

CHAPTER 13

BICYCLE VEHICLE LAW AND SAFETY

BICYCLE TRAFFIC LAW

1. "Bicycle" means every device propelled by human power upon which any person may ride, having two tandem wheels either of which is more than 14 inches in diameter.
2. "Vehicle" means a device, in, or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn on a public highway, other than a device used exclusively on stationary rails or tracks.
3. A bicycle is a vehicle and any person operating a bicycle has the rights and duties applicable to a driver operating a vehicle, unless it cannot, by its nature apply to a person operating a bicycle.
4. A bicyclist should always obey all traffic laws, signs, and signals. Never ride opposite the flow of traffic. Stop at all stop signs and stop at red lights.
5. A person operating a bicycle on a roadway who is moving slower than the other traffic on the roadway shall ride as near as possible to the right curb or edge of the roadway unless:
 - a. The person is overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction.
 - b. The person is preparing for a left turn at an intersection or onto a private road or driveway.
 - c. There are unsafe conditions in the roadway such as fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, pedestrians, animals, potholes, or debris.
 - d. The lane is too narrow for a bicycle and a motor vehicle to safely travel side by side.

6. A person operating a bicycle on a one-way roadway with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as near as possible to the left curb or edge of the roadway.

7. Persons riding two abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable flow of traffic on the roadway. Persons riding two abreast on a laned roadway must ride in a single lane.

8. A person riding a bicycle shall not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat.

9. No bicycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed or equipped.

10. No person riding a bicycle shall attach the same or himself to any street-car or vehicle upon a roadway.

11. No person operating a bicycle shall carry any package, bundle, or article which prevents the driver from keeping at least one hand upon the handlebars.

12. Bicyclists may ride on shoulders.

13. Bicyclists may signal a right-hand turn using either the left arm pointing up or the right arm pointed horizontally.

14. Every bicycle shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

15. Every bicycle in use at nighttime shall be equipped with the following:

a. A lamp on the front which shall emit a white light visible at a distance of at least 500 feet to the front of the bicycle.

b. A red reflector on the rear of a type approved by the Texas Department of Public Safety which shall be visible from distances 50 to 300 feet. A red light on the rear visible from a distance of 500 feet may be used in addition to the red reflector.

16. Hearing-impaired bicycle riders may display a safety flag. (See page 5-22.)

BICYCLE SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. Although not required by law, it is highly suggested that bicycle riders wear an approved bicycle helmet.

2. When riding on pedestrian facilities, reduce speed and exercise caution.

3. Do not weave in and out of parked cars.

4. Move off the street to stop, park, or make repairs to your bicycle.

5. A bicyclist should select a route according to the person's own bicycling skill and experience.

6. It is not required by law, but bicycles should be equipped with a mirror.

WET WEATHER RIDING

The visibility of motorists is greatly decreased. Wear highly visible clothing when riding on a bicycle. Water makes certain surfaces slick. Be aware of manhole covers and painted stripes on the road. Water obscures some hazards. Watch for potholes filled with water.

COMMON MOTORIST MISTAKES THAT BICYCLE RIDERS SHOULD KNOW

1. The most common motorist caused car-bicycle collision is a motorist turning left in the face of oncoming bicycle traffic. Oncoming bicycle traffic is often overlooked or its speed misjudged.

2. The second most common motorist caused car-bicycle collision is a motorist turning right across the path of the bicycle traffic. The motorist should slow down and merge with the bicycle traffic for a safe right-hand turn.

3. The third most common motorist caused car-bicycle collision is a motorist pulling away from a stop sign, failing to yield right-of-way to bicycle cross traffic. At intersections, right-of-way rules apply equally to motor vehicles and bicycles.