

Bike Safety Tips

- Buy a bike that is the right size, not one to "grow into." Your child should be able to place the back of his or her feet on the ground while seated.
- If your child's bike has a crossbar, he or she should be able to straddle it with their feet flat on the ground with an inch of clearance.
- If the bike has hand brakes, make sure the child can comfortably grasp the brakes and apply sufficient pressure to stop the bike.
- The bike should be equipped with front and rear reflectors, reflector patches on pedals and wheels and a bell or horn.
- Obtain any permits or license plates per your town's requirements.



Rules of the Road

- Ride in the same direction as traffic, stop and look both ways before entering traffic.
- Walk the bike across busy intersections.
- Obey all traffic signals and signs.
- Watch out for cars pulling out of driveways or parked cars entering traffic.
- Use hand signals and look in all directions before turning.
- Avoid swerving suddenly.
- Ride single file on the right side of the road.
- Never ride at dusk or in the dark. If children are unexpectedly out late, they should be taught to call home for a ride.
- Wear bright, light colored clothing.
- Never wear audio headphones or eat while riding.
- Carry things in a backpack to keep your hands free.
- Don't carry anyone on handlebars or back fender.
- If you are transporting a young child, use a child seat attached to the back of the bike or a trailer. Make sure the child has a helmet on as well.

Safety Checks

- Do a safety check each time they ride.
- See that the wheels, seat and handlebars are secure.
- Check the hand brakes. They should operate smoothly and efficiently.
- Make sure the tires are properly inflated and that the chain is oiled and tight.
- See that there is no dirt clogging smooth operation of the brakes, chain or wheels.
- Check that the bike seat is at the proper height and is comfortable for smooth operation.



Traffic Hand Signals

- Right Turn: Left arm extended and bent upward from elbow.
- Left Turn: Left arm extended.
- Stop: Left arm extended and bent downward from elbow.

Helmet Safety

- Cyclists of all ages should use a helmet that meets ANSI, Snell or ASTM standards and are so labeled.
- Parents should not buy a helmet for the child to “grow into”. Choose a helmet that is the right size.
- Directions from the manufacturer should be carefully followed.
- The helmet should fit snugly so it will not move around on the head or come off in a fall. The chin strap should be adjusted to fit snugly. The helmet should be worn horizontally on the head (not tipped back). The front edge should be only one inch above the eyebrows.
- Bicycle helmets are different from helmets used in team sports. Bicycle helmets are “single impact” helmets. Replace your helmet if you have had an accident, or have fallen off your bike and hit your head.



When to Replace Helmets

Helmets should be replaced if:

- You see any visible signs of wear and tear inside or outside the helmet.
- Interior pads lose their cushioning effect.
- Your child grows out of the helmet.

How to Fit a Bicycle Helmet

Helmets are not just hats! They must be level on your head and strapped on securely to be protective in a crash.

- Your helmet should be level on your head, not tilted back or sideways.
- You want the fitting pads inside to be touching all the way around.
- You want the strap to be comfortably snug. You should not be able to get the helmet off with any combination of twisting and tugging.
- Your helmet should not bump on glasses or sunglasses in the front.
- Your helmet should be comfortable enough to forget that it is on your head after only a few minutes.
- It will take you more fiddling time than you expect to get it this way!

Bicycle Helmet Safety

Be Safe:

- Always remove helmets before climbing on playground equipment or trees, where a helmet can snag.

