

Boy Scouts of America Bike Safety Guidelines

The following guidelines and procedures apply to all BSA units, councils, and national program activities involving bicycling.

1. Qualified Supervision

All unit, district, council, and national event activities must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult at least age 21 who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the safety of children in his or her care, who is experienced with the skills and equipment involved in the activity, and who is committed to compliance with these BSA safety guidelines.

2. Physical Fitness

Biking is strenuous. Long treks and hill climbing should not be attempted without training and preparation. For Scouting activities, all participants must present evidence of fitness assured by a complete health history from a physician, parent, or legal guardian. The adult supervisor should adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, proof of an examination by a physician should be required by the adult leader.

3. Helmets and Clothing

All cyclists must wear a properly sized and fitted helmet approved by either the Snell Memorial Foundation or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards. Layer your clothing for warmth on cool days so you can avoid chilling or overheating. Cover up for sun protection on clear days.

4. Buddy-Up

When the program activity is a bicycle expedition or trek, the buddy system must be used. When there is program activity emphasizing individual performance skills, one buddy observes while the other takes his turn. In competitive activity where the buddy concept cannot be practically applied, all activity must be directly observed by the adult supervisor. (Youth members should be taught that biking with a buddy is best. When

biking alone, apart from Scouting activities, youth members should be encouraged to tell someone their route, schedule, and destination before departing.)

5. Keep Right

Ride with the traffic flow, as far to the right as possible. Avoid curbs, storm drains, soft or loose gravel on shoulders, and other hazards.

6. Be Smart

Obey all traffic laws, signs, signals, and street markings. Watch for changes in road conditions. Ride only one to a bike. Do not ride after dark. No stunts—trick riding is only for professionals who use special equipment. Yield to motor vehicles even if you think you have the right-of-way. Never hitch a ride on another vehicle. Keep your head and ears open and do not wear headphones while riding.

7. Turns and Intersections

Look left, right, back, and ahead before turning. Stop and search all directions when entering a street from a driveway, parking area, sidewalk, or an alley. Signal all turns using universal hand signals. Walk your bike through or across busy intersections.

8. Right Bike

Ride only a bike that fits you. Select a bike that permits you to put both feet on the ground while sitting on the seat. The handgrips should be no higher than your shoulder or lower than your seat.

9. Accessories

Every bike needs a horn or bell and reflectors (front, back, and sides). Items should be carried only in baskets, saddlebags, or on a rear carrier rack. If you must ride in traffic, a bike- or helmet-mounted mirror is recommended. For long trips, a bike-mounted container for drinking water is recommended.

10. Maintenance

Keep your bike clean and well-maintained—especially the brakes and drive chain.

11. Race Right

Open street racing is dangerous. Race only with supervision on marked courses that have been set up to exclude other vehicle or pedestrian traffic, to eliminate fall hazards and minimize collision risks, and to define clearly "start" and "finish" points.

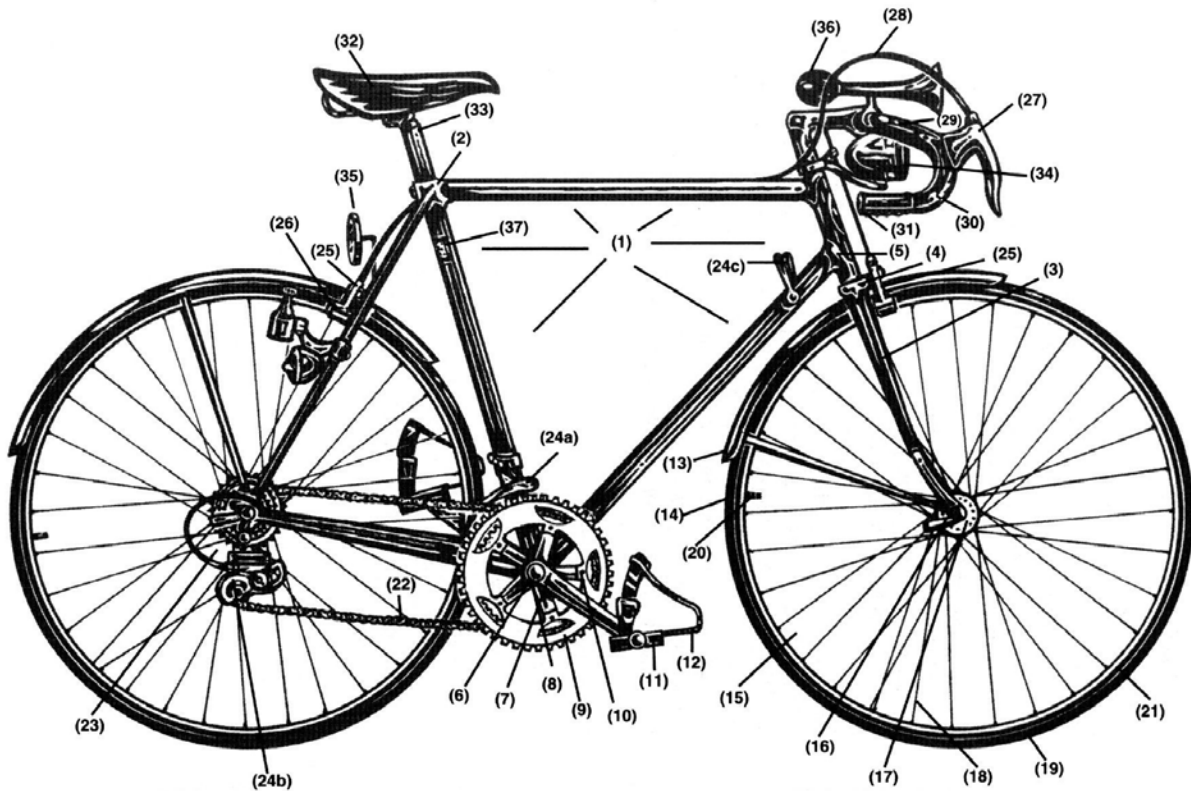
12. Planning

Plan both the route and timing of bike trips to avoid heavy traffic and hazardous conditions. Biking is unsafe on wet pavement and on windy days. Plan for at least hourly rest stops and a maximum of approximately six hours on the bike per day.

13. Discipline

All participants should know, understand, and follow the rules and procedures for safe biking, and all participants should conscientiously and carefully follow all directions from the adult supervisor.

Bicycle Safety Checklist



- ___ Frame (1) - Clean and not bent out of shape. No cracks at Frame Joints (2).
- ___ Front Fork (3) - Clean and not bent out of shape. No cracks at Fork Joints (4).
- ___ Headset Bearing (5) - Well lubricated; turns freely with no binding. No perceptible play in the assembly.
- ___ Bottom-Bracket Bearing (6) - Turns freely with not more than barely perceptible play in the bearing.
- ___ Crank Arms (7) - Clean and not bent out of shape. Tightened securely on the Crankset Axle (8).
- ___ Chainrings (9) - Clean, not worn, and not bent out of shape. Chainring Bolts (10) tightened securely to hold Chainrings to Crankarms.
- ___ Pedals (11) - Bearings well lubricated; turn freely with no perceptible play in the bearing. Pedals tightly screwed into Crankarm. Toe Clips (12) functional.
- ___ Fenders (13) - Clean; tightly attached without rattling or rubbing against the Tires (14).
- ___ Wheels (15) - Run true and round. Wheel nuts tight. Closed and tight quick-releases (16). Centered in form or frame members.
- ___ Wheel Bearings (17) in hubs - Well lubricated and properly adjusted to move freely with no more than barely perceptible play.
- ___ Spokes (18) - None broken or bent. Tightened to a uniform tension.
- ___ Tires - Good Tread (19). Valves (20) completely airtight. Properly inflated to recommended pressure.
- ___ Rims (21) - Clean of all oil and grime. Free of dents or kinks.
- ___ Chain (22) - Proper tension, allowing 1/2 inch of play. No stiff links. Clean, lubricated, and wiped of excess lubrication.
- ___ Gearing (23) - Clean and oiled. Three-speed gears adjusted to eliminate all slipping. Front (24a) and Rear (24b) derailleurs adjusted for proper shifting with Shifters (24c).
- ___ Brakes (25)
 - Coaster - Even braking. Operate within a 20-degree back-pedaling motion.
 - Hand - Even braking. All nuts tight. Front and rear brakes work without binding. Minimum of 3/16 inch of rubber on Brake Pads (26). Brake pads aligned with rims and contact rims with a minimum of movement of Hand Controls (27). No squeal when brakes are used.
- ___ Cables (28) - No frayed ends. No broken strands. All taut.
- ___ Handlebars (29) - Tightened securely. Grips (30) not worn; fit snugly. Adjusted to comfort of rider. Ends (31) plugged. In line with wheel.
- ___ Saddle (32) - Height, tilt, and fore/aft position adjusted to rider. All adjustments securely tightened. Seatpost (33) not extended beyond maximum mark on post.
- ___ Lights (34) - Front light visible for 500 feet. Generator or battery in good operating condition.
- ___ Rear Red Reflectors/Lights (35) - Visible for 300 feet. Lights/Blinkers functional with generator or batteries.
- ___ Bell or Horn (36) - In good operating condition. All accessories well tightened and securely fastened. No broken frames or fasteners.
- ___ Bike Registration (37) - If required by local law, must be displayed on frame.

ABC Quick Check

1. A is for air
 - Inflate tires to rated pressure as listed on the sidewall of the tire
 - Use a pressure gauge to insure proper pressure
 - Check for damage to tire tread and sidewall; replace if damaged
2. B is for brakes
 - Inspect pads for wear; replace if there is less than ¼" of pad left
 - Check pad adjustment; make sure they do not rub tire or dive into spokes
 - Check brake level travel; at least 1" between bar and lever when applied
3. C is for cranks, chain and cassette
 - Make sure that your crank bolts are tight; lube the threads only, nothing else
 - Check your chain for wear; 12 links should measure no more than 12 1/8 inches
 - If your chain skips on your cassette, you might need a new one or just an adjustment
4. Quick is for quick releases
 - Hubs need to be tight in the frame; your quick release should engage at 90°
 - Your hub quick release should point back to insure that nothing catches on it
 - Inspect brake quick releases to insure that they have been re-engaged
5. Check is for check it over
 - Take a quick ride to check if derailleurs and brakes are working properly
 - Inspect the bike for loose or broken parts; tighten, replace or fix them
 - Pay extra attention to your bike during the first few miles of the ride

Ten Commandments of Bicycling

- I. Wear a helmet for every ride and use lights at night
- II. Conduct an ABC Quick Check before every ride
- III. Obey traffic laws: ride on the right, slowest traffic farthest to right
- IV. Ride predictably and be visible at all times
- V. At intersections, ride in the right-most lane that goes in your direction
- VI. Scan for traffic and signal lane changes and turns
- VII. Be prepared for mechanical emergencies with tools and know-how
- VIII. Control your bike by practicing bike handling skills
- IX. Drink before you are thirsty and eat before you are hungry
- X. Have fun

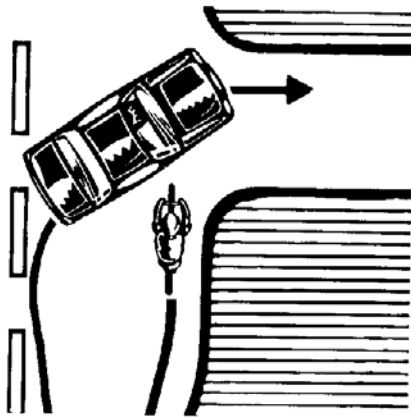
Texas State Bicycle Laws

Stipulations in the Texas Traffic Laws that bicyclists should be familiar with include:

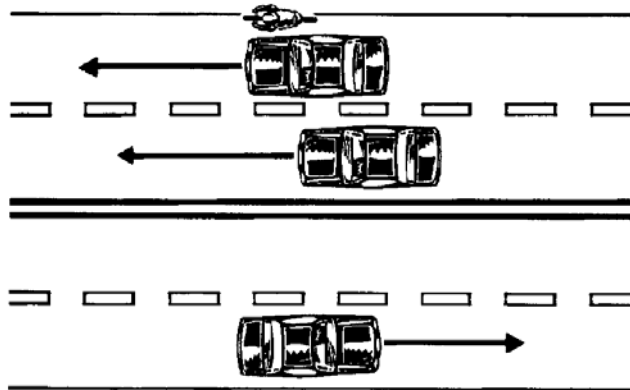
1. Cyclists have all the rights and the duties that apply to drivers of vehicles. This statement includes stopping at signs and signals, yielding the right of way and obeying posted speed limits and one-way street signs.
2. No bicycle shall carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed.
3. A bicyclist moving below the speed of other traffic shall ride as near as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway, except when:
4. The person is overtaking and passing another vehicle going in the same direction;
5. The person is preparing to turn left at an intersection or onto a private road or driveway;
6. Conditions of the roadway, including fixed or moving objects or vehicles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards or substandard lanes, make it unsafe to ride next to the right curb or edge of the roadway.
7. The person is operating a bicycle in an outside lane that is less than 14 feet in width and does not have a designated bicycle lane adjacent to that lane, or it is too narrow for a bicycle and a motor vehicle to safely travel side by side.
8. For night use, a bicycle shall have a lamp on the front with a white light visible from a stance of at least 500 feet to the front and with a red reflector on the rear that is of a type approved by the Department of Public Safety, and visible when directly in front of lawful upper beams of motor vehicle headlamps from all distances from 50 - 300 feet to the rear of the bicycle, or a lamp that emits a red light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear of the bicycle.
9. Violation of the law is a misdemeanor offense and could result in a Justice of the Peace Citation.

CYCLING [EAGLE Required]

1. Show that you know first aid for injuries or illnesses that could occur while cycling, including hypothermia, heat reactions, frostbite, dehydration, insect stings, tick bites, snakebites, blisters, and hyperventilation.
2. Clean and adjust a bicycle. Prepare it for inspection using a bicycle safety checklist. Be sure the bicycle meets local laws.
3. Show your bicycle to your counselor for inspection. Point out the adjustments or repairs you have made. Do the following:
 - Show all points that need oiling regularly.
 - Show points that should be checked regularly to make sure the bicycle is safe to ride.
 - Show how to adjust brakes, seat level and height, and steering tube.
4. Describe how to brake safely with foot brakes and with hand brakes.
5. Show how to repair a flat. Use an old bicycle tire.
6. Take a road test with your counselor and demonstrate the following:
 - Properly mount, pedal, and brake including emergency stops.
 - On an urban street with light traffic, properly execute a left turn from the center of the street; also demonstrate an alternate left turn technique used during periods of heavy traffic.
 - Properly execute a right turn.
 - Demonstrate appropriate actions at a right-turn-only lane when you are continuing straight.
 - Show proper curbside and road-edge riding. Show how to safely ride along a row of parked cars.
 - Cross railroad tracks properly.
7. Describe your state's traffic laws for bicycles. Compare them with motor-vehicle laws. Know the bicycle-safety guidelines.
8. Avoiding main highways, take two rides of 10 miles each, two rides of 15 miles each, and two rides of 25 miles each. You must make a report of the rides taken. List dates, routes traveled, and interesting things seen. The bicycle must have all required safety features. It must be registered as required by your local traffic laws.
9. After fulfilling requirement 8, lay out on a road map a 50-mile trip. Stay away from main highways. Using your map, make this ride in eight hours.

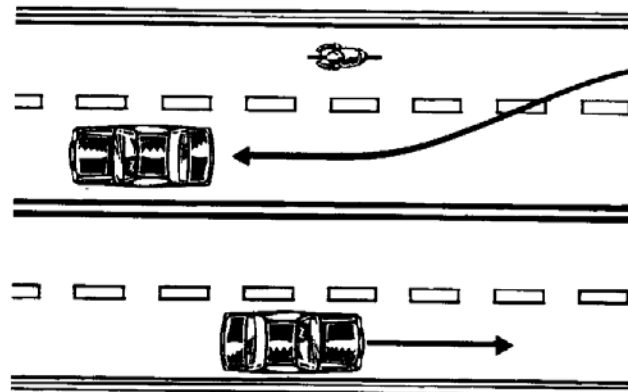


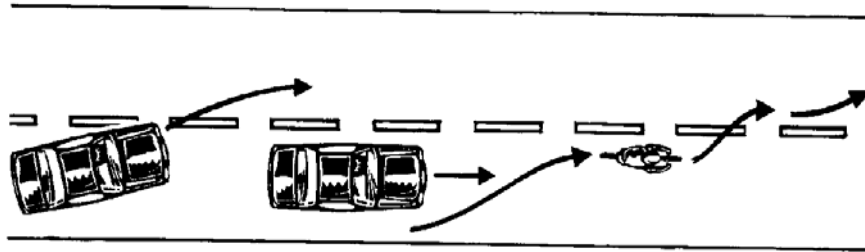
If the roadway has a usable paved shoulder or an extra-wide right lane, you may ride in a line a steady distance from the left side of the right lane and about 3 feet to the right of where the cars are traveling. This lets motorists see you and helps prevent you being cut off by a driver turning right, as in this illustration.



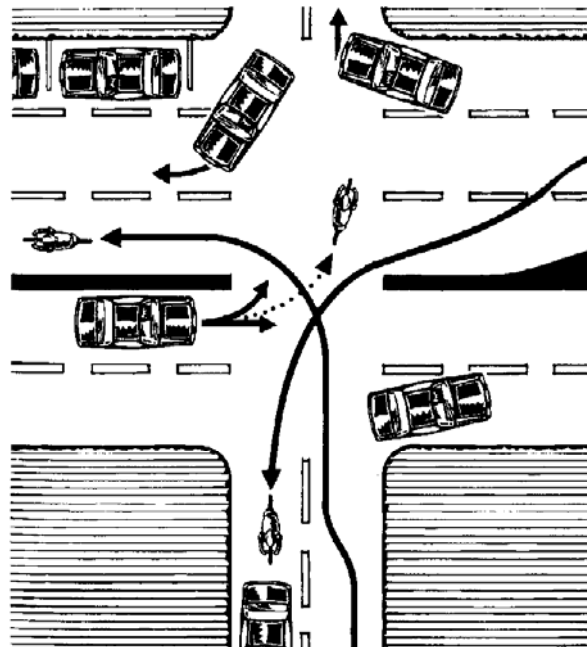
In narrow-lane conditions, riding all the way to the right invites a car to try passing you in the same lane, possibly forcing you off the road.

On roadways that have two narrow lanes for each direction, ride in the middle of the right lane at all times. Drivers need to get the idea that they must move into the passing lane if they want to pass you.





When you are moving into position within a lane, look back for traffic clearance first. When you are changing lanes to get into position, look back to let a driver make room for you, make a left-turn signal, cross to the other side of the lane, look back again to let a driver make room for you, and cross the line into the new lane. To cross multiple lanes, repeat the process as many times as necessary.



From where in the center lane should you prepare to make your left turn? If the lane is also for through traffic, ride on its left side. If the lane is a left-turn-only lane, ride on its right side. You must yield to other traffic in the intersection—vehicles and pedestrians. Pass oncoming left-turning vehicles right side to right side. When you are turning left from the left side of the lane, do not let left-turning cars behind you pass on the right. While waiting to turn left, move to the middle of the lane and make a slow signal with your left hand to inform the motorists behind you.