

# RULES OF THE ROAD

Please consult the Colorado Revised Statutes for the specific language of the law regarding bicycles and their operation. Municipalities and other jurisdictions may add further restrictions beyond those in the state law by passing local ordinances. *It is your responsibility to know the law of the jurisdiction in which you are bicycling.*

## RIDE ON THE RIGHT

Ride in the right lane with the flow of traffic.

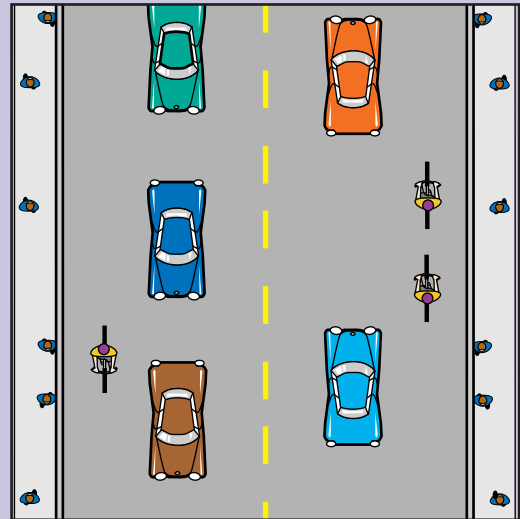
Ride as close to the right side of the right lane as safe and practical when being overtaken by another vehicle.

Ride on the paved shoulder whenever a paved shoulder suitable for bicycle riding is present.

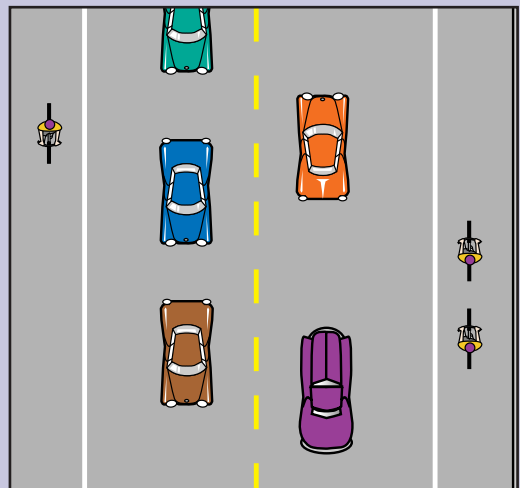
Ride in the right lane except when:

- Overtaking another bicycle or vehicle proceeding in the same direction
- Preparing for a left turn
- Avoiding hazardous conditions

**TIP:** *Riding on the right doesn't mean hugging the curb or edge of the road. This is not the best place to ride because if you hit the curb or edge of the pavement, you might lose your balance and fall into traffic.*



*Ride in the right lane with the flow of traffic*

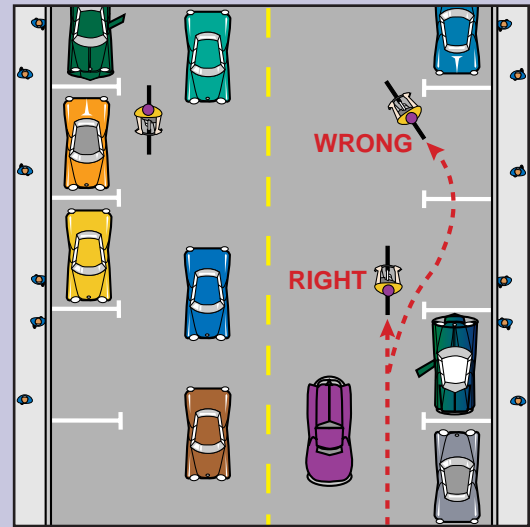


*Ride on the paved shoulder*

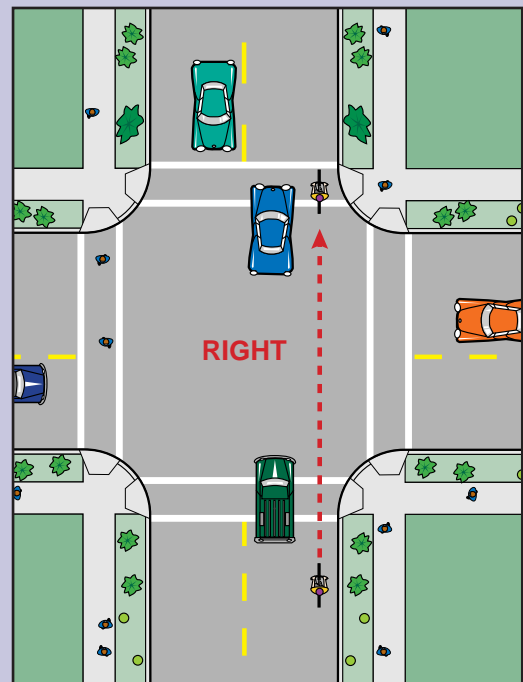
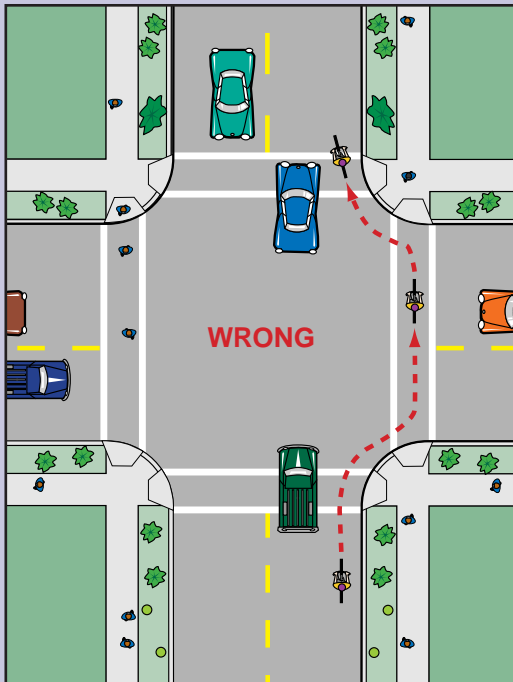
## RIDE IN A STRAIGHT LINE

Riding predictably will make you more visible to motorists. It's easier for a motor vehicle driver to pass when you're riding in a straight line. Don't weave in and out of parked cars - you may disappear from motorists' sight and get squeezed out or clipped when you need to merge back into traffic.

At intersections, stay on the road. Don't ride in the crosswalk and suddenly reappear on the road again. A driver may not see you and turn the corner and hit you.



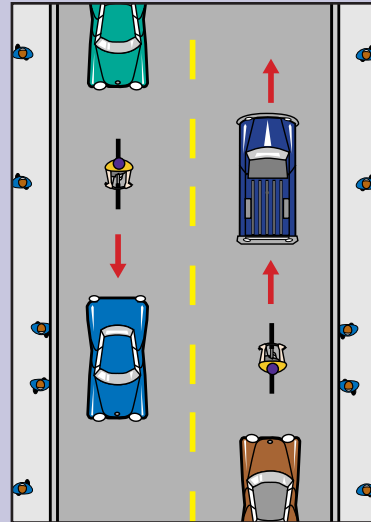
*Don't weave in and out of parked cars*



*Alternating between riding on the road and riding in a crosswalk is confusing to drivers*

## WHEN TO TAKE A LANE

If there is no shoulder or bike lane, where traffic is slow and the travel lane is narrow, or when approaching an intersection, ride closer to the center of the lane to establish yourself as part of the flow of traffic. This will prevent motorists from passing you when there isn't room. You should also take the lane when you're traveling at the same speed as traffic. This will keep you out of motorists' blind spots and reduce conflicts with right-turning traffic.



*Occupy more of the travel lane if it is narrow or if you are moving at the same speed as the flow of traffic.*

## RIDE SINGLE FILE

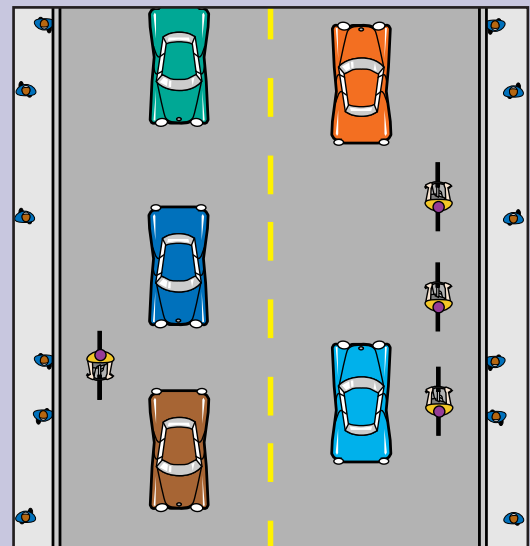
Persons operating bicycles on roadways shall ride single file.

Riding two abreast is permitted in the following circumstances:

- When no motor vehicle traffic is approaching within 300 feet in front of or behind you.
- When sight distance is greater than 300 feet in front of or behind you.
- On paths or parts of the roadway set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles.

Persons riding two abreast shall ride within a single lane.

On curving mountain roads, play it safe and ride single file. When riding two abreast, if faster moving vehicles are behind you, immediately return to single file to allow them to pass safely and easily. Share the road and be courteous to improve relationships with your fellow road users. Cooperation with other users makes the roads safer for all of us.



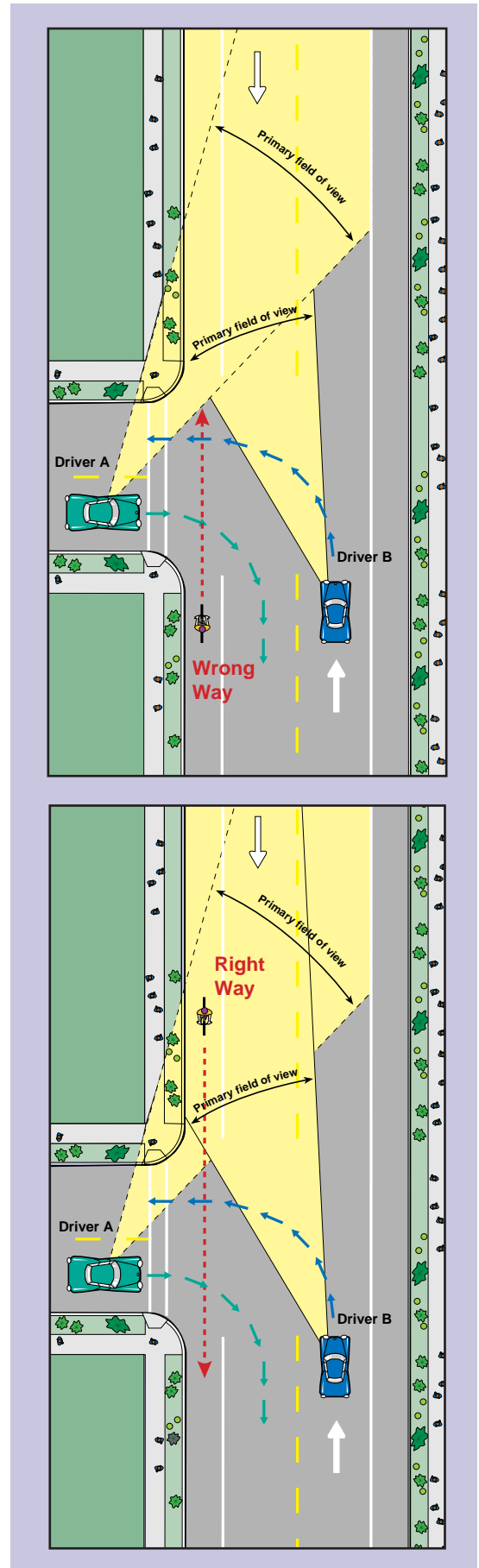
*Play it safe and ride single file*

## NEVER RIDE AGAINST TRAFFIC

Ride on the right, in the same direction as the traffic next to you. Riding with the flow of traffic makes you more visible.

Riding on the left, against traffic, is illegal and dangerous. Motorists and other road users are not looking for bicyclists on the wrong side of the road. Riding the wrong way increases the chance of a head-on collision with vehicles moving with the normal traffic flow.

*Hazards of wrong way riding: Driver A is looking for traffic on the left. Driver B is looking for traffic ahead. In both cases, a wrong-way bicyclist is not in the driver's main field of vision.*



## ***DON'T PASS ON THE RIGHT***

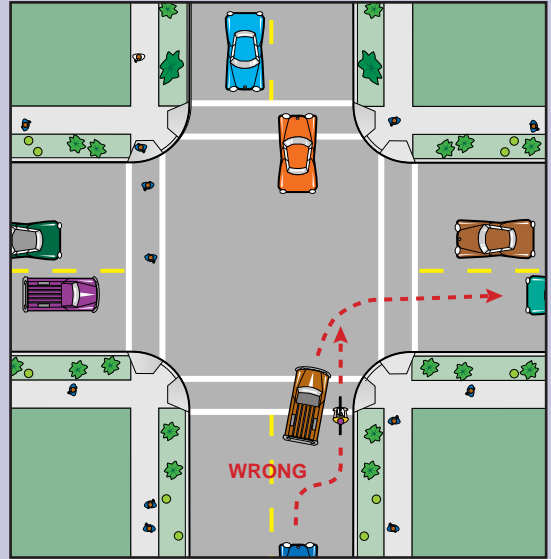
Motorists are not looking for bicyclists to pass on the right even if the bicyclists are in a designated bike lane. Establish your place in traffic behind the motorist where you can watch for turn signals. Drive defensively, always use extreme caution when passing.

## ***OBEY TRAFFIC SIGNS & SIGNALS***

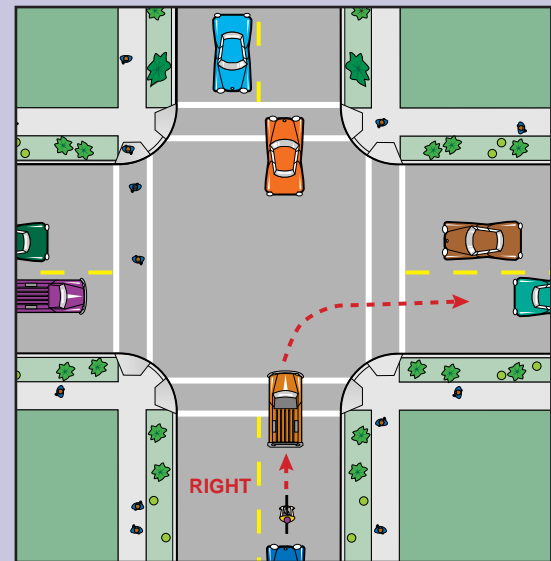
Know and obey all traffic laws. Give motorists a reason to respect bicyclists!

It is illegal and dangerous to ride through stop signs, red lights, impede traffic, ride several abreast, or ride the wrong way down a street. These illegal actions reinforce the myth that bicycle drivers are irresponsible and do not belong on the road.

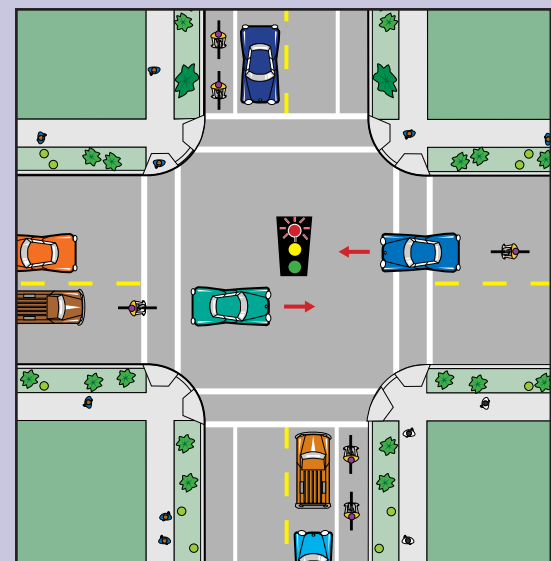
By driving your bicycle in a safe manner (watching out for yourself as well as others) you make it easier for motorists to treat you as an equal on the road and be polite to you or the next bicyclist they see.



*Don't pass on the right*



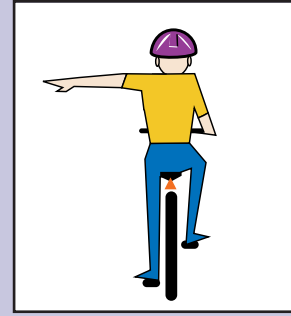
*Don't pass on the right - stay in the lane*



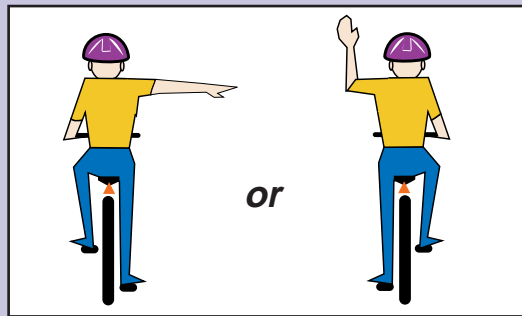
*Stop at all red lights and stop signs*

## USE HAND SIGNALS

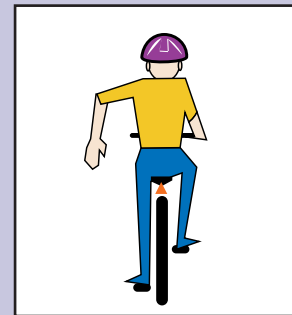
Use the proper hand signals for left or right turns and for slowing or stopping. When turning, you must signal continuously at least 100 feet before the turn and while you are stopped waiting to turn, unless use of your hand is needed to control your bicycle.



**LEFT**



**RIGHT**

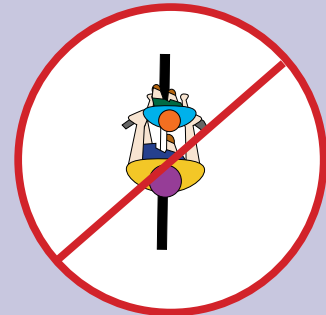


**SLOW or STOP**

*Use the proper hand signals to indicate your intention to turn, slow down or stop*

## NEVER “RIDE DOUBLE”

Never carry more people at one time on the bicycle than the number for which the bicycle is designed or equipped. “Riding double” may seem like fun, but it is dangerous and illegal.

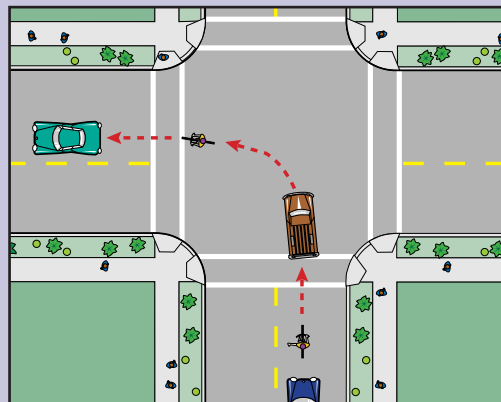


## LEFT TURN OPTIONS

You have the following choices:

### 1) Like a motor vehicle:

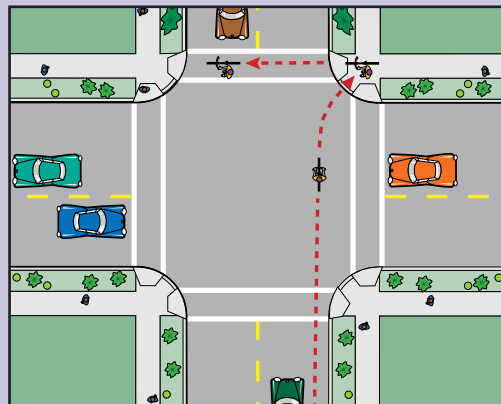
- Signal left
- Look behind you
- Move into the left lane, left turn lane, or the center turn lane
- Yield to oncoming cars before turning



*Left turn like a motor vehicle.*

### 2) Like a pedestrian:

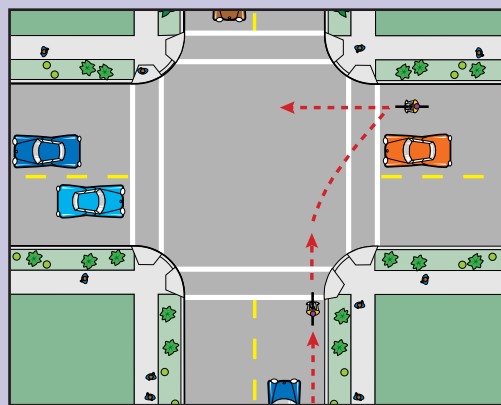
- Ride straight through the intersection to the far crosswalk
- Stop, dismount, and position your bike in the new direction
- Yield to oncoming traffic, or if you are at a signalized intersection, wait for the green or WALK signal
- Walk your bike across the intersection



*Left turn like a pedestrian.*

### 3) 90 Degree or Inverted L:

- Ride straight through the intersection to the far corner
- Stop and position your bike in the new direction
- Yield to oncoming traffic, or if you are at a signalized intersection, wait for the green signal
- Ride your bike across the intersection

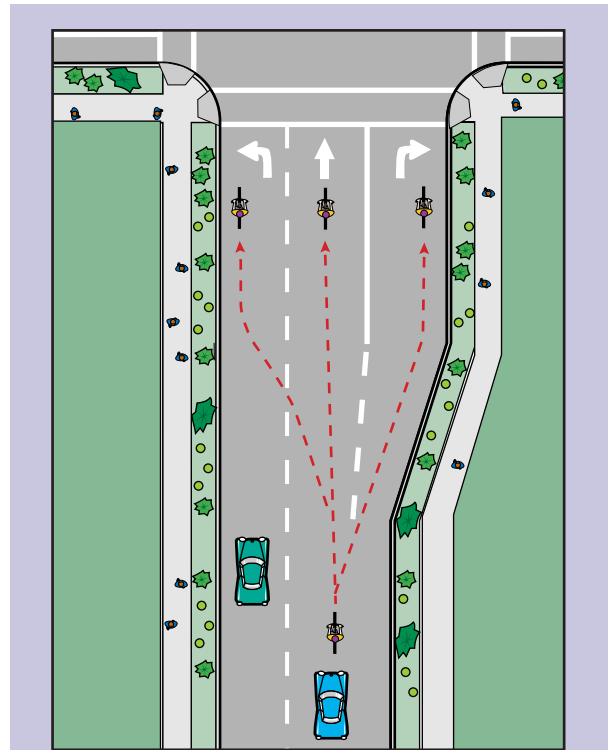


*Left turn at 90 degrees or inverted L.*

## ***FOLLOW LANE MARKINGS***

When you approach an intersection with several lane choices, choose the lane with the arrow pointing where you want to go. You may get cut off by turning cars if you're in the wrong lane. If there is a bike lane going through the intersection, use it only if you're going straight ahead.

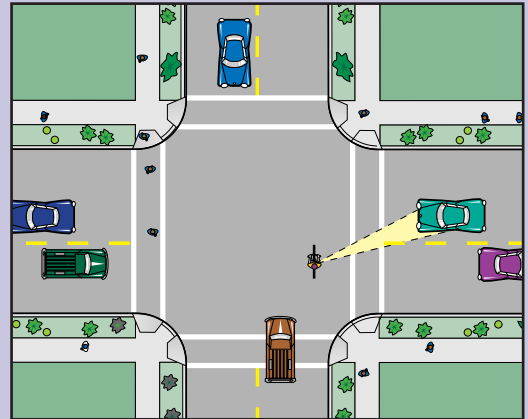
Like other traffic, cyclists must follow lane markings. Bicyclists can't turn left from the right lane or go straight from a right-turn-only lane.



*Follow lane markings.*

## ***MAKE EYE CONTACT WITH DRIVERS***

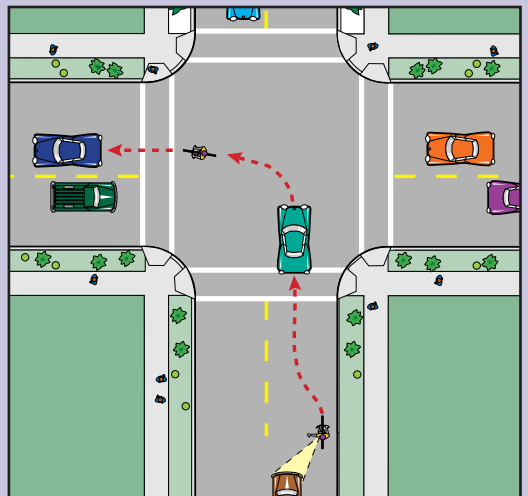
Until you are sure, assume motorists do not see you. Expect the unexpected and watch for cars pulling out from driveways and at intersections.



*Make eye contact with drivers.*

## ***SCAN THE ROAD BEHIND***

Learn to look back over your shoulder without losing your balance or swerving. A mirror mounted to your bicycle, helmet, or glasses can also be used for this. Remember to regularly check behind you for oncoming traffic.



*Scan the road behind.*



## NEVER CATCH A RIDE

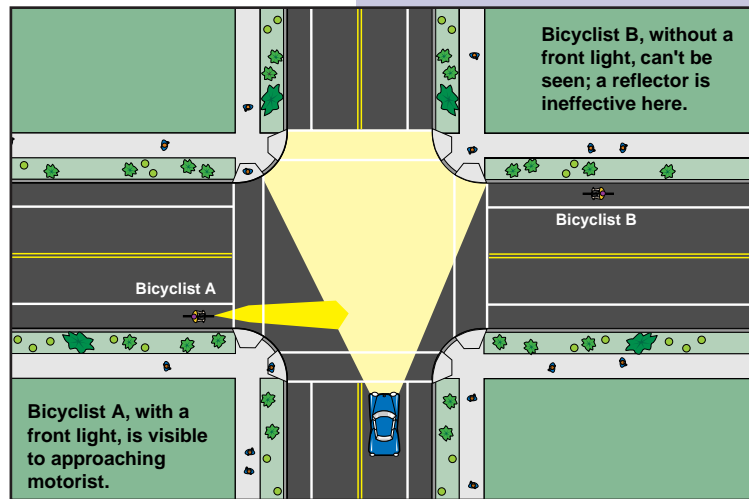
It is illegal to attach yourself or your bicycle to any motor vehicle.



## USE LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS

When bicycling from sundown to sunrise or when weather or other conditions cause poor visibility, your bicycle must be equipped with a rear red reflector and reflectors on both sides that can be seen for 600 feet in a car's headlamps. You must also have a white front headlight that can be seen for at least 500 feet from the front of the bicycle.

Aside from nighttime, the most hazardous times to ride are dawn, dusk, and during storms. These are the times when you are least visible. Riding at these times requires all the lighting and safety equipment of night time riding. If you do not have this equipment or your lights are dim, it is best to wait for full light or for the storm to pass.



*Effectiveness of bicycle lights.*

## KEEP HANDS ON HANDLEBARS

Keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times. Use both hands for steering and braking. Remember that wet and icy conditions make control and braking much more difficult.

## WORKING BRAKES

The bicycle must be equipped with a working brake or brakes that will enable you to stop within 25 feet from a speed of 10 miles per hour on dry, level, clean pavement.

## ROAD HAZARDS

### SAND & GRAVEL

Avoid sand and gravel on the pavement; they can cause loss of control.

### GLASS & DEBRIS

Avoid glass and debris; they can cause a flat tire and/or loss of control.

### PUDDLES

Avoid puddles; you never know the depth of a puddle or what is hidden in it.

### SEWER GRATES

Avoid sewer grates; your wheel can get caught in them.

### CRACKS IN THE ROAD

Avoid cracks in the road. The edge of the pavement and sharp bumps can throw your bicycle out of control.

### RAILROAD TRACKS

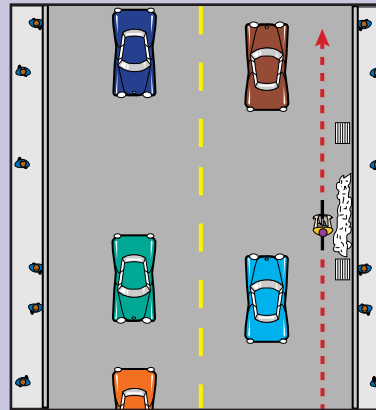
Always cross railroad tracks perpendicular to the rails (straight on). If tracks are poorly maintained, walk your bike across them.

### PARKED CARS

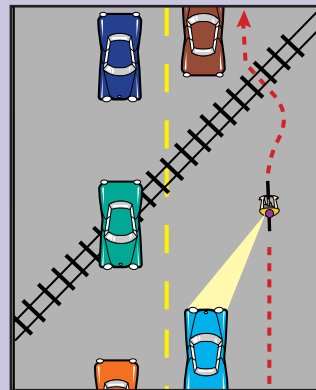
Always stay a car door's width away from parallel parked cars. Assume that a car door may open into your path even though you cannot see anyone in the car.

### SNOW & SLUSH

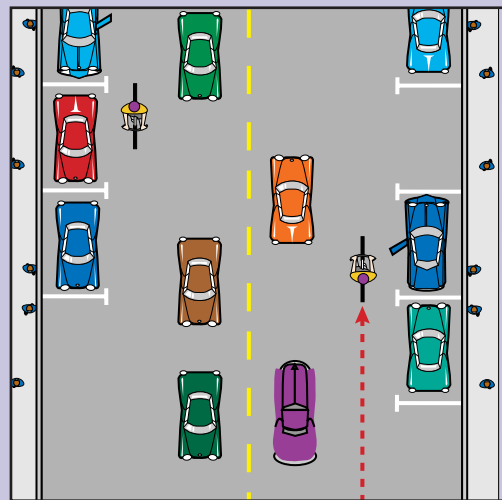
Avoid snow and slush. It is hard to steer and pedal in excessive snow or slush and requires a great deal of energy. Under these conditions, bicycle transportation is not the best choice.



*Avoid road debris and sewer grates.*



*Cross railroad tracks at a 90 degree angle.*



*Watch for opening car doors.*

## **ROAD HAZARDS** (Continued)

### **ICE**

Ice is sometimes hidden, particularly black ice and ice under new snow, and is a hazard to cyclists as well as motorists. If it is icy, don't ride in traffic, even if you are outfitted with studded snow tires. You may be able to maintain control, but the motorists might not. If you have to ride in icy conditions, reduce your tire pressure and relax, allowing the bicycle to find its way. React quickly and forcefully only when it is required to recover from a skid.

### **HIGH WINDS**

High winds can blow cyclists off the road or threaten them with blowing objects. Being passed by large trucks becomes more of a hazard because the intermittent blocking of the wind makes it harder to control your bicycle. If caught in a wind storm, it may be necessary to get off your bicycle and find an alternate form of transportation.

### **LIGHTNING**

Cyclists make good lightning rods! Seek shelter in a building if caught in a thunderstorm. If a building is not available, DO NOT stand under a tree. Find a ditch or depression to crouch in while remaining on your feet - do not sit or lie down.

### **IRATE DOGS**

Most dogs can be deterred by eye contact and a commanding tone of voice or a squirt from your water bottle. If those techniques don't work, get off your bike and use it as a shield while you walk away. The best insurance against a canine encounter of the worst kind is to carry dog repellent. Spray repellents are available in canisters which secure to your bicycle for easy access. Dog repellents also make good people repellents, so carry one for personal protection.

### **IRATE MOTORISTS**

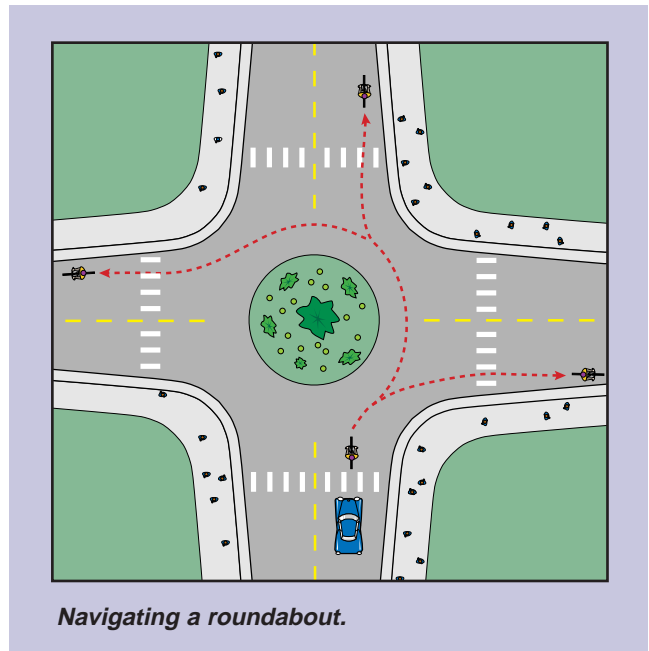
When you encounter motorists having a bad day or a bad attitude, be cordial even if they are in error. This can defuse a potentially hostile situation and prevent motorists from finding a reason to run you or the next cyclist down. Under no circumstances is the use of an obscene gesture appropriate or safe. Besides, you don't want to give them the satisfaction of knowing they irritated you!

## ROUNDABOUTS

Although popular in Europe for many years, roundabouts are relatively new to Colorado. A roundabout is designed to slow traffic and reduce hazards common to four-way intersections.

### Rules for navigating roundabouts:

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



## RIDING ON SIDEWALKS & IN CROSSWALKS

You are allowed to ride your bicycle on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk unless it is prohibited by official traffic control devices or local ordinances. When riding on a sidewalk or in a crosswalk, you must observe all the rules and regulations applicable to pedestrians, yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, and give an audible signal before passing them. An audible signal can be a bell, horn or your voice saying, "Hello, passing on your left."

However, riding on sidewalks is not recommended. Many crashes between bikes and cars occur on sidewalks at driveways and street crossings, especially when bicyclists ride against the flow of traffic. You should always walk your bicycle in busy shopping areas or on downtown sidewalks. Sidewalks are for pedestrians, not bicyclists, and you should be courteous and ride slowly and cautiously.

## ***RIGHT-OF-WAY***

Never assume you have the right-of-way. Your first responsibility at all times is to avoid a crash. It is true that in many instances another vehicle operator should yield to you. However, many people have been seriously injured because they insisted on the right-of-way. Right-of-way rules and regulations do not authorize negligent bicycle driving.

When approaching an uncontrolled intersection at approximately 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.

When changing lanes in traffic, you must yield to all vehicles in the other lane which are close enough to be a hazard. Don't change lanes if another vehicle must slow down for you. Always look behind you and signal before changing lanes.

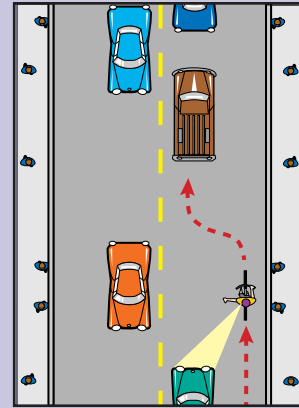
You should yield to pedestrians under all conditions. They have the right-of-way at crosswalks and intersections whether the crosswalks are marked or not.

## ***BICYCLES & TRAFFIC SIGNALS***

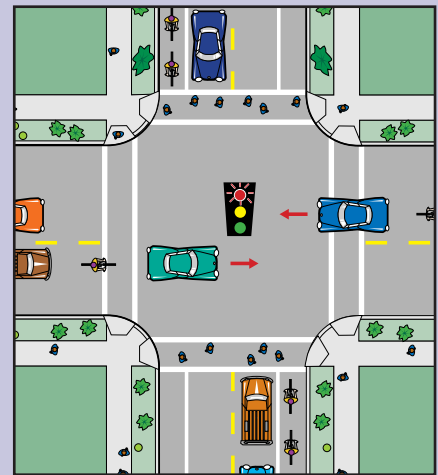
Many traffic signals are triggered by motor vehicles driving over electrically charged wires buried in the pavement. When a car drives over the loop, the metal disrupts the current. That sends a signal to the traffic light control computer, which then directs the signal to change.

Most bicycles have enough steel or aluminum in them to trigger the light. However, if your bike doesn't trigger the light, either move forward to leave room for a car to place itself over the loop, or go to the sidewalk and press the pedestrian push-button.

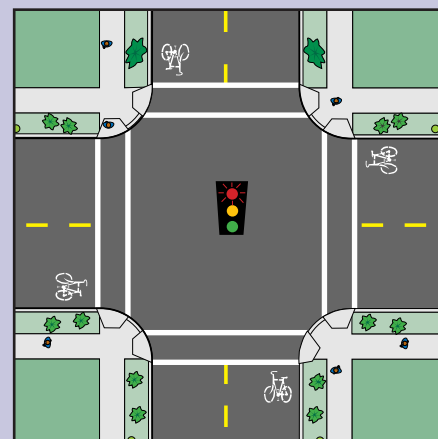
To trigger a light, position your bike over the bike indicator.



*Cyclists should signal and scan for traffic before merging into the lane.*



*Cyclists and cars should yield to pedestrians under all conditions.*



*To trigger a light, position your bike over the bike indicator.*

## ***BICYCLES & TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS***

A bicycle driver has all the rights and responsibilities applicable to the driver of any other vehicle except when specifically regulated by law or when certain regulations, by their nature, cannot apply to bicycles.

Bicycle drivers who violate traffic laws will be subject to the same penalties as drivers of motor vehicles, except that no penalty points shall be assessed against the bicyclist's driver's license.

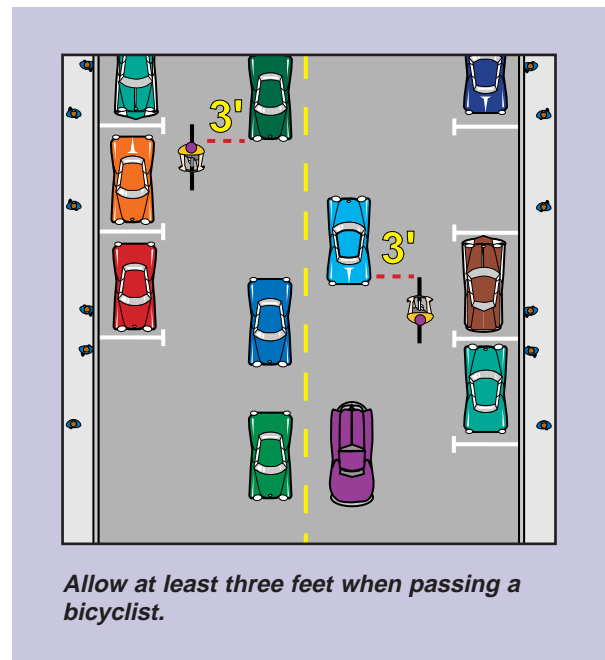
If a bicycle driver is stopped for a traffic violation and the officer has reason to believe that the bicyclist will not appear in court or the officer is unsure of the bicyclist's identity, the officer may arrest the bicyclist and require the bicyclist to post bond.

## ***TIPS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVERS***

Motorists also have a responsibility to act in ways to make the roads safer for all users. Please consider the following points as you share the road with pedestrians and bicyclists. Scanning for pedestrians and bicyclists should be a normal part of your driving routine as is scanning for other cars and trucks. Extra care should be taken when exiting alleys and driveways since pedestrians and bicyclists may be using the sidewalk and approaching from your left and right.

### **When passing a bicyclist:**

- Allow at least three feet between your vehicle and the bicycle. Just as the wind produced by a passing tractor-trailer can pull a car off course, so too can a passing car cause a cyclist to swerve out of control.
- Be patient and wait until it is safe to pass, as you would any other slow-moving vehicle. Be aware that when a road is too narrow for cars and bikes to ride safely side by side, bicyclists should ride in or near the center of the lane to discourage motorists from trying to pass them without enough clearance.
- If you feel that you must toot your horn in advance of passing, please do it from a friendly distance (several hundred feet), not from directly behind. You could startle them and they might veer into your path, causing an accident.

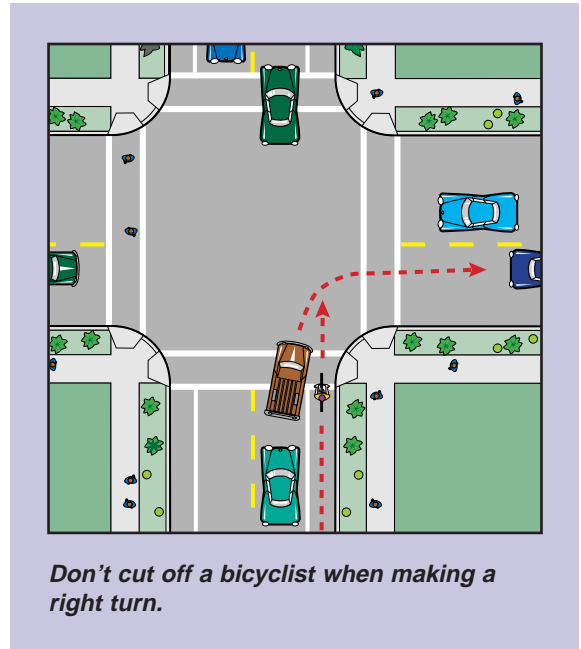


# RULES OF THE ROAD

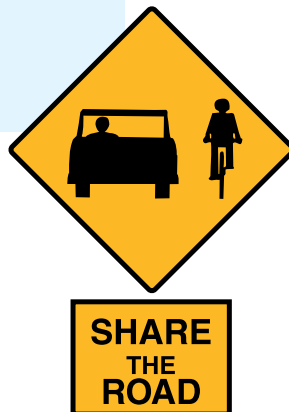
When you are turning right and a bicyclist is proceeding straight through the intersection, do not speed ahead of the bicyclist and cut him/her off as you are turning. He/she may not be able to avoid crashing into the passenger side of your vehicle.

Do not harass or endanger a bicyclist or pedestrian. Harassment, which may include threats, taunting, or intimidation, is a misdemeanor offense. Reckless endangerment is also a misdemeanor offense and involves conduct which places another person at risk of personal injury.

You should yield to pedestrians under all conditions. For more information on traffic laws and safety procedures, obtain a copy of the **Colorado Driver's Handbook** at any driver's license office.



**TIP:** *In Colorado, motorists and cyclists share the road. Both have equal rights and responsibilities to obey all traffic laws. All users should show respect and consideration when sharing the road.*



## TIPS FOR BICYCLING AND WALKING NEAR LARGE TRUCKS AND BUSES

Most truck drivers know to allow extra space between themselves and other trucks and buses - these large vehicles need room to move in traffic, and it's wise to give them a wide berth. But all too often, when we're not in a car, the good sense that helps us stay safe around large vehicles while driving doesn't carry over when we're walking or biking close to large trucks and buses. The result of this inattention can be serious - pedestrians and bicyclists put themselves at risk when they cross inattentively in front of transit or school buses. Sadly, a high percentage of single-vehicle fatal bus accidents involves pedestrians. The need to rethink our walking and biking habits when around large vehicles is obvious.



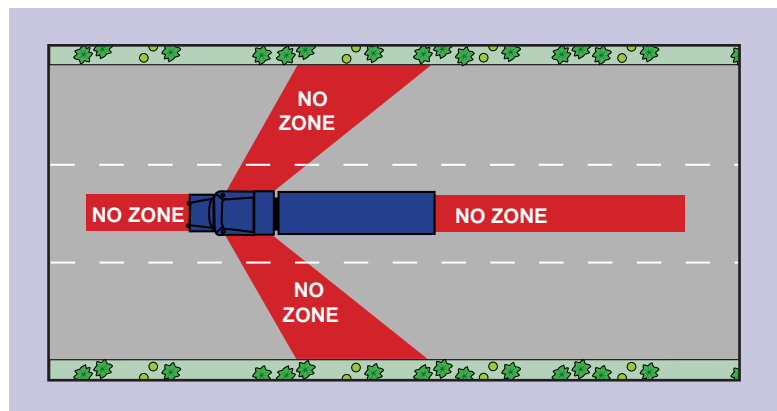
We can help to avoid trouble when walking or biking near large vehicles by keeping in mind the fact that the driver of a truck or bus has several "blind spots" - certain areas around the vehicle that the driver simply cannot see, even with the specialized side view and fish mirrors that modern large vehicles are equipped with for safety. We have to do our part by being "heads-up" in those situations when we find ourselves near large vehicles.

Remember to wait until the bus leaves the bus stop before trying to cross the street. Don't cross in front of, or behind, a bus standing at a bus stop. As the bus moves away from the curb, the driver's attention will be directed at vehicle traffic, looking for a gap in traffic big enough for the bus. Stay on the sidewalk until the bus leaves the stop.

### STAY OUT OF THE NO-ZONE WHEN CYCLING OR WALKING AROUND LARGE VEHICLES

The key to being safe around large vehicles and buses is to **KNOW THE NO-ZONES**.

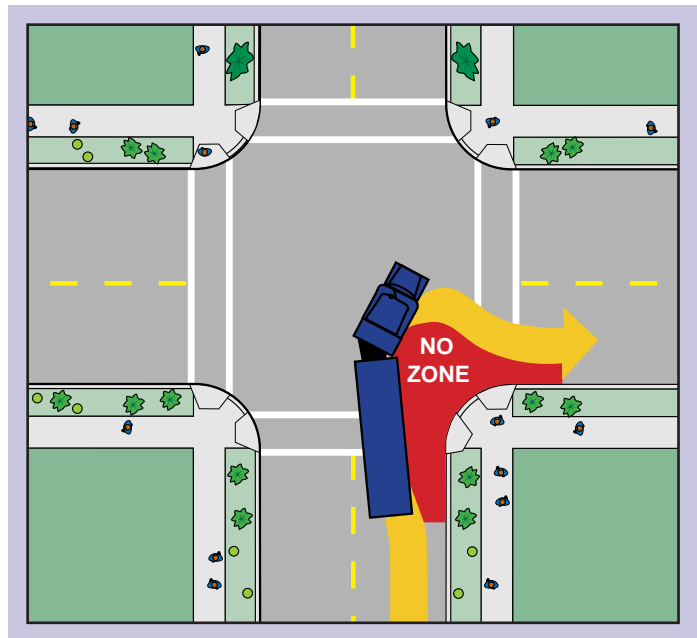
**NO-ZONES** are those areas on all sides, even the front and back of large vehicles, where the driver cannot see other vehicles or fixed objects...pedestrians or bicyclists.





### Side Blind Spots

When a large vehicle makes a turn at a street corner, that long distance between front and rear wheels means that the rear wheels may “off-track” and run across the pedestrian area at the curb. A skilled driver knows just how the wheels must track in order to make a safe turn. But pedestrians must still be “heads-up” and keep aware of their surroundings. Back away from the edge of the street corner when a large vehicle approaches for a turn. Being alert and staying out of blind spots are keys to pedestrian safety when around large vehicles and buses.



Bicyclists should not pass trucks or buses on the right and should always stay out of NO-ZONE areas. Keep your place in traffic behind these vehicles staying alert for lane changes or turns at intersections or driveways.

### Behind the Vehicle

When it becomes necessary for a truck to back up, perhaps to make a delivery, the vehicle will probably block the sidewalk for a short time. Don't race behind as the truck backs up, trying to avoid a little inconvenience! The driver cannot see you, and, just like thinking about racing to beat a train at a grade crossing, it's a race you won't win. Remember that a truck or bus that appears to be standing still may move suddenly, particularly in crowded city traffic. Stay safe, and stay clear of backing trucks and buses.



### BUSES AND LARGE TRUCKS TAKE LONGER TO STOP - NO MATTER WHAT THEIR SPEED

It's easy to understand that a lot of power is required to move a bus or a large truck through traffic. It's important to realize that once that large vehicle gets rolling, it's going to take a longer distance to come to a safe stop - much farther than for a passenger car! Don't be in a hurry to cross in front of a bus or truck that's approaching a crosswalk, even a well-trained professional driver might not be able to avoid an accident. Remember these safe walking and bicycling tips, and be aware!

# RULES FOR SHARING SHARED-USE PATHS

Shared-Use Paths are used for transportation and recreation and can refer to urban paved paths or unpaved backcountry trails. In either case, you should be prepared to share the trail with multiple users. Whether you prefer to ride or walk on a paved urban path or backcountry trail, you need to follow appropriate trail etiquette and be courteous to other users to ensure that trails provide a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone.

## **RIDE • SKATE • WALK ON THE RIGHT**

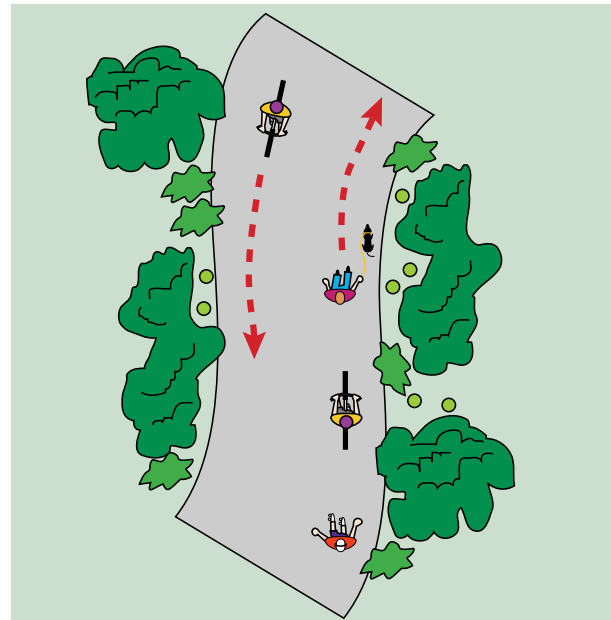
Ride, skate or walk with the flow of traffic, as far to the right side of the trail as practical.

## **RIDE • SKATE • WALK SINGLE FILE**

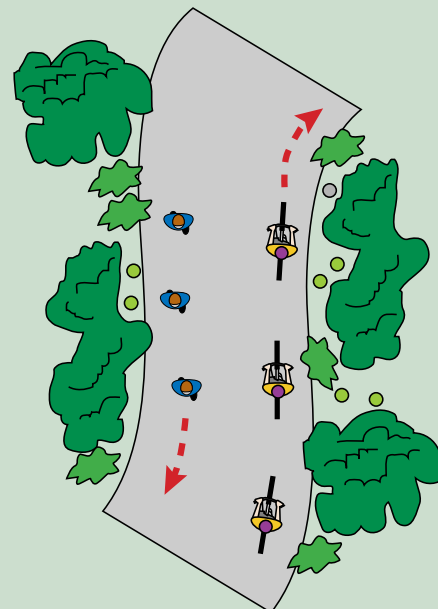
Don't block the trail. Groups should be in single file when other trail users are present and should never use more than one-half of the trail to allow for the flow of traffic.

## **CONTROL YOUR SPEED!**

Inattention for even a second can cause problems or crashes. Obey all speed regulations and recommendations. Slow down and use caution when approaching or overtaking other pathway users. Remember to regularly check behind you for oncoming traffic. Bicyclists and Skaters: learn to look back over your shoulder without losing your balance or swerving. A mirror mounted to your helmet or glasses can also be used for this as well.



*Ride, skate, and walk on the right.*



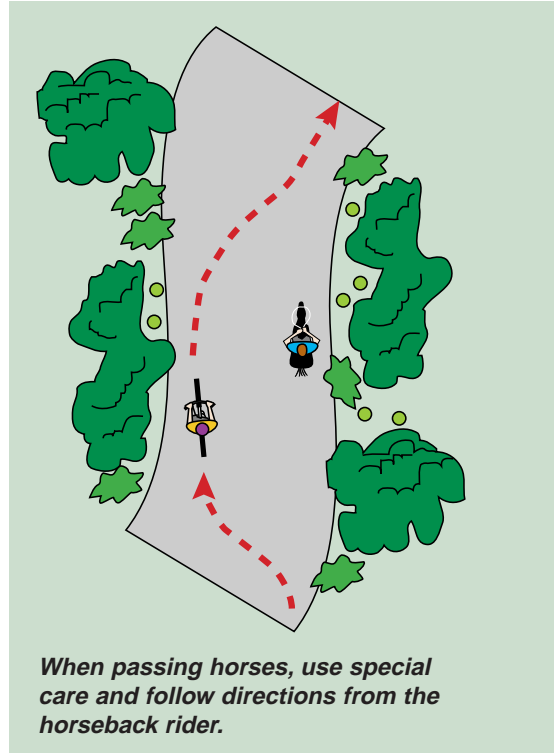
*Ride, skate, and walk single file.*

## WHO YIELDS THE TRAIL?

Before passing another trail user, make your approach known well in advance. A friendly greeting, “Hello, passing on your left,” or ringing a bell is considerate and works well. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots.

### Who yields to whom?

- Bicyclists, Skaters, Walkers, and Others yield to Equestrians
- Bicyclists and Skaters yield to Walkers
- Bicyclists yield to Skaters
- Downhill Users yield to Uphill Users
- Faster Users yield to Slower Users



## NEVER SPOOK ANIMALS

All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement, or a loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and the animals. Give animals extra room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses, use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife is a serious offense. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.



## TREAD LIGHTLY & LEAVE NO TRACE

Stay on existing trails and don't create any new ones. Avoid wet or muddy trails. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in. Respect trail and road closures (ask if you're not sure), avoid possible trespass on private land, and obtain permits and authorization as may be required. Federal and state wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions and policies.

Consider volunteering for trail building or maintenance projects throughout the state. (See organizations on page 78)



*Pack out as much as you pack in.*



*Stay on existing trails.*

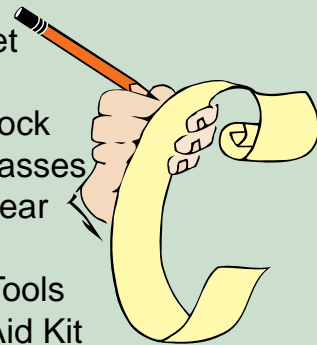
## PLAN AHEAD

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding — and prepare accordingly. Always wear a helmet, drink plenty of water, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry gear for Colorado's changing weather conditions.

**TIP:** *Keep trails open by setting a good example of environmentally sound and socially responsible off-road cycling.*

## CHECKLIST

- Helmet
- Water
- Sunblock
- Sunglasses
- Raingear
- Food
- Bike Tools
- First Aid Kit



*Always wear a helmet and carry gear for changing weather conditions.*