

## STAY SAFE

### SEE AND BE SEEN

Wear bright coloured clothing with reflective patches. The more reflectors you have on your bike, the better—especially on your spokes, pedals, and back. At night or in stormy weather, always have a white light on the front and a red flasher on the back. More than just a great idea, lights at night are legally required.

### AS SEEN BY CAR DRIVERS:



you in the day



you at night



you with lights & reflectors

### RIDE CAREFULLY AND PREDICTABLY

- ride in a straight line without weaving into gaps between parked cars
- use hand signals; point in the direction you intend to turn
- make eye contact with car drivers, especially as you are entering an intersection
- don't ride too fast or lean the bike while turning on slippery surfaces

### STAY AWARE

- watch traffic behavior and ride defensively; behave as if you are invisible to other road users
- learn to check over your shoulder for approaching cars without swerving, by keeping your right arm slightly flexed as you look over your left shoulder (practice this on a quiet road). This is necessary both to see what is happening behind you and as a signal to drivers (who are conditioned to watch for shoulder checks by any drivers).

- listen for traffic—never wear headphones when riding!
- watch for opening car doors, people in parked cars
- watch for sand, gravel, leaves, oil (especially at intersections after late summer rains), ice, sewer covers and grates, pot-holes, roadkill, squeegee kids.

### RIDE IN CORRECT ROAD POSITION

- in general, you should ride to the right of the lane
- remember that you *do* have the right to occupy a full lane (by riding down its center) when safety demands it, such as in the case of a narrow lane, dangerous gutter, debris, parked cars, etc.
- stay out of designated right-turn lanes if you intend to proceed straight through an intersection
- always shoulder check before you move into a lane

### BE AWARE!

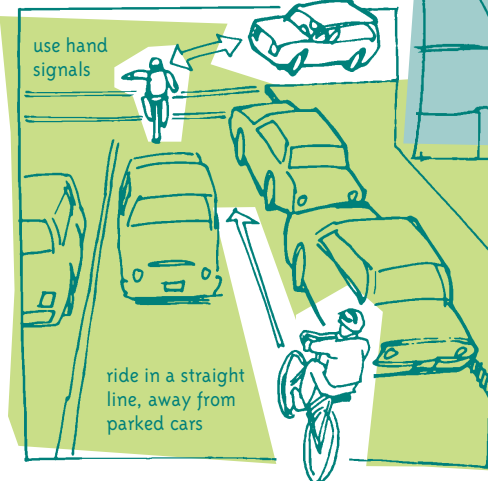
shoulder check before changing lanes

make eye contact with drivers at intersections

look out for people in parked cars: a car door may be opened into your path.

watch for junk on the road

### RIDE SAFELY IN TRAFFIC



use hand signals

ride in a straight line, away from parked cars

### RIDE IN CONTROL

- on bumpy sections put more weight on the pedals than the seat, and grip the seat with your thighs for better control
- your front brakes account for 80% of your braking power, so learn to lift your butt off the seat and toward the back of

the bike when emergency braking—this will keep your rear wheel from skidding, and help you stop much faster

- keep your weight to the back of the bike, especially when going downhill—this is a good stable position to avoid “headers”
- keep your shoulders, arms and hands relaxed



the cyclist's mantra: eat before you're hungry, drink before you're thirsty

### RESPECT PEDESTRIANS

Give pedestrians lots of room. If you ride on the sidewalk (on bridges, shared bike/ped paths, or riding to bike-racks), ring your bell or call out at least 5 metres from pedestrians and pass them no faster than at a jogging pace.

### HONE YOUR SKILLS

Feel like you could use some hands-on bike safety or mechanical training? Find out about Community Bike Skills courses by calling Our Community Bikes at 879-BIKE.

## ENJOY YOUR RIDE

### PICK YOUR ROUTE

- get a good city cycling map
- use bike routes or secondary routes where possible: less traffic, less pollution, more fun
- routes one street over from main arterials tend to make good commuter routes
- ride with a more experienced cyclist if you're just starting out
- allow yourself extra time for your trip, especially if it's your first time riding to a destination
- whenever possible, choose a route with access to one or more bakeries

## ACHES AND PAINS?

At first, a more challenging ride than you're used to may result in muscle fatigue and a strong desire to nap or eat pastries. With time, muscles get stronger, hills get smaller, and you'll get used to having icing sugar on your chin. There are, however, many things you can do to alleviate cycling discomfort:



PROBLEM	REASON	SOLUTION
Muscle Stiffness	Dehydration	Drink before thirsty
Sore legs	Slow pedal cadence (gearing too high)	Gear down; maintain approx. 80 rpm
Fatigue	Low blood sugar	Eat pastries
Numb hands or stiff neck	Handlebars too low	Raise or change stem or handlebars
Sore back	Poor seat position	Adjust seat angle and seat rail position
Sore knees	Low seat height; slow pedal cadence; poor footwear	Raise seat; increase pedal cadence; use stiff-soled shoes
Sore butt	Wrong seat; not accustomed to riding	Change seat; ride more!

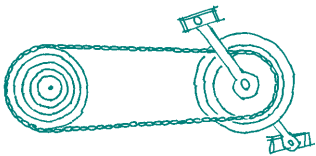
## SPINNING IS THE SECRET

Riding in too high a gear (making it "hard" to pedal) can lead to muscle pain and joint injuries. "Spinning"—staying in lower gear—will let you keep on riding into the years.

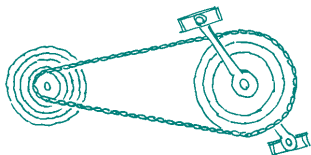
Ideal pedal cadence should be consistent at about 80 rpm. Find a long stretch with no stop signs or traffic lights and count your cadence over 15 seconds, then multiply by 4.

### COMFORTABLE GEARING:

LOW GEAR = "easier" to pedal = more "spin" = better for going uphill



HIGH GEAR = "harder" to pedal = less "spin" = better for going downhill



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B.E.S.T. is a non-profit, community-based organization working to promote sustainable alternatives to the private automobile.

IN COOPERATION WITH

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OCB is a bicycle shop offering access to tools, mechanical wisdom, and previously loved bikes.

TIPS &  
TRICKS FOR

# SAFE & HAPPY CYCLING



Riding a bicycle  
is a heck of a lot of fun...

if you feel safe, confident,  
and comfortable on  
your bike.

We all know cycling  
can save money and  
stress, and that it  
can help us stay  
fit and healthy.  
But it's also got  
to be fun.

Here are a few  
simple ways to  
make cycling a  
joyful — not a painful! —  
experience.

Other City Cycling Essentials to check out:

- **How to Coddle and Care for Your Bicycle**
- **Choosing a Bicycle and Accessories**



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