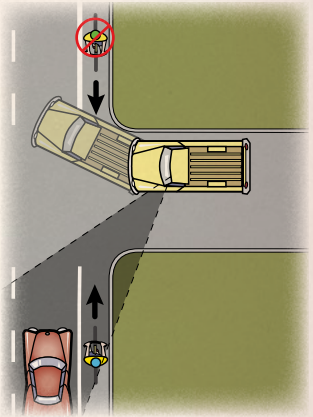
THE BICYCLIST'S SURVIVAL GUIDE

Live to ride. Ride to live.

Here's to you, Oregon riders! You've been rolling for longer than you've been walking, so it's no wonder you feel right at home on two wheels. You're saving money, reducing pollution and improving your health. But with all that fresh air comes a certain amount of vulnerability, so here are a few tips to keep you on the straight and vertical.

RIDE WITH TRAFFIC



Drivers pulling into traffic tend to look mostly in the direction of oncoming cars. If you ride against traffic, drivers may not see you until it's too late.

1

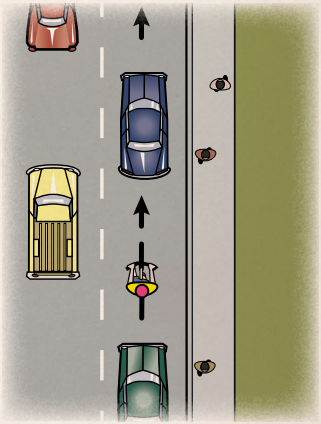
ABIDE
WHEN YOU RIDE

Go with the flow: ride on the right, in the same direction as traffic. It's the law – and it will help you to be seen by drivers.

Pedal by the book. When on the road, your bike is a vehicle. That means you have the same rights – and responsibilities – as motorists. So obey all traffic signs, signals, lane markings and other rules of the road.

tip It's the law to stop for a yellow light, too. Rushing through may not leave you enough time before the light changes.

STAY CENTERED



If there is no shoulder or bike lane ***and*** the travel lane is narrow, ride closer to the center of the lane where drivers can see you.

2

STAY
ON TOP OF YOUR RIDE

Get a grip – keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times. And be ready to brake at a moment's notice.

Keep to the right, but not so far to the right that you risk hitting the curb, leaving the paved road or getting hit by the opening door of a parked car.

tip Stay sober in the saddle – or risk a DUII. Know why? You guessed it: your bike is a vehicle.

CHECK YOURSELF

SO YOU DON'T WRECK YOURSELF

Shield your brain – always wear a helmet.

Tune into traffic, not your earbuds.

Stow the phone – it can wait.

Dress to be seen. Yellow and lime green are especially visible colors in daylight; reflective accessories will help make you visible to drivers at night.

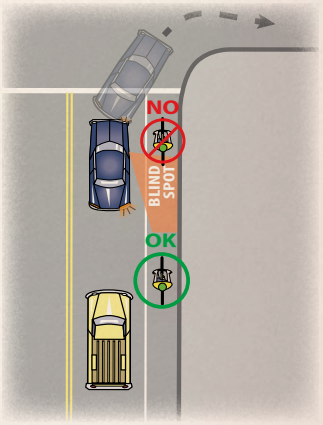
STOP! Brakes must be in good repair and powerful enough to let you stop easily and safely.

Light up the night – Oregon law requires reflectors and lights on front and back.

Gauge it right – tires should be in good condition and inflated to their recommended pressure.

Avoid a chain reaction – tuck in or hike up loose clothing so it doesn't get caught.

AVOID THE RIGHT HOOK



When close to an intersection, use caution while passing vehicles on the right. Watch the right-turn signals and hang back until the coast is clear.

3

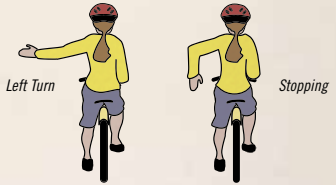
BE VISIBLE, BE ALERT

Be bright at night by using a white headlight on the front of the bike, and red light or reflector on the back – as required by Oregon law. And wear bright colors and/or reflective accessories.

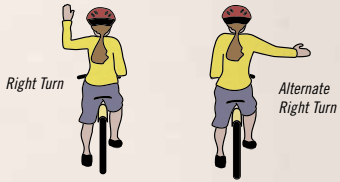
Steer clear of danger by watching out for vehicles waiting at stop signs or pulling out of parking spaces: drivers may not see you, especially if you're in their blind spot.

tip

Be courteous: when using the bright LED light, angle it slightly downward. That way it won't blind drivers or fellow riders, but will still allow you to see and be seen.



PRACTICE SIGN LANGUAGE.



Reflective tape on your sleeves or gloves can help drivers see your hand motions – especially at dusk and at nighttime.

4

NEVER

KEEP 'EM GUESSING

Be predictable to drivers – telegraph your every move with hand signals. The last thing you want to do is catch a driver by surprise... the surprise may be on you!

Space out: when following a vehicle, allow a little extra space between yourself and motorists – it will give you time to avoid any sudden moves on their part.

tip

Don't take it for granted: even if you're doing everything right, drivers may not see you – so ride defensively.

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Heading out for a scenic ride? Here are some safety tips before you go rural:

Plan your trip and research your route to make sure it's bike-friendly and within your endurance limits.

Gear up: check your tires, chain, brakes and light batteries. And don't forget the flat repair kit.

Watch your back with rear-view mirrors and frequent shoulder checks – especially prior to cresting a hill or entering a curve.

Be predictable: ride in a straight line, no swerving or weaving, and use clear hand signals.

Stay on the straight and narrow: if moving slower than the speed of traffic, ride single file and closer to the shoulder.

Watch for critters (including unleashed dogs!) in wooded areas and farming communities.

Think fast! Open country roads often mean faster speeds, and motorists may not expect bicyclists on the roadway. So watch out and keep your cool.

Don't be left in the dark. Rural roads lack the ambient light of urban areas, so drivers may not see you. Be prepared to ride at night with lights and reflectors – or plan to finish your ride before nightfall.

When no bike lane is present, you have the right to ride in the roadway.

Ride on!

For more info, tips and Oregon laws, follow these useful links:

Oregon Bicyclist Manual

Oregon Pedestrian and Bicycle Laws

How to ride in roundabouts

Bicycle helmet advice

Share the Road. *The Way to Go.*

Transportation Safety – ODOT