

# Urban Cycling Tips

## General Tips

- Practice riding your bike until it's second nature. There are too many other hazards to risk being distracted by starting, stopping, signaling, looking behind and gear changing.
- Cycle 3-6 feet away from the curb and 4 feet away from parked vehicles.
- Assume you're invisible to everyone. Always have an escape route.
- Your main visibility weapon is making eye contact with drivers.
- Anticipation is the most effective way to avoid the majority of accidents.
- Your hearing is far better than that of cocooned motorists. Use your ears as an information source.
- Scan the road ahead.
- Buy a flexible orange reflector, which sticks out to the left on your bike to persuade motorists to give you more clearance.
- Use bike routes, back streets and trails if you can.
- Look behind you, and then signal clearly before changing road position or making maneuvers.
- Trust your instincts. If it seems unsafe, then get off and walk until you're past the danger.

## Hazards to Watch Out for

- Never pass on the right side of large vehicles (between vehicle and curb), especially semis & tractor-trailer trucks.
- Assume all the doors of parked cars and stationary taxis will open just as you pass.
- The gutter offers many surprises, including drain gratings that can trap your front wheel, broken glass and other bulky objects.
- Rain attracts poorer motorist driving standards, makes manhole covers slippery and affects your braking ability. Frequent gentle application of brakes helps performance.
- When approaching a side road on the right, move in the middle of the right hand lane. If you are turning right it will mean you do not need to swerve out, and if you are going straight, it will discourage right-turning motorists from trying to overtake you.
- When cycling inside/outside/in-between lanes of traffic, go slowly and be very careful. A car door may open in your face, a vehicle may make a sudden turn or a pedestrian may be crossing the road. Where is your escape route if this happens?
- Danger! Danger! Large yellow buses may suddenly emit or attract small, fast moving humanoids.
- Shopping bags on handlebars or long flowing clothing may catch a wheel, throwing you off your bike.
- Effective brakes are vital. Do not cycle until they work properly.

bike

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Ride the  
Riverside



- Watch out for commercial vans, sports cars, pedestrians, children and dogs.
- If a pothole appears just in front, don't swerve out unless you're sure there's no vehicle behind. If you can do it safely, stand up on your pedals before you hit the hole.
- When cycling at night, always use lights. A reflective vest is often very effective.
- Alcohol and cycling do not mix. Your alertness drops, as does your ability to balance.

## 83% of road bicycle accidents do not involve a motor vehicle.

Of these, the most likely causes are:

- wet roads
- bag/clothing caught in wheel
- cycling from sidewalk onto road
- bike mechanical failure (brakes or chain falling off),
- collisions with pedestrians and/or animals.

## Traffic Regulations

You must obey the same traffic laws as motorists. There are occasions when you may feel you need to infringe a traffic regulation in order to remain safe. You may have a moral right to do so, but the law will not recognize this unless the situation is exceptional. Flagrantly flouting the rules of the road brings cycling into disrepute. Furthermore, your actions may irritate a motorist so much that they take it out on the cyclist behind you.

**Have fun and be safe!**



*This information has been adapted from the website of BikeFix London, UK ([www.bikefix.co.uk](http://www.bikefix.co.uk)) and [www.greaterdallasbicyclists.com](http://www.greaterdallasbicyclists.com).*