

BIKE SAFETY TIPS

Biking is good for your health and for the environment, fun, and can be very safe when a few common sense rules are followed...



1 Make sure your bicycle fits - One size does not fit all!

It is important that the bike is not too big or small for the rider.

- The rider must be able to stand with their feet on either side of the frame. If they cannot do this, the bike is too big.
- Adjust the seat so that, with a relaxed straight leg, the heel rests on the pedal in the down position. When riding and forefoot on pedal, the leg will be slightly bent when pedal is in down position. At the stop, the rider's foot may not fully reach the ground and (s)he will need to stand legs either side.

2 Always wear a bike helmet, and make sure it fits...

And only use bike helmets for cycling -- bike helmets can also be used for scootering and in-line skating, but other sport helmets are not safe -- they're not designed for bike fall impacts.

Place helmet on head --do not buckle. Bend over till head upside down and move head side to side. The helmet should remain on while doing this, if not the helmet is too big. Do not wear a hat under the helmet, except a thin 'skull cap' for warmth in the winter.

3 Buckle up and follow the 2V1 rule



2 With head up, adjust helmet so it is level (not tilted back) **making sure to leave about an inch, 2 fingers, above the eyes**, and visibility is not obscured. Otherwise, the helmet does not protect.

V Adjust **V straps** over ears so the straps go by on either side of the ear. Make a V with your fingers to check.

1 Adjust **chin strap** so it is felt under the chin and you can only place **1 finger between the strap and your neck**.

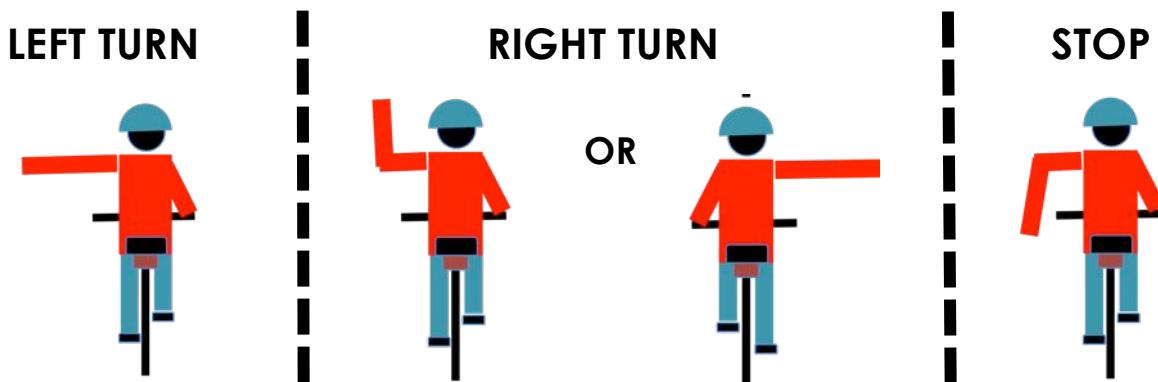
4 Be a safe cyclist and learn the rules of the road

In Nova Scotia, children can ride their bike on sidewalks, but they must yield to pedestrians and must walk or carry their wheels at all street crossings.

If riding on the street, cyclists must follow the rules of the road, and use the proper hand signals to alert traffic when turning or slowing down.

Here are **some tips to stay safe** and the **hand signals for turns and stopping** when riding on the road:

- **See** everything around you and be alert for the unexpected (such as cars turning, backing out of driveways, opening doors, etc.). Always keep one door length of space when riding from cars.
- **Be seen** by drivers by wearing bright colours (fluorescent/reflective) jackets, vests or belts. At night always have a flashing red light on the back and white light on the front of your bike.
- **Be predictable**, never swerve, turn or stop suddenly. Drivers can't read your mind! Ride in a straight line about one meter from the curb or parked cars to avoid riding into opening doors.



5 Remember your ABCs and perform regular bike safety checks

These are the **ABCs of the bicycle safety check**. Do these at least bi-weekly or after hard use.

- A** **Air** - Check that tires inflated (generally 65 psi), there are no broken/missing spokes, treads are good, and wheel nuts & bolts (quick release) are tight.
- B** **Brakes** - Check that brake levers are not bent, move easily, pads are not worn or rubbing on wheel, cables free of rust & wear - test one at a time by pushing & apply brakes to lock the wheel.
- C** **Chain & crank** - Check that chain is lubricated, free of rust & dirt, and derailleur shifting acceptably.



References & Resources: This document was written and produced by Natalia Diaz-Insense, Youth AT Coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre, and Clive MacGregor, Volunteer Coach at Westmount Elementary School in Halifax, to educate children on the basics of bike safety with information drawn from experience and many sources. For a more in depth information on bicycle safety we strongly encourage you to check out the [**Nova Scotia Bicycle Safety Handbook**](#), and [**The Bicycle Book**](#), available online through the NS Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. Published 2018.