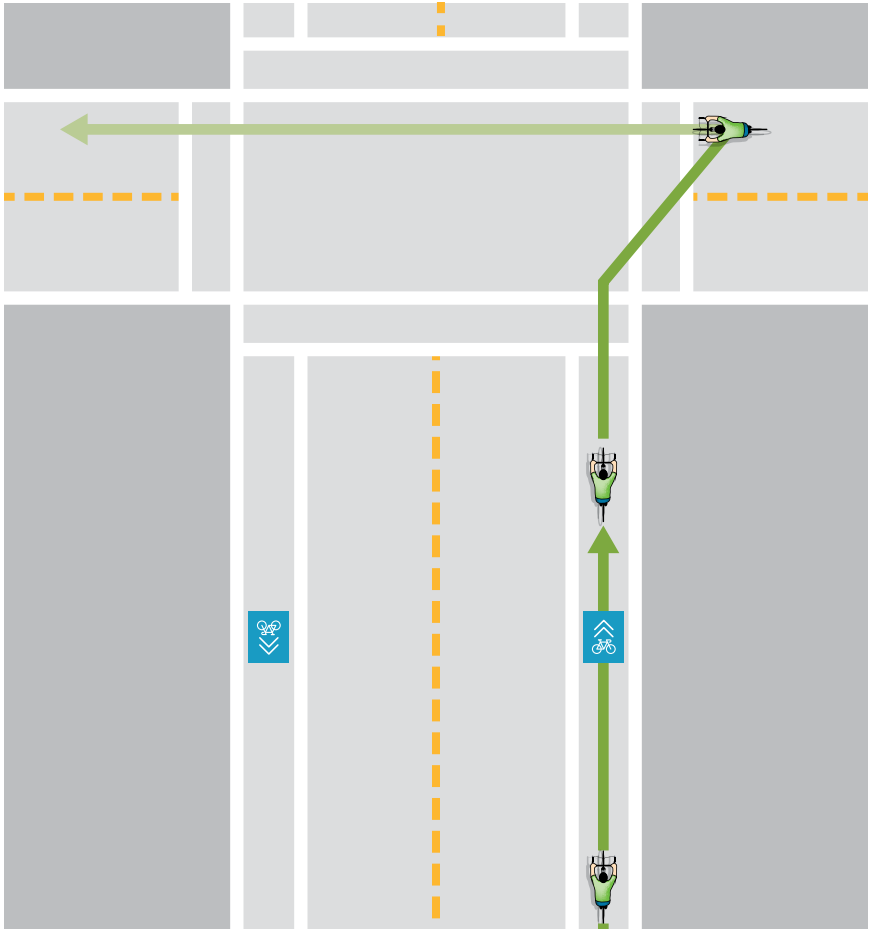
### Turning left from the left lane





**For new riders and at busy intersections:** Use a box turn or 90 degree turn. Ride through the intersection to the far corner. Stop and position your bike in the new direction. Yield to oncoming traffic or wait for the green signal, where there is a traffic signal. Ride your bike across the intersection.

## Box Turn





## DANGEROUS BEHAVIORS

- ✓ Not wearing a helmet
- ✓ Bicyclists riding on the wrong side of the street
- ✓ Pedestrians crossing the street mid-block
- ✓ Pedestrians jaywalking
- ✓ Riding in a crosswalk
- ✓ Not looking both ways before entering a street, even from a driveway or parking lot
- ✓ Crossing the street without making eye contact with motorists
- ✓ Rolling through stop signs without stopping and looking for oncoming traffic
- ✓ Not wearing reflective gear at night



**PARENT TIP** – Be aware. Anticipate these possible dangerous behaviors to avoid injury.



# DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIKE LANES

## GREEN LANES

These lanes are intended to provide visibility of a bike lane, and help identify potential areas of conflict. Bicyclists have the right of way, but use caution when cars may merge into your zone.



**PARENT TIP** – When a bike lane is dashed, motorists merge carefully over the bike lane to make a turn. Don't forget to yield to bicyclists already in the bike lane.

## PROTECTED LANES

These are separated bicycle lanes from the road using flexible posts, parked cars, concrete posts, or other physical barriers.



**PARENT TIP** – Bicyclists should be cautious and visible at intersections to turning vehicles even when you have the right of way. Motorists should also be cautious and look out for bicyclists when making a right turn at an intersection.

## SHARROWS

A bicycle and motor vehicle may share a lane. Sharrows are double chevron road markings that indicate a shared bicycle lane with motorist. They are often used for a road that is too narrow for a bicycle lane, and help position bicyclists far enough away from the door zone.



**PARENT TIP** – Motorists, be aware that a shared lane marking means that bicyclists may use the full travel lane.

## BIKE BOXES

Only seen in a few locations in our community, bike boxes position the bicyclist in front of the stopped vehicles at a traffic light, allowing the bicyclist to be more visible at certain busy intersections.



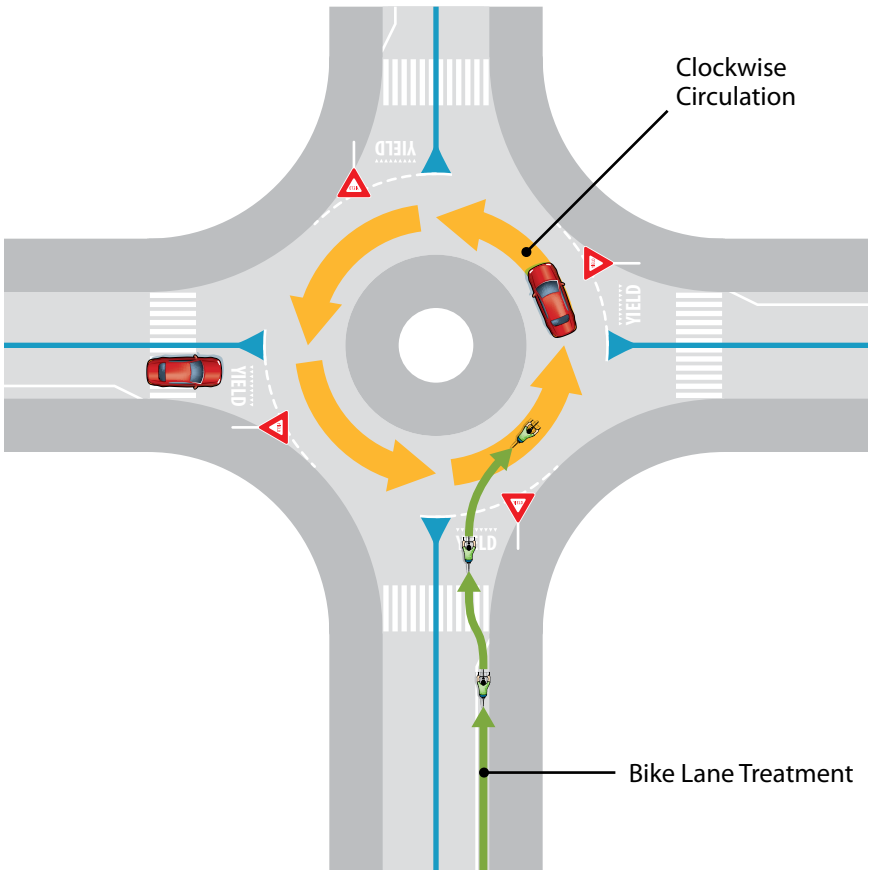
**PARENT TIP** – Motorists, do **NOT** stop on top of the green bike box when at an intersection. Bicyclists should position themselves in the appropriate lane for the next move.



# ROUNDABOUTS

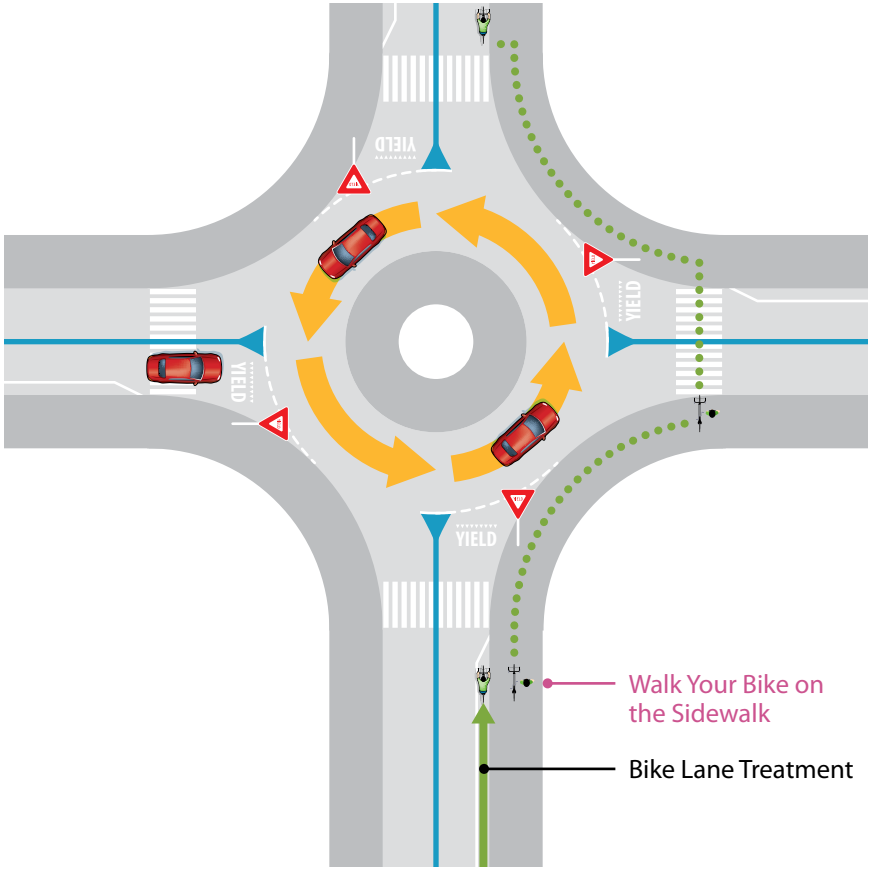
Bicyclists have two choices when riding in/thru a roundabout, depending on skill level and comfort.

**For experienced riders:** using the same rules of the road as drivers, approach the roundabout like a motorist. Yield to any other traffic (pedestrians at crosswalks and/or bicyclists/motorists on the road). Enter the roundabout when it is clear or there is a big enough gap in traffic to merge safely. Signal when exiting the roundabout.



Source: Publication number FHWA-SA-15-016

**For new riders and at busy intersections:** If bicyclists aren't comfortable riding in the roundabout, bicyclists may dismount and walk at the crosswalks.



Source: Publication number FHWA-SA-15-016



**PARENT TIP** – Bicyclist take the full lane throughout the roundabout. Do not allow a motorist to pass on the left or right side.



## CYCLING ETIQUETTE

- ✓ Get off your bike to cross at a crosswalk or busy street. Check both ways before you cross.
- ✓ Practice looking back over your shoulder without weaving your bike. Always do a shoulder check, especially before you make a turn or change lanes.
- ✓ When riding in groups, it is safer to ride single file. Be sure to communicate hazards, change in speed, and passing to the left with your fellow riders.
- ✓ Look out for surface hazards, such as puddles, sharp objects, debris, and holes in the pavement. Ride far enough away from the curb to maintain a straight line.
- ✓ When riding on multi-use paths or trails, know the rules of the trail, be courteous, and yield to all other trail users.





# MOTORISTS — SHARE THE ROAD

Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motorists on the road.

(VC21200(a)) Here are some helpful hints for motorists:

- ✓ **What to Expect** – By law, bicyclists should ride in the same direction as car traffic. However, you should also be on the lookout for bicyclists on the sidewalk and moving in the opposite direction from car traffic. Also, be on the lookout for small children on bicycles.
- ✓ **Give Adequate Space** – In conditions where there is not enough room for the bicyclist to ride to the right, they are allowed in the lane of traffic.
- ✓ **Passing** – Wait until it is safe to pass a bicyclist. It is the law to give the bicyclist a minimum of three feet when passing. (VC21760(c))
- ✓ **Turning Right** – Watch out for bicyclists when turning right. A bicyclist may be to the right of you and planning to go straight. The bicyclist may be going faster than you think.
- ✓ **Turning Left** – Look for bicyclists when making a left hand turn. Bicyclists who are crossing straight through the same intersection in the opposite direction may be going faster than you realize.
- ✓ **Backing Up** – When backing out of your driveway, look to see if someone is riding (or walking) in your path. Children on bikes are especially hard to see. Look left-right-left before backing up.
- ✓ **Check the Door Zone** – After parallel parking and before opening your door, check the rear view mirror and turn around to look for bicyclists riding alongside your car or approaching quickly.
- ✓ **Honk Only When Necessary** – If the need arises to honk your horn to alert a bicyclist that you are about to pass, do so at a respectful distance. Honking too close may cause the bicyclist to lose their bearings and create a hazardous situation for you both.
- ✓ **Signaling** – Always use turn signals before turning, changing lanes, or pulling out from the curb.



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[stanfordhealthcare.org/bikesafety](https://stanfordhealthcare.org/bikesafety)



[bike.stanfordchildrens.org](https://bike.stanfordchildrens.org)



[sccphd.org/traffic](https://sccphd.org/traffic)

For more information, call 650-736-8095