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How to Use This Booklet

How should you use this booklet? First, look at the subjects listed on the front cover. You'll see what page to turn to for that information.

If you want other information about how to bike safely in Illinois, read the Table of Contents. There, we've listed everything this booklet covers. If you can't find what you want, check the list of bicyclists' resources on the inside back cover.

This booklet is intended for bicyclists above 12 years of age. Parents and teachers can use the booklet to teach younger cyclists how to bike safely.

If you have questions or comments, please call the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation at 312/42-PEDAL

A MESSAGE FROM A CYCLIST: MAYOR RICHARD M. DALEY

We bicyclists have a pretty good idea of the benefits of bicycling. We know that bicycling is an energy-efficient form of transportation that has the potential to improve air quality and alleviate the traffic congestion that all big cities face. Besides, we know bicycling is a healthful form of recreation.

That's why, in 1991, I asked bicyclists, business people, environmentalists, and city officials to begin working together to attract more Chicagoans to bicycling. One of the first tasks of this group, the Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council, was to recommend ways to improve conditions for bicycling in Chicago.

We named these recommendations the *Bike 2000 Plan*. The *Bike 2000 Plan* and its successor, the *Bike 2010 Plan*, guide us as we continually improve Chicago's bike-friendliness. Our dozens of miles of bikeways and thousands of bike-parking racks are some of the most visible parts of our efforts.

But our world-class bicycling program is more than metal and concrete. It includes things such as this booklet to help bicyclists grasp the importance of safety.

Safety starts with the simple fact that poor cycling skills cause many bicycling injuries. This booklet tells you how to bicycle better in Chicago, so you can reach your destination enjoyably and without mishap.

Sincerely,

Mayor

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1: FITTING & EQUIPPING YOUR BIK

HOW TO GET A GOOD FIT

Your bike's most important safety feature is you: If you're not comfortable, you're more likely to ride badly and hit something. Getting exactly the right fit depends on many things—including your height, weight, and riding style. You should contact your neighborhood bicycle store to help you find the right fit. Consider these points.

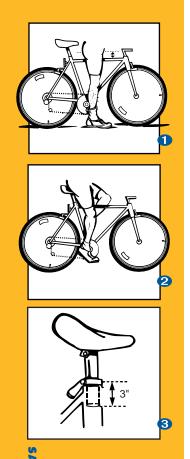
Frame Size: If your bike's frame is too tall, too short, or too long, it's very hard to adjust other things to make you comfortable—so you might need a new bike.

To Check the Height: On a men's bike, stand with the bike between your legs, just in front of the seat. Measure the space between the top tube and your crotch. **1** For road or street riding, a one-inch to three-inch space is safest. (Off-road riding might require a bigger space.) For women's frames, ask your bicycle store's staff to size you.

Frame Length: If, when you ride, you feel overly stretched or have pain in your neck, shoulders, or back, your frame might be too long. Try moving the seat and handlebars closer together (see page 3). Also, some people—including many women—have torsos shorter than what most bikes are made for. If you're one of them, look into a shorter handlebar stem extension, a taller stem, different handlebars, or a custom bike made for people with smaller torsos.

Seaf Height: A seat that's too low will strain your knees, while a seat that's too high will make it hard for you to pedal and to put your foot onto the ground. Here are some ways to get the right seat height for most riding:

- ➤ Sit on your bike and push one pedal all the way down. ② Put the ball of your foot on the pedal. If your seat's high enough, your knee should be slightly bent.
- ► If your hips rock from side to side when you pedal, your seat's too high.
- ➤ Don't raise your seat so high that less than three inches of your seat post extends into the frame. ③ (Most seat posts have a mark showing how high you can raise them.) If you have to raise your seat higher, consider getting a longer seat post, or a taller bicycle.



Handlebars: After you've set your seat height, set your handlebars so you feel comfortable. Some things to guide you:

- ➤ Start by raising or lowering your handlebars so they block your view of the front axle when you're sitting on your bike with your hands on the handlebars. ④ In this position, your elbows should be slightly bent (not locked).
- ► Lower-back pain often means the handlebars are too far away, while upper-arm or shoulder fatigue often means the handlebars are too close to you. Try raising or lowering the handlebars, or moving your seat forward or backward. ⑤ You can also change to a shorter or longer handlebar stem.
- ➤ Don't raise your handlebars so high that less than two and a half inches of your handlebar stem extends into the frame. (a) (Most stems have a mark showing how high you can raise them.) If you have to raise your handlebars higher than the safe limit, get a longer stem or stem extender.
- ➤ Rotate your handlebars so that they put even pressure across the palms of your hands without bending your wrists in a strange way.

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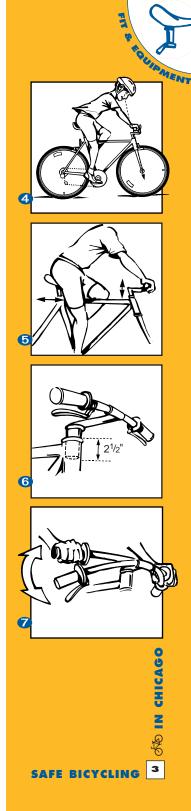
Seaf Till: Last, adjust your seat tilt for comfort: Many cyclists keep their seats level. Many women, however, tilt them nose-down, and many men tilt them nose-up. Try different angles until you find a comfortable one.

Saddle Soreness: If you haven't bicycled in a while, expect to be sore at first; chafing or soreness should get better with time. If it doesn't, the first thing to check is the seat adjustment; see "Seat Tilt" above, and "Seat Height" on page 2. If adjustment doesn't help, try alternatives: a gel-filled saddle or saddle pad; a wider or differently-shaped saddle; one with springs; or one made specifically for women. Many bicycle stores will exchange saddles if they're not damaged, so try alternatives until you're comfortable. Also, many cyclists like padded and/or seamless shorts for long rides.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For help on fitting a bike:

See *Urban Bikers' Tricks & Tips*, by Dave Glowacz. Available at book stores, by calling 800-888-4741, or on-line at www.askmrbike.com.











SAFE BICYCLING

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BASIC EQUIPMENT

Experienced cyclists have a few simple ideas about equipment that make biking a lot safer—and easier. Here's what they recommend.

Helmet: A must in the city! See page 9 for details.

Flat Fixer: To prevent flats: • Keep your tires at maximum air pressure; they lose a little air every day. Skinnier tires lose air more quickly. Many cyclists use puncture-proof tire liners (like Mr. Tuffy), Kevlar-belted tires, thorn-resistant tubes, or tube sealants. Heavy-set or rough-surface riders should try wider tires. To fix flats: Always carry a spare inner tube or a patch kit, and tools to get your tube out. Use tire levers (best) or a screwdriver (not as good); a wrench if you don't have quick-release hubs; an old sock or rag to cover your hand when you grab your chain; and a hand pump or a quarter to pay for a gasstation pump. (Beware: high-pressure pumps can explode your tire!)

Carrying Rack: Make your bike carry your things! 2 Use bungee cords to tie things to your carrying rack. Attach a milk crate as a carrying case. If you carry things often you should invest in panniers, or the many varieties of bike bags available.

Instead of a rear rack or front basket, you can use a backpack. However, a backpack can strain your shoulders and make balancing harder. And carrying stuff in your arm is unsafe; it's harder to steer and brake.

Toe Clips: Toe clips give your pedaling more power. But if they're not adjusted right, the clips can lock your feet to your pedals so you can't put a foot down when you lose your balance. When using toe clips, make sure you can get your feet out of them fast.

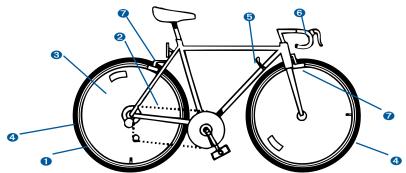
Ankle Strap: Getting your pants caught in your chain can make you lose control and ruin your pants. If your bike doesn't have a chain guard, use a clip or Velcro strap 3 around your pants cuff to keep it from hitting your chain and frame.

Sunglasses or Goggles: To protect your eyes from bugs and airborne debris, wear sunglasses or clear goggles, especially with contact lenses. Wrap-around glasses are best. If your glasses steam up in cold weather, apply an anti-fogger. (Some cyclists use a light coating of gel toothpaste.)

Night and Foul Weather Gear: If you ride at night or in bad weather you need lights, reflectors, and more. See pages 29-32 for details.

2: QUICK MAINTENANCE CHECKS

Safety starts with your bike. Whether you use your bike a lot or you're dusting off an old bike, this page gives you a few simple things to check for a safe ride. While these checks help you find problems, we don't have room to tell you how to fix them all. If you need help, go to your owner's manual, a maintenance book, or a bike shop.



- dar: Tires lose a little air every day. If your gauge says a tire is more than five pounds under the needed pressure (printed on the side of the tire), add air. No gauge? Push each tire hard against a curb. If you can flatten it, add air.
- **Chain:** A dry chain can skip, lock up, or break suddenly. If your chain squeaks or hangs up, lubricate it. Oil will do, but it attracts dirt; a greaseless chain lubricant's best. To lubricate:
- **Ca.** Grab the bottom of the chain loosely with a lint-free rag. With the other hand turn the pedals backward, sliding the chain through the rag. Pedal the chain around twice to remove grime.
- **b.** With one hand squeeze or spray lubricant onto the chain, and with the other hand pedal the chain backward so it goes completely around once (twice if really rusty).
- **c.** Repeat step (a) to get the excess lubricant off the chain. Extra lube can attract dirt.
- give it a slow spin. (Spin the back wheel up and give it a slow spin. (Spin the back wheel forward so the pedals don't move.) Check that it doesn't rub against the brake pads, frame, or something else. If the wheel doesn't spin freely but it's not rubbing, the problem might be inside the axle.

- **Tires:** Turn each wheel very slowly and look for big cuts, bulges, bubbles, or places you can see the inner casing. If you spot any, replace the tire. Remove glass or other debris. If the valve stem doesn't point straight at the middle of the wheel, the rim might cut it; let the air out and straighten the valve.
- **5 Shifting:** Try all of your gears, shifting each gear lever from high to low. You have a problem if the lever sticks, you can't shift to all gears, the chain rubs the derailleur, or the chain jumps off the gears. These are usually caused by worn or dirty cables, or a derailleur that needs cleaning or adjustment.
- **6 Handlebars:** Hold the front tire between your legs and try to turn the handlebars. If they're loose, tighten the stem bolt.
- **Brakes:** You should have your brakes adjusted or replaced if you have any of these problems: (a) when you apply the brake on
- each wheel, one or both brake pads don't touch the rim; (b) you can squeeze your brake lever all the way to the handlebars; (c) on each wheel, the brake can't stop the tire from moving on dry, clean pavement.

Loose Parts: Pick up the bike and shake it hard. Check and fix anything that rattles.

SOME GOOD BOOKS ON BIKE REPAIR

Anybody's Bike Book, by Tom Cuthbertson

Bicycling Magazine's Basic Maintenance and **Repair**, by the Editors of *Bicycling* magazine

On the Road Guide to Bicycle Maintenance,

by Eugene A. Sloane

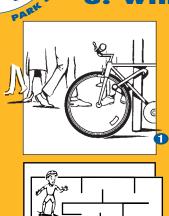
Roadside Bicycle Repairs, by Rob Van der Plas



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3: WHERE TO PARK YOUR BIKE







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PARKING & LOCKING BASICS

The first rule: Always lock it. Never, never leave your bike unlocked—even if you're leaving it for only half a minute. A thief can grab your bike in seconds. Some parking basics:

Security: Lock your bike to something that's permanent and not easy for a thief to take. Lock to a bicycle rack, a parking meter, a metal fence post, or a large tree. Don't lock to another bike, a door handle, or small tree. And if you keep your bike in a garage, basement, or on a porch, lock it.

Visibility: Park in open areas where many people pass by and your bicycle can be seen easily.

1 Thieves usually don't like an audience.

Keep It Close By: Put your bike where you can get to it fast. 2 Thieves like to steal bikes whose owners are far away.

WHAT LOCKING HARDWARE SHOULD YOU USE?

U Locks: Some U locks are stronger than others; make sure you buy a strong steel-alloy lock. 3 If the manufacturer offers a warranty or insurance, register the lock and write down the lock's serial number and when you bought it. For added protection, get one or more U-lock cuffs (such as Bad Bones); they can keep thieves from using a lever to pry open your lock. One drawback to U locks: you can't lock up to thick objects such as street lights; for these, carry a thick cable.

Padlocks & Chains: The thicker, the better; chain links and lock clasps should be at least 3/8 of an inch thick. Look for locks and chains that are case-hardened—a process that makes them harder to cut.

Cables: Some cables are actually harder to cut than chains, because they don't snap and thieves can't pry them open. 4 Use a cable at least 3/8 of an inch thick with a lock as thick, or thicker.

Ugly Bikes: In busy commercial areas, where thieves have lots of bikes to choose from, your bike is less likely to be stolen if it looks old or just ugly.

HOW TO LOCK UP

A thief with enough time and the right tools can break any lock. But you can discourage many thieves if you follow these tips about locking your bike:

Lock the Whole Bike: You should put your chain, cable, or U locks through your frame and both wheels—taking the front wheel off if you have a quick-release hub. Never lock through your wheel without locking the frame, because thieves can remove your wheel and steal the rest of the bike.

Cross Locking: A good way to foil thieves is to use more than one kind of lock. **⑤** For example, put a U lock through your frame and front tire, and put a cable or chain through your frame and both tires.

Placing the Lock: Thieves can break a lock by putting it against a wall or sidewalk and smashing it with a hammer. If you use a padlock, try to put it where it's not close to the ground or against a wall or another solid surface—leaving little or no slack in your cable or chain. When using a U lock, leave little or no space in the lock's middle to prevent prying.

Removable Items: When you leave your bike, remove any parts you can't lock and a thief could steal easily: a quick-release seat, horn, bike bag, pump, cycle computer, or lights. If removing quick-release parts is a hassle, replace them with permanent ones.

WHERE TO PARK

Parking Meters: Lock your bike to a parking meter if you're using a U lock. **5** Never lock to a meter with only a chain or cable—a thief will slide your bike over the top.

Bike Racks: The City of Chicago and building owners have installed thousands of ribbonshaped racks and upside-down-U-shaped racks, which are very secure places to park your bike.

Sign Poles: Sign poles aren't the best places to lock your bike. Before locking to a pole, check whether you can pull it out of the ground. Also check how easily a thief could remove the sign and slide your bike over the top of the pole.









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SAFE BICYCLING

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Parking Lots: Some public parking lots will let you park your bike for a small fee. If you forget your lock, look for an attended parking lot.

Indoors: A good way to avoid theft: park your bike indoors. Some stores and buildings allow bikes inside, if only for a short time. When parking indoors, lock your bike securely.

CUTTING YOUR THEFT LOSSES

Forms/BicycleReg.html.

What's the first thing to do when you get a new bike? Write down its serial number and register your bike with the Chicago police. Police recover hundreds of stolen bikes each year, but can't return most because they aren't registered. To register, fill out and mail a white registration card. You can get a card at any police station (see the phone book's blue pages), most bike shops, and the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, Room 300, 650 S. Clark St. (Call 312/742-BIKE to have one sent to you.) Or register on-line at http://w4.ci.chi.il.us/CommunityPolicing/FightCrime/

Identifying Marks: You can discourage thieves by engraving your name or social security number in an obvious place on your bike frame. Or put a card with your name and phone number inside the handlebar tube—so if you find your stolen bike at an auction, junk shop, or flea market, you can prove it's yours.

If Your Bike Is Stolen: First, find your bike's serial number if you have it. Then call the Chicago police non-emergency number, 311, and tell them where your bike was stolen. You also must give a call-back phone number. Police will call you with a report number that you can use for an insurance claim. They'll call again if they find your bike.

Police Bike Auctions: Every month except January and February, the Chicago Police auction off stolen bikes that they've recovered. 3 The auctions are announced in the *Tribune* and *Sun-Times*; call 312/747-6224 for the time and place of the next one. But if you find your stolen bike at an auction, the police won't give it to you unless you can prove that it's yours.

4: ALL ABOUT BIKE HELMETS

WHY SHOULD YOU WEAR A HELMET?

It's a fact: About 1,000 American bicyclists die in crashes each year—and around three-fourths die from head injuries. Hundreds more suffer permanent brain damage. Many of these are experienced, careful riders—maybe just like you. And most of these head injuries can be prevented with bike helmets.

You say a helmet's too much of a hassle? It'd make your head sweat? Give you "hat head?" It's too expensive? You'd look like a geek? 4 Think how good these sayings would look on your gravestone.

BASIC HELMET TYPES

Helmets consist of a foam core, usually white or black in color, and most have a thin plastic shell (sometimes called a "micro-shell") that covers the core.
Some cheaper helmets come without the shell, with the foam core exposed—or with a cloth or nylon covering.
A plastic shell keeps the helmet's base from getting scratched and nicked. So you should always get a helmet that has a plastic shell.

If you have a crash and your helmet takes an impact, replace it right away. An impact usually damages a helmet's foam core, meaning it won't protect you again. You should also replace your helmet at least every five years, because its foam core becomes brittle.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN HELMETS

Rating: Rating: Look at the inside of the helmet. It should have one of these: 7 a green or blue Snell sticker, meaning the helmet passed the Snell Foundation's tests for safety; 3 an F1447 certification label by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM); or a compliance label from the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC).











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Fit: You **must** have a good fit. A snug fit means that if your head hits more than once, the helmet stays in place. Most brands of adult helmets come in two or three sizes, and you make them fit by adjusting the chin strap and putting foam pads around the inside.

Don't wear your helmet tilted back. It won't protect your skull in a frontal impact.

1 Right **2** Wrong

How To Check For A Good Fit

ca. The helmet sits level on your head.

- **b.** You can't easily shift the helmet to the front, back, or sides of your head.
- **c.** With the strap tight, you can't possibly get the helmet off.

If the helmet fails these, adjust the straps, put in bigger pads, or try another size.

COMFORT AND COST

Cost: You can get a good CPSC-rated bike helmet for about \$30—cheaper than a visit to the emergency room. Hard shells cost a little more than soft. More costly helmets usually aren't much safer, but they have better ventilation, weigh less, and look cool. If you order a helmet from a discount catalog, first find a friend who has it and try it on—because a good fit is important to protect your head.

Ventilation: A helmet's ventilation depends on front-to-back air flow. **3** Good air flow comes from long, wide air vents and air passages (or troughs) between the vents. (Bald, light-skinned cyclists beware: big vents can cause weird tan lines!)

Weight: Cheaper helmets usually aren't much heavier than expensive ones—and most cyclists adjust to them easily. If you think you need an ultralight helmet, test-ride a regular one to make sure.

Look: You can pay a lot of money for style. But even a low-cost helmet can look cool with an elastic helmet cover. And don't be fooled: No matter how aerodynamic a helmet looks, it won't help you go faster unless you're moving at warp speed.

WHY KIDS NEED HELMETS

Kids need helmets as much as adults do. Kids generally aren't as careful, they don't know how to protect themselves, and when riding in a child seat they're especially vulnerable. Make sure kids wear their helmets snugly—and set an example by wearing yours!

5: TRAFFIC BASICS

RIDING PREDICTABLY

On the street, most motorists follow the same traffic rules. Traffic flows smoothly because all the drivers can predict what each other will do. A collision happens only when someone does something abnormal.

When you're on a bike in the middle of all those cars, it's easy to defy traffic rules; you can maneuver better, and almost no one will stop you. **This is how most bicyclists get into collisions.** When you break traffic laws motorists never know what you'll do next, so they're not sure how to avoid you. But if you *act like the operator of a vehicle*—signaling turns, turning from the correct lanes, and stopping at red lights—*drivers can predict what you'll do*.

Being predictable is the key to safe bicycling on Chicago streets. And if you follow traffic rules, motorists will come to respect bicyclists as drivers of vehicles—which is exactly what Chicago and Illinois laws say bicyclists are. (See the back cover for details.)

Here are the basic rules for riding predictably: **Get Smart:** Know the traffic rules you should follow and when others should yield to you. See "Traffic Rules for Cyclists," below

Be Confident:: Learn riding skills so you don't hesitate in traffic, and always be courteous.

See "How to Learn Traffic Skills," page 12.

Communicate: Make eye contact, signal your moves, and wave when someone yields. See "Communicating," page 13.

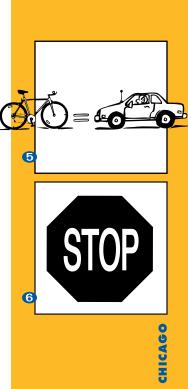
TRAFFIC RULES FOR CYCLISTS

You probably know that a red light means "stop."
But as the driver of a vehicle, you must know and obey all of Chicago's traffic signals and pavement markings. Read "Rules of the Road," a free booklet from the Secretary of State. You can get a copy at any driver's license test office, or have one mailed by calling 800/252-8980

Messengers: Chicago has other rules that apply only to bike messengers working downtown (messengers must wear helmets and display identification). To learn more, call the Department of Consumer Services at 312/744-6227.

Right of Way: "Right of way" means permission to go ahead of somebody else. As the driver of a vehicle, you must give right of way in the same situations that motorists do. If you don't know when















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to yield to pedestrians and other vehicles, read "Rules of the Road."

Sidewalks: Chicago law says if you're more than 11 years old, you should not ride on a sidewalk unless it's marked as a bike route. If you do use a sidewalk, you should walk your bike —even where you might feel tempted to bicycle, as on Sheridan Road north of Hollywood. 2

Roads to Avoid: It's against the law to ride your bike on Lake Shore Drive. It's also illegal to ride the wrong way on a one-way street, against traffic on a two-way street, and on expressways.

what Police will Do: 3 If you break a traffic law, an officer might stop and warn you. But for something serious—like a collision or a violation of bike-messenger rules—police can give you a traffic ticket (most bicycling fines are \$25). If you don't have I.D. or bond money, you can end up in a police station, calling someone to post your bond.

What happens when police stop you for the wrong reason? If you have this book, politely show the officer the part you think proves your point. If gentle persuasion doesn't work, make your case in court.

HOW TO LEARN TRAFFIC SKILLS

With practice, every adult can bicycle comfortably in Chicago's traffic. If you feel scared to try, practice by riding on quiet side streets or in parking lots. 4 Then practice on major streets early on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Below, we've listed a few skills that'll help you ride in traffic safely.

Look Behind You! To bike in traffic you must know how to look back over your shoulder while riding. This simple act helps you move left or right quickly—to avoid hazards, change lanes, or make a turn. And looking over your shoulder helps drivers pay attention to you. Even if you have a mirror, you should always turn your head to look before you move left or right—just as you'd do in a car.

How to Practice Looking Back: Here's how to learn to look back without swerving or slowing down.

- **G.** Find a parking lot or wide, quiet street with some kind of lane stripe.
- **b.** Ride along the lane stripe in a straight line.
- Keeping your left shoulder steady, turn your head down and around to the left. Try to keep your arms steady so your bike moves straight. Then turn your head forward.

- **d.** Turn your head back again, but this time pick out something to look at. **5** Try to keep moving straight. Then turn your head forward.
- If you can't turn your head without turning your handlebars, it should help to drop your left hand to your thigh while you turn your head.
- Next, practice turning your head right. Then practice turning your head while moving faster.

where to Look: As you ride you have to avoid two kinds of things: hazards on the ground right in front of you, and cars and pedestrians ahead and on either side. You should always know how both the ground and the traffic around you look. To do this, get into the habit of looking first at the ground 20 to 30 feet in front of you, then up at traffic, then back down at the ground. At first this'll seem hard—maybe even strange—but with practice you'll do it without thinking.

Ready for a Brake: Always keep your hands near or over your brake levers—so you can stop fast in a pinch. When you brake, squeeze the front and back brakes at the same time. (To learn more, see "The Quick Slow-Down" on page 22.)

Shifting Gears: If your bicycle has a gear system, know how to shift without looking down. Always pedal when shifting, no matter how slowly. Learn shifting from a friend or a bike shop.

COMMUNICATING

Bikes are slower, quieter, and less visible than most other vehicles. So you should make drivers notice

LEFT

SLOW/STOP

you, and try to communicate with them. And because a lot of bicyclists don't follow traffic laws, drivers don't always know what you'll do—even if you think it's obvious. Here are some ways to communicate.

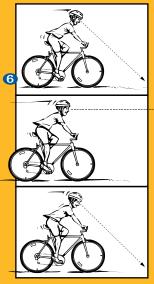
Use Hand Signals:

Whenever you change lanes or turn, signal with your arm.

If you're about to move in an

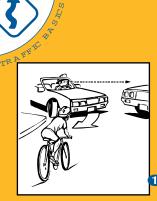
unexpected way—like around a bunch of glass—point to the part of the road you're moving to. Also signal when slowing down—you don't have brake lights! The law says you must signal 100 feet before making a turn, so you might have to signal while shifting and braking—but don't do it if you'll lose control. You can yell your intentions, but remember that noisy traffic might prevent others from hearing you.





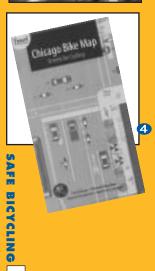
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Yielding: When you're waiting for a car to pass you before you cross an intersection or change lanes, the driver might not realize you're yielding. Wave at the driver to go ahead. Also, when drivers correctly yield the right of way, it's a good idea to thank them by waving or nodding.

Pretend You're Invisible: In some situations—like a car turning in front of you—it's a good idea to pretend the driver doesn't see you. Know in advance how you'll avoid that driver. Can you stop in time? If not, slow down or plan how you'd steer out of the way.

How to decide whether a driver sees you:

- ► Watch for the car to move slower than it would if you weren't there.

Make Noise: Just as a car honks its horn when it comes out of an alley, you should make noise when you emerge from places where people can't see you—like when you emerge from between two vehicles to get into an intersection. ② Use a horn, bell, or whistle, or yell if you have to.

Headphones: Don't wear them! As a bicyclist in traffic, you can hear more of what's going on around you than motorists can. In fact, people you share the road with expect you to hear their engines, horns, or shouted warnings. If you wear headphones you might not hear something that can help you avoid a crash.

BIKES ON THE CTA

You can take your bike on all CTA trains seven days a week—except for rush hours and a couple of holidays. 3 You can also put your bike on the front of CTA buses that have bike-carrying racks. For more info, call 888/YOUR-CTA or go to www.transitchicago.com.

USING THE MAP

Before you ride, decide which streets to take to your destination. Think about road construction, rush-hour traffic jams, and areas with bad pavement. Use the *Chicago Bike Map* (see "Bicyclists' Resources") to pick your route.

A word of caution: Know the neighborhoods you ride in; the map doesn't tell you where crime might be a problem. Before you bicycle in an unfamiliar place, talk to someone who knows the area.

#

6: LANE POSITIONS, TURNING, & PASSING

BASIC LANE POSITIONS

Traffic law says that slower vehicles should stay to the right. But where exactly should bicycles ride? Here are some basics.

Never Ride Against Traffic: If you feel safer riding against traffic because you can see cars coming, you are wrong: Twenty percent of all car-bike collisions result from cyclists going the wrong way. Drivers moving down a street—and drivers turning onto the street—don't look for vehicles coming at them in their lane. And if they hit you, it'll be much harder head-on than from behind.

When to Stay Right: Stay right if you're moving slow compared to traffic, but remember: the farther from the curb you ride, the better motorists can see you—whether they're in your lane, oncoming, or on cross streets. 5 Riding closer to traffic keeps cars from passing you on the left and then turning right immediately in front of you.

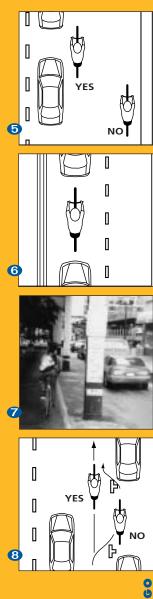
When to Ride In the Middle: 6
It's safest to ride in the middle of the lane when: (a)
You're moving at the speed of traffic; (b) the lane's
too small for cars to pass you safely; (c) you're
avoiding potholes or the doors of parked cars. If
you're riding in the middle and traffic starts to move
faster than you can, move toward the curb if there's
room. Some special cases:

▶Dangerous Areas: If you come to a dangerous area—like a bend in the road that you can't see beyond—ride in the middle of the lane to be more visible.

PEI Tracks: Ride in the middle on streets underneath elevated CTA train tracks, where the metal track supports make it hard to avoid opening car doors and crossing pedestrians. Under the el tracks, ride on the inside of the supports, not on the curb side. Motorists behind you might get impatient, so communicate with them by using the "slow" arm signal (see page 13).

>Bus Lanes: The law prohibits biking in bus lanes. But if you must use a bus lane, ride in the middle so buses don't squeeze you into the curb. If you block buses for too long, you should use another lane.

Parked Cars: Don't weave in and out of parked cars, because you'll confuse drivers; ride in a straight line. **3** Ride at least four feet away so you













don't get hit if someone opens their door. And if a car door starts to open into you, yell and brake; swerve out of the way only if you have enough room.

bikeways: Chicago has two kinds of on-street bikeways: Striped bike lanes and marked, unstriped bike routes. Where bike lanes appear beside parked cars, ride on the left side of the bike lane—so you don't get hit by opening doors. If you find a parked vehicle in the bike lane: Check back behind you for traffic, signal if you can, then pass the vehicle on its left. Pass far enough away so you don't get hit by an opening door. Report motorists parking or driving in bike lanes to police by calling 311. In bike routes, ride just to the right of car traffic as described in "When to Stay Right" on page 15.

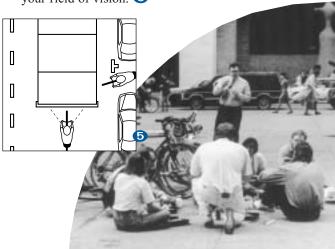
Riding with Others:

- ➤ Illinois law says that in traffic no more than two cyclists may ride side-by-side. If you ride next to someone, don't block cars or bikes that want to pass you.
- ➤ When another cyclist turns or changes lanes, don't assume it's safe for you to do the same. Always look behind you before you make a move.
- ► When you're with a group stopped at a light, line up single file so you don't block or slow other vehicles.

Blind Spots: To be safe, know where a driver's blind spots are—and stay out of them! 3

Don't follow a vehicle so closely that you can't see potholes or other pavement problems until you're on top of them.

If you're following a large vehicle—like a van, truck, or bus—don't follow so closely that it blocks your field of vision. 5



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INTERSECTIONS AND TURNS

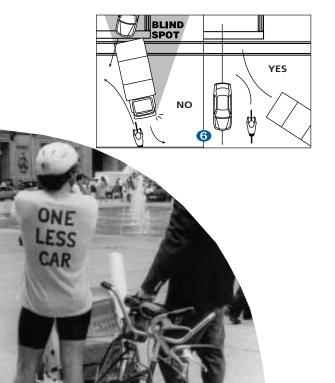
Almost half of car-bike collisions in the city happen at intersections. This section tells you the safest places to put yourself when you reach an intersection, whether you're turning or going straight.

Things to Remember at Intersections:

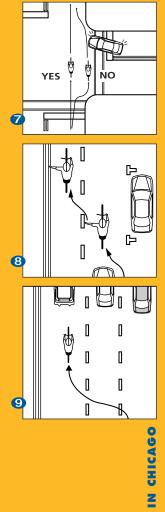
- ► When you're about to cross an intersection, don't veer to the left or right. Try to move in the straightest possible line to where you'll ride on the other side. ✓
- ▶ Don't block crosswalks. It's dangerous to make pedestrians cross farther into the intersection.

Changing Lanes Before a Turn:

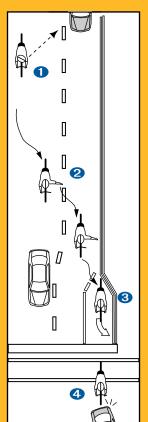
- ➤ When you're turning left on a multi-lane street where traffic isn't much faster than you, merge left one lane at a time. ③
- ► Where traffic moves much faster, drivers won't have time to react to you—so it's safest to wait for a gap in traffic and move across all the lanes at once. ②











Turning Left from a Left-turn Lane: Follow these steps for making left turns just like cars do.

- ▶ When traffic allows, signal left and change lanes. ② If you can't find a gap and you're sure of your skills, get a driver to let you in by making eye contact and pointing. Don't change lanes until you're sure the driver will yield!
- ► Go to the middle of the left-turn lane. ③ If there's more than one turn lane, use the one farthest to the right—unless you're making another left turn immediately.
- ▶ If there's a car already waiting to turn left, get behind it. ④ (Never put yourself next to a car in the same turn lane!) Don't be afraid of oncoming cars that are stopped facing you, waiting to turn left.
- ➤ Turn just like a car does. **⑤** After the turn, move into the right lane—unless another vehicle is there or you're making another left turn immediately.





Lane: If there's no turn lane, ride about four feet from the center stripe—far enough out so a left-turning car behind you can't pass until you've finished the turn.

If a car's stopped at the intersection and you can't tell whether it's going to turn left, don't try to pass it on the left. Stay behind it until it gets through the intersection.

When turning left from one one-way street to another, you can turn into the left or right side of the street. In this case, Chicago law allows "left turn on red": you can make a left turn after stopping at a red light and yielding to vehicles on the cross street.

The Box Left Turn: Use the box left turn if you can't merge left before you reach the intersection. **3** Here's how:

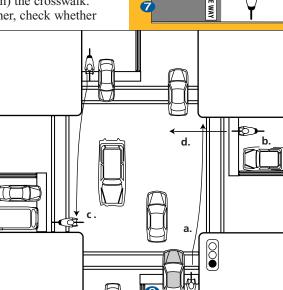
CL. Stay in the right lane and ride across the intersection on the left side of (not in) the crosswalk.

b. Just before the opposite corner, check whether

there's room for you in the traffic lane to the right of the crosswalk, behind the stop line. If there is, go there and align yourself with traffic.

c. If there's no room behind the stop line, stop on the intersection side of the crosswalk and align yourself with traffic.

d. When the traffic light changes, move with traffic.



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ONE WAY

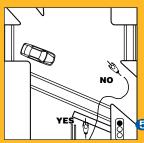












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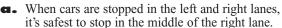
a stop signs and Turns on Red: At a stop sign or right turn on red, the law says you must stop—not just slow down. Remember to behave as a vehicle operator as follows.

► If you're at a stop sign and a vehicle on the cross street got there first, let it go through first.

► If you're turning on red, yield to any vehicles coming at you in your lane.

Don't Veer to the Curb: Don't veer into the right-turn lane as you go through the intersection. **2** You're easier to see if you stay away from the curb. And you won't have to move back over when you get across the intersection.

Cars Stopped in Both Lanes: 🔞



b. But if the right-lane car is turning right and you're sure of your traffic skills, stop on the left side of the right lane. Stop where drivers on both sides can see you.

Right on Red Allowed: At a red light



where right turn on red is allowed, stop on the left side of the right lane—leaving enough room for other right-turning cars. 4 If a car's stopped in the left lane, stop where drivers in both lanes can see you.

Three-way Intersection: At a

red light in a three-way intersection, stop on the street you're traveling on. • Don't cross the diagonal street to wait on the next corner, because you'll confuse drivers about which way you're really going.

PASSING

In most cases you should pass cars in your lane as you would if driving a car: look behind you, signal left, get into the left lane, and pass. Here are some things to remember about passing:

Pass Left: Pass moving cars on the left when you can. That's where motorists expect you to pass, so that's where they look.

Don't Pass on Turn Side: If a vehicle is about to turn, don't pass it on the side it's turning toward.

Opening Doors: When you pass a stopped car, watch out for the driver or a passenger opening their door. Pass three feet from the car, or pass on the side with no passengers.



Cars Speeding Up: If you're passing a car and it speeds up, stay in your lane and slow down. After the car passes you, look back, signal, then merge back behind the car.

Squeezing between Cars: (5) Say you're in a traffic jam with cars backed up for at least a block. It's safest (and most legal) to get into line with the cars and wait it out. But if you do squeeze between the cars to get through, here's what to watch out for:

- ► A car door can open in front of you, on the left or right, at any time. Look inside cars for passengers who might get out. Keep your hands on your brake levers.
- ➤ When pedestrians cross the street in the middle of a traffic jam, the last thing they expect is you zooming down on them between the cars. Watch out for pedestrians, especially when passing trucks or buses that you can't see in front of.
- ► If a space opens up in the traffic jam—and you're near a driveway or cross street—watch for a car from the opposite direction turning into your path.

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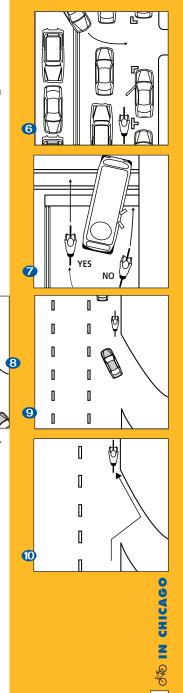
Passing CTA Buses:

Here are a few tips for passing buses at intersections or bus stops:

- ▶ When you come to a bus that's nearing or stopped at a bus stop, don't pass on the right.
 You might get squeezed into the curb or hit a passenger.
- When you pass on the left of a bus with its rear stuck out in traffic, look around carefully. And pass the front of the bus with plenty of room in case it pulls out suddenly.
- ▶ Don't pass a bus to turn right immediately in front of it. Buses sometimes speed up suddenly or start moving before the traffic light turns green.

Highway Ramps: When an exit ramp merges from the right, first look over your right shoulder to see what's coming. If a lot of cars are merging, stay straight so they pass before you on the right. 3 As you move farther, they'll pass behind you on the left. 9 If there's a break in the merging traffic, move over to the right as soon as you can. 10

Passing Cyclists: Cyclists can swerve faster than cars—so when you pass a bicycle, pass at least three feet away on the bicycle's left (not the right). Always shout "on your left!" before you pass so nobody's surprised.





7: TROUBLE SITUATIONS









AFE BICYCLING 2

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EMERGENCY MOVES

When you're moving fast and something gets in your way, slamming on the brakes doesn't always work. This section describes some emergency moves—like the Quick Slow-Down, Instant Turn, and Rock Dodge—that you can practice in a quiet parking lot. Start slowly, then work your speed up. This section also tells you why knowing how to fall might keep you from serious injury

The Quick Slow-Down: When you stop fast, your weight shifts from your back wheel to the front. Even if you use both your front and back brakes your back tire can skid and start to lift. To slow down quickly:

- **Q.** Push yourself as far back on the bike as you can. This keeps weight on the back tire.
- **b.** Put your head and torso as low as you can so you don't flip.
- **c.** Squeeze both brakes. If the back tire starts to slide or lift, ease up on the front brake.

The Instant Turn: Use the Instant Turn when a car turns in front of you while you're going straight. To make a very sudden right turn, you steer sharply left—towards the car—which makes you lean right. ② Then you turn right hard, steering into the lean. ③

The Rock Dodge: The Rock Dodge is just a quick turn of the front wheel to miss a rock or hole right in front of you. 4 At the last second, turn the front wheel sharply left and back right again. Both your wheels should miss the hazard.

How to Fall: Most serious bicycle injuries involve brain damage, so the best way to protect yourself in a fall is by wearing a helmet. Otherwise, it's not easy to prepare for a fall. But if you have time to think:

- ➤ When you're about to hit a car, don't try to wipe out first; instead, stay upright as long as you can. If you get low you risk going under the wheels or hitting the sharpest parts of the car.
- ▶If you go flying, tuck your head, arms, and legs into a tight ball and try to roll when you hit the ground. If you stick your arms out you're likely to break them, or your collarbone, or both.

DOGS, PEDS, TRACKS, & ATTACKS

Dogs: 5 Here are some of your options when a dog chases you:

- ► Just stop. Some dogs just want a good chase and will give up when you're not moving.
- ➤ Stop and get off your bike, quick. If the beast looks like it wants to attack, try to keep the bike between you and it. Shout something commanding, like "Go home!"
- ▶ Try to outrun it. This might be a good idea if there's more than one dog. *Don't* try to outrun it if you're not sure you can; too many cyclists have wiped out when running dogs jam their front wheels. If you go for it, try a squirt with your water bottle to slow Fido down. *Don't* try to hit the dog; you could lose your balance.
- ► Use a dog-repellent spray. But be careful: wind could blow the stuff back into your face. If a dog bites you, get to a doctor or hospital right away for a rabies test. If you know where the dog lives, call 311 to tell police.

Pedestrians: The law says you should yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. This can test your patience downtown, where hordes of pedestrians cross against the traffic light when they see no cars coming. So what happens when you're zooming down La Salle Street, come to a green light, and find a dozen people scurrying through the crosswalk?

- ➤ Warn them by shouting or using a bell, whistle, or horn. Remember: pedestrians look for cars, not bikes.
- ▶ If there's still a crowd in the crosswalk, or pedestrians freeze, you should slow down or stop. If you don't stop, when you're close enough for the pedestrians to see you clearly, go carefully between them. Try not to go between parents and their kids.

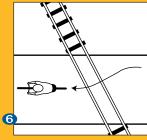
Railroads: Some railroad tracks cross streets diagonally. If you go over these tracks without changing your direction, your tires might get caught between a track and the road.

Instead, try to cross tracks at a right angle—especially when the street's wet.

Rocks and Gravel: When you bike over rocks or gravel, don't turn suddenly or use your brakes; you might wipe out. See "Braking" on page 30 to learn how to brake when it's slippery.







IN CHICAGO











Assault: If somebody's determined to attack you, they will—whether you're on foot, bike, or in a car. If you're afraid to bike in a certain neighborhood, don't—or go with friends and stay on busy streets. Here are some other tips:

- ➤ The best defense is to stay alert. If you see someone who looks like they'll hurt you, stay away from them.
- ▶ Don't stop, for any reason, in places where you think you're about to be attacked.
- ➤ Carry a defensive spray, such as pepper spray or dog repellant, where you can grab it quick. Remember that people who use this stuff often get it blown back in their own faces.

If you get knocked off your bike by a mugger, don't fight. Try to notice what they look like, then go to the nearest phone and call 911.

CONFLICTS WITH MOTORISTS

A lot of motorists act mean toward bicyclists. Some will cut you off or curse you because they don't understand you're operating a vehicle, just like them. What should you do?

Rule 1: Don't start a fight. ① As long as you and your bike aren't damaged, don't start a fight—no matter how steamed you get. If you lose your cool, the motorist might decide to nail the next bicyclist that goes by. Or, worse, the motorist might decide to smash **you** with two tons of metal and glass—and speed off before you can even start to say "license plate."

Rule 2: Report harassment. 2 Motorists that touch you or put you in danger might be guilty of assault. Stop and write down everything you can remember: the license plate number, type of car, and where and when it happened. Then call police at 311.

Rule 3: Take the long view. 3 If more cyclists follow traffic laws, more motorists will start to see bicycles as vehicles. You can help: If a motorist questions what you're doing but isn't hostile, give them a copy of the back cover of this booklet. Meanwhile, the City of Chicago is teaching motorists to share the road through driver education, outreach at community events, and advertising.





WHAT TO DO AFTER A TRAFFIC COLLISION

If you're hurt in a traffic collision, don't ride away or shake off what seems like a minor injury—you might find later that it's worse than you thought. If you're a victim of or a witness to a traffic collision, here are the steps to take:

- ➤ Call 911 for the police. If needed, get medical help immediately.
- ► Get the following information from every vehicle driver: name, address, phone number, driver's license number, license plate number, make of car, insurance company name and policy number.
- ► Get the names and phone numbers of witnesses.
- ► Get the police report number from police on the scene.
- ► Write down how the crash happened.
- ► Keep (or photograph) any damaged clothes or equipment.

Also, if you're a victim:

- ▶ Don't get mad at the scene. Keep a level head so you can ask questions and take notes.
- ► If you're injured, don't move unless you're sure you won't injure yourself more.





8: OFF-STREET BICYCLING

THE BASICS OF USING PATHS

Where in Chicago can you bicycle away from the streets? On the paths of the city's parks and lakefront. Despite the pleasant setting, bicycle collisions happen almost three times as often on paths as on streets. Here are some tips about safe path riding.

Be Courteous: People on paths don't always know which side to travel on and when to yield. So the most important rule for everyone is: act courteously. • When in doubt, give the other person a break.

Ride Predictably: Ride straight and at a steady speed so people can stay out of your way. Always look back before passing or turning. And use hand signals (see page 13) and make noise by shouting or using a bell, horn, or whistle.

Where to Pass? Slower path traffic should stay right, except to pass—just like traffic rules for the street. And you usually should pass others on the left. When there's not enough room on the left, pass on the right. Always signal so people behind you know which side you'll pass on.

Calling Out to Others: Yell "on your left" or "on your right" before you pass another cyclist, a skater, or a runner. When you yell at people walking, some will freak out and jump in front of you. So if they're walking in a straight, predictable line, you can pass them without saying anything—but pass them with as much distance as you can. And you shouldn't wear headphones so you can hear others passing *you*.

When to Yield: Here's when to yield on a path: 3

- ► When you enter a path, or you're on a path that crosses a street or another path, always be ready to slow down and yield to cross traffic.
- ► If cross traffic has a stop or yield sign, they should yield to you.
- ► If there are no signs, you should yield to the person who reaches the intersection first.
- ➤ Yield to anyone who looks like they won't slow down for you. And if there's no room to pass, yield to people in front of you who are moving slower than you.







Obey "Slow" Marks: Slow down wherever you see a series of thick white lines across a path. 4

Don't Block the Path: Don't stop on a path. Instead, move off of the path to stop.

Using Lights: If you ride paths at night, you should always have lights in front and back. See page 29 for more info.

Don't Do Damage: Don't ride in the grass or dirt, or lock your bike to small trees. You'll compact the soil, killing grass and trees and causing erosion.

RIDING THE LAKEFRONT PATH (5)

Not a Highway: Many, many people use the Lakefront Path. They walk, run, skate, dance, and just stand and talk. This means that you—a cyclist sharing the Path with others—often have to slow down or stop. If you use the Path to work on your racing skills or you're trying to get downtown in a hurry, going slow might really annoy you. If it does:

- ► Find a better route. For commuting, city streets might be faster and safer. For racing, try higherspeed roads outside the city. And if you usually ride on the North Side, try the Path south of McCormick Place to 67th Street; it has less traffic.
- ► Use the Path at off-peak times. In warm weather, the times to avoid are Saturdays and Sundays after 8 a.m., and weekdays after 3 p.m. That's when the Lakefront Path gets the most crowded. Also stay away during special lakefront events such as football games.

Problem Areas: Many parts of the Lakefront Path are tricky for cyclists. Here's a list of things to watch out for.

- ▶ Narrow pavement. In some places the Path is as narrow as a sidewalk. You should slow down and share the space.
- ► Crowds. Where it runs along beaches and other gathering places, the Path's often filled with pedestrians. In crowds, go slow and make noise. Special signs warn you of really crowded places.











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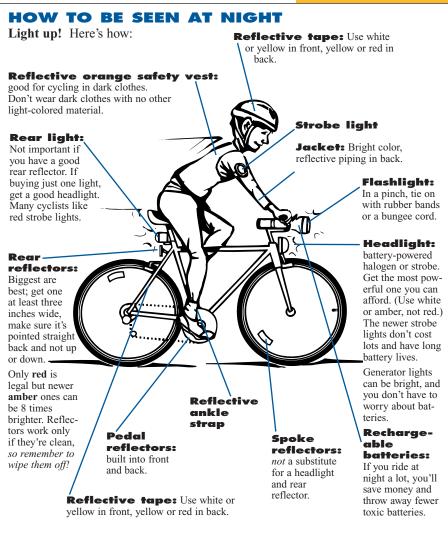
- ▶ Where's the Path? Some stretches of pavement look like they're part of the Path, but they're really access roads and ramps that lead off the Path. ② Know your route, and watch for the Path's yellow center stripe. (See the inside back cover to learn how to get a Lakefront Path map.)
- ➤ Sand, ice, and snow. When the Path gets covered with sand, ice, or snow, slow down and avoid sharp turns. ③
- ► Getting mugged. Less crime occurs on the Path than in past years, thanks in part to stepped-up police patrols. But muggings still happen. If you feel unsafe, ride with a friend.
- ▶ After 11:00 p.m. After most parks close at 11:00 p.m., the Park District lets cyclists use the Path to travel (not hang out). But some police officers don't know this. If police tell you to get off the path after 11:00, don't argue; take another route. But help the police department identify the officers who need up-to-date information: Try to get the officer's beat number or car number (from the top or side of the squad car), then call 312/42-PEDAL with the info.

Where to Get Help: Here's where to go if you need help on the Path.

- Park buildings and pay phones. Get help from a Park District building or use a pay phone if there's one nearby.
- ▶ Wait for police. In daylight hours from May through October, Chicago Police patrol the Path on bikes and in cars. ④ If you can wait, a police officer will come by.
- ▶ Bike shops. Several bike shops are located near the Path. If your bike breaks down, get off the Path to find a store or gas station where you can look in the Yellow Pages for the nearest shop.
- ► Hotline. To report a pavement hazard on the Path, call the Lakefront hotline at 312/747-2474.

9: RIDING AT NIGHT & IN BAD WEATHER





Only three percent of bike rides happen at night—but over half of all cyclists killed get hit while riding at night without lights. Under Chicago's bright street lights you need bike lights to be seen, not to see: At night, Illinois law requires a white front light visible from 500 feet, and a red back reflector or light visible from 100 to 600 feet. That's not much; you can see a car's headlights from 3,000 feet—and that's what most motorists look for. And since your upper body's at eye level, it's important to wear bright stuff at night.

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SAFE BICYCLING

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RIDING AT NIGHT

Defensive Moves: At night you can't see where drivers are looking. Also, many drivers are tired, and some are drunk. **Slow down** from your daylight speed. To make sure drivers see you when you're stopped, **flash your lights** by twitching your handlebars back and forth. **1** And watch cars closely; be ready to get out of their way.

Know Your Route: If you're new at night riding, take streets where you know the potholes and traffic so you can focus on riding in the dark. Also, if you're not sure about nighttime crime in a neighborhood, ask someone who knows the area—or don't ride alone.

Night Blindness: 2 Don't bike at night if your visual acuity's worse than 20/40 with glasses or contacts, or you can read a far-away sign or address okay in daylight but not at night. See a doctor to be sure.

RIDING IN RAIN & SNOW

Wet Streets: Wet streets can throw you. Watch out for:

- ▶ Metal, paint, and leaves. Metal-grate bridges, sewer and manhole covers, painted pavement, and leaves get slippery when wet. Don't turn or brake on them. On bridges, if you have thin or smooth tires don't ride across; ③ put both feet on the road and "scooter" across, or walk your bike on the sidewalk.
- ▶ Puddles. Don't ride through a puddle if you can't see the bottom. It could be a deep pothole that'll sink you.
- ➤ Start of rain. Don't race to beat the rain when it starts; it's when streets are slickest, because oil on the road spreads before it washes away. Turn slower and with less lean.

Slow Down: Remember that in rain or snow motorists and cyclists can't see as well as usual. And it takes longer for them to stop. To be safe, go slower than normal.

Braking: When brake pads are wet they take up to ten times longer to work. Dry them by applying your brakes far ahead of where you want to slow down, causing your pads to wipe the rims. To dry them faster, "pump" the brakes by applying them, then letting go, over and over.

Snow: Snow crews usually clear major streets within a day of a major snowfall. Walk your bike to one and get going. Other concerns:

- ► Ice. Snow hides ice on the pavement, so avoid riding on snow. ◆ Walk your bike if you must.

DRESSING FOR COLD & WET WEATHER

Chicagoans who bicycle in the cold and rain aren't nuts; they're just dressed right. But how?

Protection for Cold & Wet

Weather: If your clothes keep out rain they might also seal your sweat in. To vent perspiration, wear a jacket or poncho that lets air in from the bottom, back, or sides. And fenders work best to keep your legs, feet, and back dry.

Layers for Cold: You don't need a whole new set of clothes to bike in the cold. Instead, wear a sweatshirt or jacket and add t-shirts, light sweaters, and tights or long johns in layers as weather gets colder. By wearing light layers you can also remove outer clothes if you warm up while cycling. (Overheating can make you sick.) And if you sweat a lot, the layer closest to your skin should be a non-absorbing material (synthetic instead of cotton) that'll let sweat evaporate as you ride.

Try different clothing to find what makes you comfortable at different temperatures and in the rain. In extreme cold or wind chill, cover your hands, feet, and ears well. Here are some other ideas:

Temperature Cool: 50 Cold: 40 Freezing: 30 Below Freezing: 10

What to Wear

Light jacket or windbreaker; long pants; light gloves. Thicker socks (or a second pair); heavier gloves; hat. Sweater or another torso layer; glove liners under gloves; neck gaiter, turtleneck, or scarf; headband or earmuffs; add knee socks; heavy shoes or shoe covers.

Another torso and leg layer; mitten shells instead of (or over) gloves.







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EQUIPPING YOU AND YOUR BIKE FOR RAIN AND SNOW

Wear bright colors:

vellow, orange, or fluorescent pink.

Ears: Wide headbands and even

fits under your helmet. earmuffs fit under your helmet. **Hoods:** Don't use Neck: Wool scarf.

cotton turtleneck, or neck gaiter keeps icy air from blasting down your shirt.

Hands: Use gardening or fishing gloves with wool or synthetic liners, ski gloves, or thick ragwool hunters' gloves.

Crotch:

To prevent unusual frostbite, avoid porous warm-up pants.

Legs: When it's cold but dry, wear loosefitting, average-weight pants like jeans. When it's colder use long underwear or a second pair of tights. In wet weather wear synthetic underwear with one or two pairs of tights.

Head: Cover it unless you have thick hair. A tight-fitting hood covers your ears and

> loose-fitting hoods that block peripheral vision.

> > Neck: High collar or hood keeps water from going down your neck.

> > > Leg gaiters: often made of nylon; keep your

pants legs dry.

Rain gear: Wear a waterproof jacket. If sweat's a problem, wear a loose or vented jacket, a waterproof poncho that lets in air from below, or a **cyclist's rain cape** that hooks to handlebars to keep it out of your tires.

Feet: Wear heavy wool socks or two pairs of socks. Knee socks protect shins from cold from below. With socks for warmth and fenders for dryness, wear shoes simply to take road dirt. When it's really cold and wet, wear rubber boots.

Rims: When wet, brake pads grip aluminum rims better than they do steel.

Tires: Fat tires have better traction. Tires less than 1 1/4" wide work better on wet streets when under-inflated. Use tires with a herring-bone tread pattern.

Brakes: Grime builds up on brake pads, making them squeak or scratch your rims. Run a rag between each pad and the rim, like shining a shoe. Occasionally remove the wheel and check pads for wear.

> **Bearing** damage: After biking in wet weather put your bike indoors so bearings can dry.

Fenders: They beat almost anything to keep you dry on wet pavement.

The newest plastic ones are cheap and light, but can crack if installed wrong.

Salt damage: With lots of winter riding, occasionally wipe down your frame, rims, spokes, and derailleurs, and lube your chain (see page 5). Use a toothbrush for hard-to reach parts.

BICYCLING

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BICYCLISTS' RESOURCES

Information about Bicycling in Chicago

- Chicagoland Department of Transportation 312/742-BIKE (742-2453)
 Suite 400, 30 N. LaSalle St., 60602
 www.ci.chi.il.us/Transportation/Bikes
 View the *Chicago Bike Map* on-line, request bike parking, suggest bicycling facilities, and more.
- Chicagoland Bicycle Federation (CBF) 312/42-PEDAL (427-3325)
 Room 300, 650 S. Clark St., 60605
 www.biketraffic.org

Your one-stop source of bicycle info for the Chicago area: maps, commuting, bike rides and cycling events, safety, clubs, government contacts, national bicyclists' network, and bike facilities planning.

Other Helpful Sources

- ► To report a city street hazard: 311
- ► To report a Lakefront Path hazard: 312/744-2474
- ➤ To request Mayor Daley's Bicycling Ambassadors: 312/427-3325, x25 www.biketraffic.org/ambassador

Maps

- ► Chicago Bike Map (free)
 Chicago Bureau of Traffic 312/742-2453
 Suite 400, 30 N. LaSalle St., 60602
- ► Lakefront Path Map
 Chicago Park District 312/744-2474
 www.chicagoparkdistrict.com
- Seven-county Chicagoland Bicycle Map (\$6.95 retail, \$5.00 CBF members) Chicagoland Bicycle Federation (CBF) 312/42-PEDAL (427-3325) Room 300, 650 S. Clark St., 60605 www.biketraffic.org
- ► State-wide bike map information Ill. Dept. of Transportation 217/782-0834
- ► State-wide trail information
 Ill. Dept. of Natural Resources 217/782-7498
- ► Illinois Rules of the Road Secretary of State's Office 800/252-8980
- ► Information for the hearing impaired 800/526-0844 (TDD only)

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Chicagoland Bicycle Federation.

CHICAGO TRAFFIC LAW: Bicycles are vehicles!

Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by the laws of this state declaring rules of the road applicable to vehicles or by the traffic ordinances of this city applicable to the driver of a vehicle.

Section 9-52-010(a) of the Chicago Municipal Code

Traffic rules that apply to motorists also apply to bicyclists.

Because both state and city laws define bicycle riders as vehicle operators, motorists should treat them as such. Specifically, motorists should treat a bicycle as a vehicle for purposes of:

- LEFT AND RIGHT TURNS
- **▶** PASSING
- STOPPING AT LIGHTS
 AND STOP SIGNS
- ➤ YIELDING RIGHT-OF-WAY
- ► LANE POSITION







A message from the Chicago Department of Transportation.

Bicyclists are encouraged to reproduce this message and share it with motorists and others.