



THE DRIVER'S FIELD GUIDE

— THE DRIVER'S —
FIELD GUIDE
TO



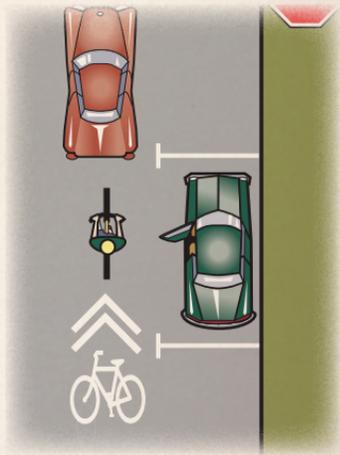
— *Let's all get home safely!* —

SHARE THE ROAD. THE WAY TO GO.



Oregonians love riding – to work, to school, to see friends or just for fun. Day or night, on any given road, that person on two wheels may be someone’s mother, father, sister or brother. As drivers, we need to keep a sharp eye out for bicyclists, so if you don’t see them, look again. This guide is a combination of Oregon traffic laws and best practice recommendations, and is designed to help drivers understand the rules of the road and avoid common mistakes – so that everyone can stay safe.

— SHARE + ARROW = SHARROW —



On some roads, you'll see two arrows or chevrons painted on the road above a bicycle symbol. That's a sign that the lane is shared – so be extra alert.

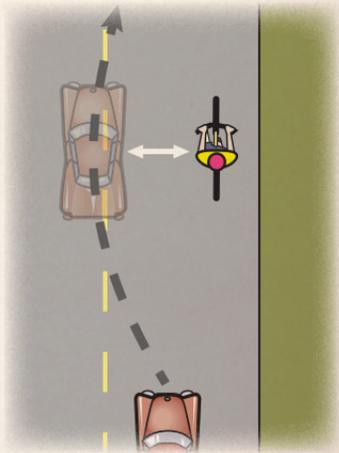
WHOSE LANE IS IT, ANYWAY?

The short answer is: everybody's. By law, bicycles are vehicles – and they have the right to ride in the roadway. Generally, they must ride on the right, in the direction of traffic. But there are some exceptions.

The center can be safer. If you see bicyclists in the center of a lane, chances are they're not hogging the road. It's legal for them to take the lane if:

- They need to avoid road debris or other obstacles on the side of the road;
- The road is too narrow for vehicles and bikes to travel safely side by side;
- They are moving near or at the speed of traffic;
- They are passing another rider, or a stopped or parked vehicle;
- They are preparing for a left turn.

DISTANCE YOURSELF



When passing a bicyclist, leave enough room (at least 4 feet) to avoid contact if the rider falls into your lane.

Return to your lane only when you're completely clear of the rider.

PASS WITH EXTRA CARE

Safety always comes first – and that means giving bicyclists a wide berth.

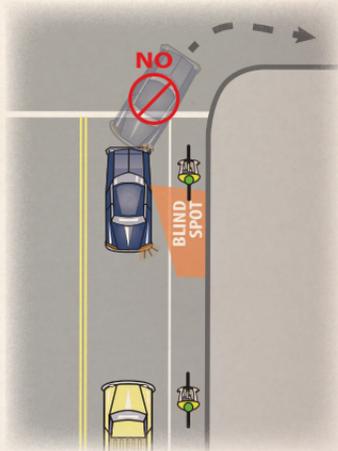
Easy does it. When approaching a rider from behind, slow down if you intend to pass – fast-moving vehicles can create a wind vortex that can cause the rider to wobble or fall.

To pass or not to pass? On a two-lane road with no bike lane, drivers may cross the center line to pass a bicyclist – but only if it can be done safely and yielding to all oncoming traffic first.

Sound tip

Avoid using your horn when approaching bike riders – the loud noise could startle them and cause them to swerve.

AVOID THE RIGHT HOOK



Before turning right, use your mirror or take a quick look over your shoulder to check your right rear zone: if you see approaching bicyclists, you must yield.

TURN SMART, TURN SAFE

Bicyclists often get hurt when cars turn or enter the roadway. Keep them safe by taking some extra care before making your move.

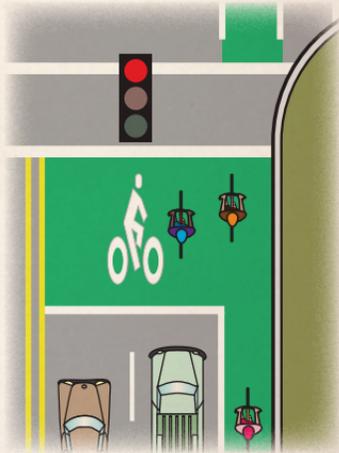
Do a double take. When turning left, we often check only for oncoming cars. Get in the habit of actively looking for bicyclists, too – and yield to *all* oncoming traffic.

No curb cuts. When you enter the roadway, don't just check for motor vehicles – scan the road, bike lane and sidewalk for bicyclists before pulling out from a parking lot or driveway.

Bikes crossing

Bicyclists are allowed to use a pedestrian crosswalk to cross a street – treat them as you would any pedestrian.

RESPECT THE GREEN



Bicyclists can legally wait anywhere in the box, which allows them to be more visible to drivers and protects them from right turning vehicles.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

You're about to stop for a red light when you see it – the pavement by the intersection is painted green, extending completely across your lane. It's called a bike box – as a driver, here's what to do.

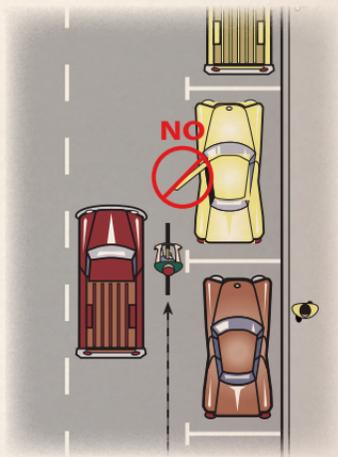
Boxing lessons:

1. Stop for the signal *behind* the bike box – do not stop in the box.
2. You *cannot turn right* on a red signal when you're stopped behind a bike box.
3. When turning right, make sure you signal, wait for the green light and *yield* to all riders on your right.

There's always a "but"

Sometimes you'll see a bike box without green paint – just a white frame. It's still a bike box, with the same rules as above.

AVOID DOORING



Once parked, you and your passengers have a legal responsibility to avoid “dooring”—opening a door in the path of an approaching bicyclist.

DON'T BE A SPACE INVADER

You wouldn't think it, but even parked cars can be a hazard to bicyclists. These simple habits will earn you the gratitude of every rider.

Look out before you leap out. Make it a habit to check your mirrors for bicyclists before swinging the door open — and encourage your passengers to do the same.

Hit “pause.” When you're ready to leave your parking spot, check the mirror closest to traffic or look over your shoulder to make sure you don't pull out into the path of a bicyclist.

Rule of the lane

In Oregon, drivers may not drive in the bike lane in preparation for a right turn, or to pass a stopped vehicle.

GIVE SAFETY A HAND



KNOW THE SIGNS.



Know the code. A little sign language can keep the roads safer for drivers and bicyclists. Know and watch for the hand signs riders use to signal a left turn, a right turn or a stop.

Be the hero. All road users – including bicyclists – should obey traffic laws and use the road correctly. But we all make mistakes, so be prepared for anything by staying alert and giving riders some extra room.

*Night
riders*

Just because the sun's gone down doesn't mean that bicyclists have left the road. Watch carefully for their lights and reflectors.

MORE SIGHTS WORTH SEEING

Bicyclists are plentiful in urban areas. But there are many other places where you should keep a watchful eye out.

Kids on wheels. When driving through neighborhoods or school zones, look out for kids on bicycles. They may not know all the road rules and are not always steady on their bikes. Kids can also be impulsive and unpredictable – so keep your speed down and pay extra attention.

Rolling down the highway. Bicyclists may lawfully ride on most of Oregon's highways. They are not allowed on certain highway sections around Portland and Medford – but it's best to watch for bicyclists wherever you drive.

About the roundabout. Slow down and prepare to yield when you approach a roundabout. Allow bicyclists to enter the roadway from the bike lane. Once you're in the roundabout, don't pass bicyclists. Remember that bicyclists may use the roundabout roadway as cars do, or the sidewalk as pedestrians do.

Eyes on the road

The best way to ensure that you never miss what's happening on the road is to avoid distractions behind the wheel – particularly using mobile devices.



Wherever you go on the open road, expect to see other Oregonians on bicycles. Make it a habit to search and scan for bicyclists the same way you do for other vehicles and pedestrians. That way, you'll get where you're going safely, with less worry – and so will everyone else.

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

[Oregon Pedestrian and Bicycle Laws](#)

[Oregon Driver Manual](#)

[Oregon Bicyclist Manual](#)

[How to Ride in Roundabouts](#)

A publication of the [Bicyclist Safety Program](#)



Share the Road. The Way to Go.

Transportation Safety – ODOT