

Tips for...

Biking



in our towns and cities

1 Position yourself to be seen

Ride in a position where you can see others and others can see you.

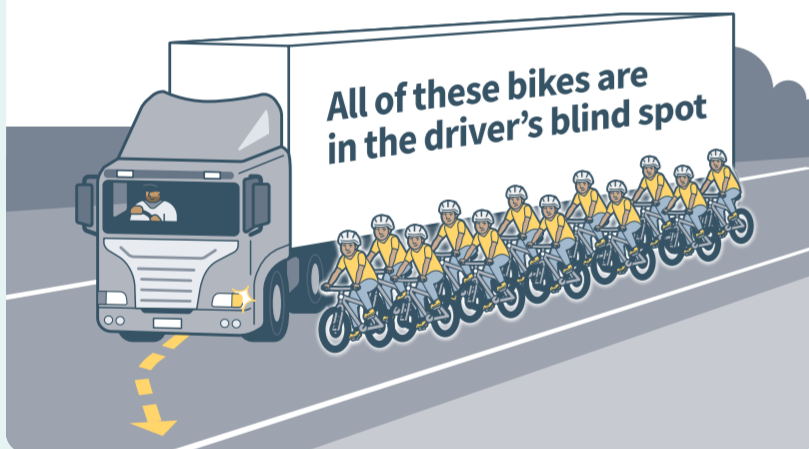
Keep a steady line

Only ride as far left as it feels safe to do. Often this will be out from the kerb, away from roadside debris, and in a position where you can see the road ahead and drivers can see you. Maintain a steady line to help other people predict your movements - avoid swerving where possible.



Avoid blind spots

Large vehicles like trucks have especially big blind spots, meaning the driver may not be able to see you if you are directly in front, behind or riding alongside them. Either stay back so you can see them or get well out in front so they can see you - don't ride alongside. If you have pulled up to an intersection and think the driver may not have seen you, move out and make eye contact.



Advanced stop boxes

Some intersections have a marked box for people riding bikes to stop ahead of the other traffic at the intersection.

They increase your visibility to drivers, enable you to stay clear of turning vehicles and give you space to get into the correct lane.



Here are some useful skills for riding your bike in towns and cities.

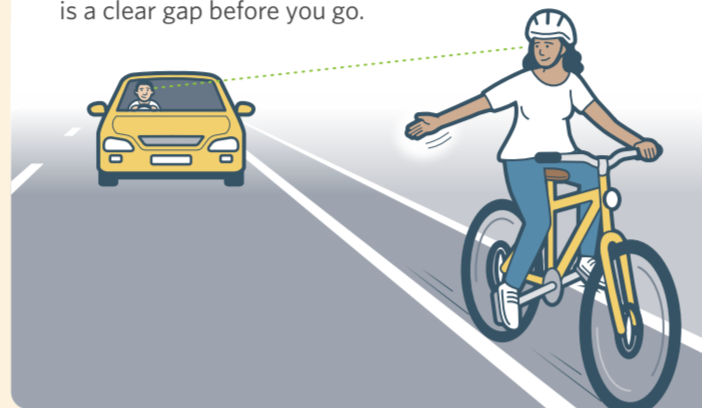
2 Communicate your intentions

Use arm signals to let other people on the road know what you're doing, so they can anticipate your movements and give you space. Always check to make sure the traffic around you has seen and understood your signals before you move. If in doubt, pull over and wait.



Moving into, or turning across traffic

Wait until you're certain there's a safe gap in the traffic before you move. Sometimes you may have to pull over and wait until there is a clear gap before you go.



Look, signal, look again, then go

Look over your shoulder to check it's safe to move. Signal, check it's still safe and then go. If it's not safe, keep signalling and wait for a suitable gap. It helps to make eye contact with drivers where you can.

4 Scan for risks

Learn to anticipate situations where the clear path ahead might suddenly change. These situations can often happen when drivers have limited visibility or are distracted.

Car door zone

Where possible, ride at least a 'door and a bit' clear of parked vehicles to avoid being hit by car doors. Scan ahead in queues of parked cars for clues that someone inside might be about to get out - lights, movement or silhouettes are all good warning signs.



Bumps and slumps

Watch out for slippery or uneven road surfaces. Even the smallest obstacle can send you flying if met at the wrong angle. Some common culprits include: loose gravel, potholes, tram tracks, stormwater grates, and drain covers or painted surfaces that are slippery when wet.

Turning vehicles

Stay clear of turning vehicles, especially large ones like trucks or buses. Hang back and let the vehicle turn ahead of you to avoid being caught in their turning circle.



Busy roads

Take it easy and be prepared to give way at a moment's notice, as people and cars can suddenly appear. When riding through queues of stationary or slow moving vehicles, scan ahead for gaps in the queue where turning vehicles may unexpectedly cut across your path.



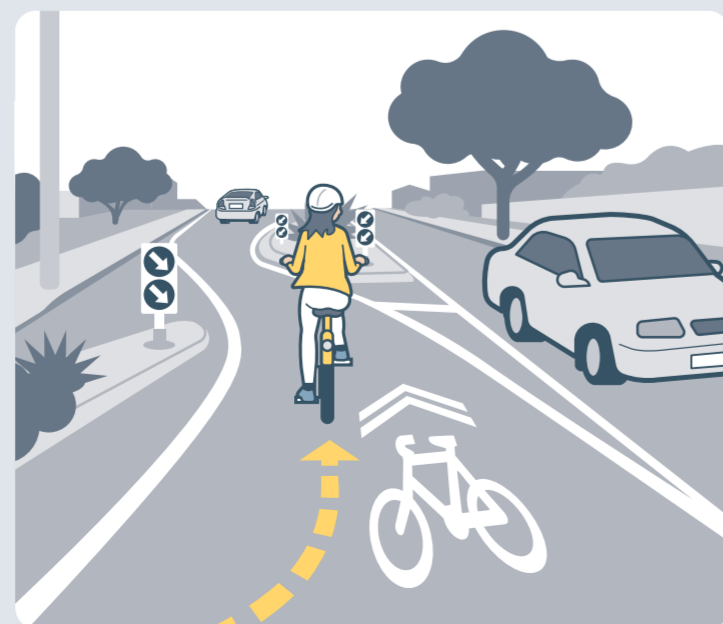
3 Know when to take the lane

There are times when the safest position on the road is in the middle of the lane. 'Taking the lane' can help you be seen, avoid car doors and stop cars from overtaking you when it isn't safe. Taking the lane is not advised when traffic is travelling at a much higher speed than you.

Narrow stretches of road

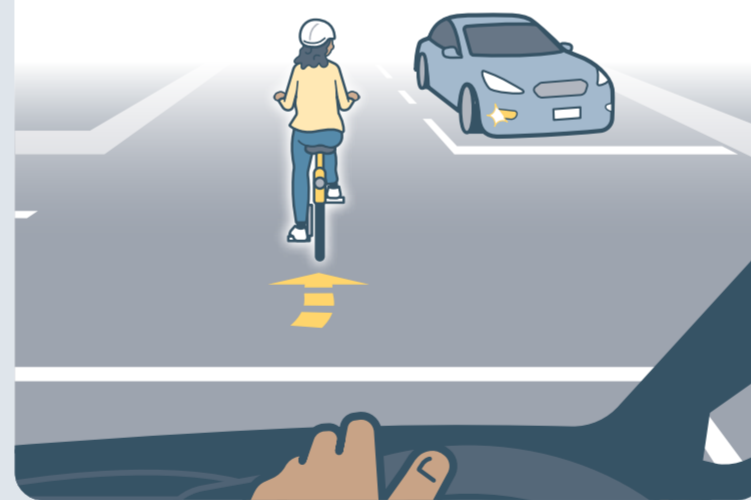
Take the lane in situations where staying left puts you at risk or where cars are unable to pass you safely. This could be alongside a queue of parked cars, on a narrow road or through pinch points, such as pedestrian crossings and traffic islands.

Move back to the left side of the road when the road widens or when it's safe to let traffic past. For longer sections of narrow road, check regularly for following traffic and allow it to pass when you can.



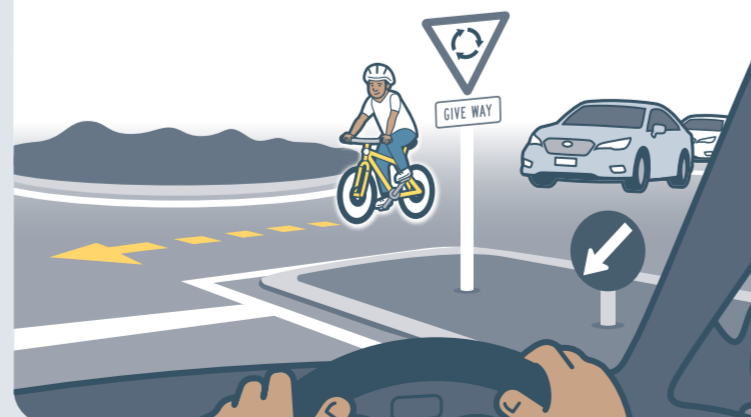
Intersections

Taking the lane at intersections increases your visibility and reinforces the message from your arm signals. It also helps prevent drivers from passing while you approach or ride through the intersection.



Roundabouts

Taking the lane at roundabouts puts you in the best position to be seen by drivers. It also helps prevent drivers from passing you unsafely or crossing your path when they exit.

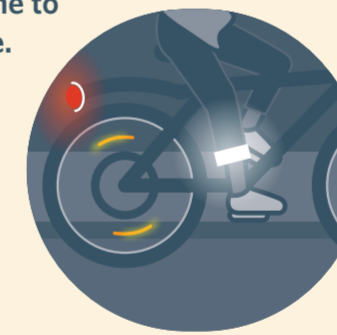


5 Shine bright at night

In urban areas, it's important to be highly visible from the front, so turning traffic can see you coming. In areas where cars are travelling at high speeds, it's extremely important to be visible from a distance, so drivers have time to slow down and give you space.

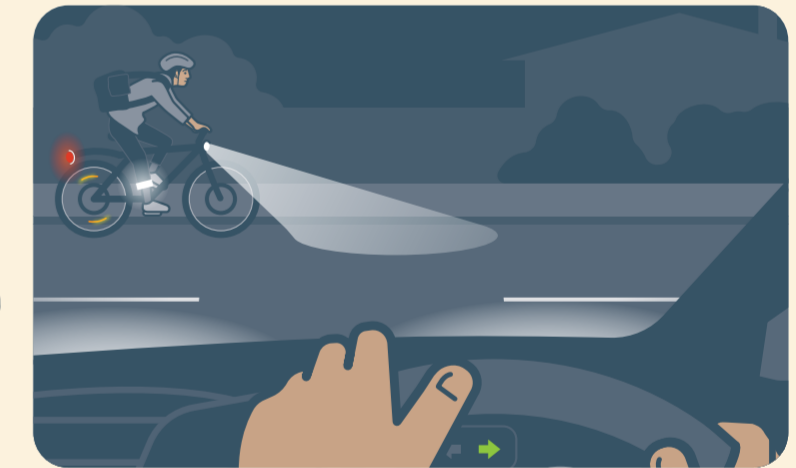
Reflectors

Reflective clothing and accessories provide an effective way to increase your visibility in the dark, especially if they catch the headlights of other vehicles with the movement of your arms, legs or bike.



Light up - front and back

Make sure you have the correct lights (white on the front, red at the back), and turn them on when the light gets low. To avoid dazzling other people on the road, angle your light slightly downward.



6 Remember - we're all human

Take it easy. We're all vulnerable - no matter how we're travelling - and we can all make mistakes.



Shared paths

Slow down and give the people around you space. People on the move can be hard to predict, so take extra care when they're near.

Wear a helmet

Your brain is the most valuable thing you have - protect it. Plus, it's illegal to ride without a helmet.

People make mistakes

Be kind, be patient and be prepared for people to make mistakes. You can't control their actions, but you can control your own. Stay alert and ride with care to give yourself the greatest chance of steering clear of other people's mistakes.

