

Guidelines for Bicyclists

By state law, bicyclists using our public roads have the **same rights and responsibilities** as motor vehicle drivers. For our own safety and that of those around us, both drivers and bicyclists must take this very seriously. Bicyclists fare best when they act and are treated as drivers of vehicles. Do your part to learn the rules of the road and basic safety precautions. Take a few minutes to read the guidelines below and help make New Haven a more bicycle-friendly city.

Obey all traffic laws. Stop for stop signs and traffic lights, signal all turns and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. Remember – **you ARE traffic** and these laws apply to you. Ride in the direction of traffic in **single file** and stay to the right whenever the road is wide enough to share.

Wear a helmet and wear it correctly. The law requires that **those under sixteen must wear a helmet**, though everyone really should. Make it level and snug so that it will not fall off in an accident.



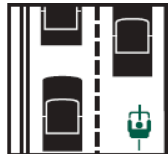
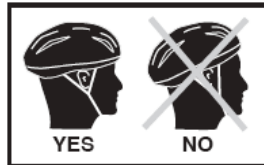
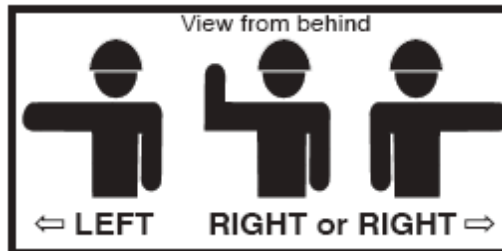
Be **visible and predictable**. Wear bright clothing and **always** use lights at night – white in front and red behind. Always be wary that drivers may not know the rules of the road or may not see you clearly. When stopped at a light make sure you are clearly visible, especially to cars that may decide to turn right across your path. **Make eye contact** and remember to **smile**.

Take the lane if a shared road is too narrow for motor vehicles to safely pass. This means moving to the center of the travel lane and riding with traffic. A driver may not have the same idea of a safe buffer zone as you do.



For the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists may not ride on sidewalks in New Haven except where otherwise designated. If you have to travel along a sidewalk or if you do not feel safe in the street, simply hop off your bicycle and **become a pedestrian**.

Use **hand signals** to let other vehicles know that you intend to make a turn. **Use a bell** or a friendly (but audible!) greeting to let other cyclists or pedestrians know your intentions. **Warn others** when approaching.



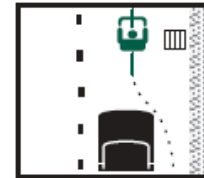
Guidelines for Motorists

By state law, bicyclists using our public roads have the **same rights and responsibilities** as motor vehicle drivers. We motorists must respect these rights as we would any other vehicle. As we strive to make New Haven a more bicycle-friendly city, we must be sure that both bicyclists and motorists are clear on the laws and best safety practices. Bicyclists fare best when they act and are treated as traffic. Please take a few minutes to read the simple guidelines below and keep them in mind whenever and wherever you drive.

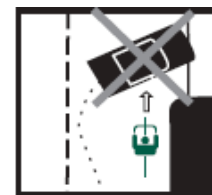
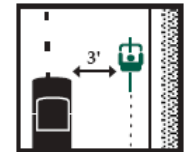
Always **reduce your speed** when passing a bicyclist.



Do not pass if the road is **too narrow**. Bicyclists are encouraged to “take the lane” in these situations, so don’t be surprised if they move out into the center of the travel lane. Please have patience and understand that they may be in just as much of a hurry as you are.



Give at least **three feet of passing space** between the side of your vehicle and a bicyclist – as you would with any other vehicle. He or she may need a couple of feet to avoid a hidden pothole or sewer grate.



Do not pass a bicyclist if you intend to make a right turn immediately afterward. State law specifically prohibits vehicles from passing a bicyclist and then cutting him or her off. When turning left at an intersection, **yield to oncoming bicycles** as you would to any other vehicle. A bicyclist may slow down to make sure that you know the rules, but don’t interpret that as an invitation to make your move.

Always look for bicycles before **opening your car door**.

Children on bicycles are often **unpredictable** and may not be familiar with the rules of the road. Use extra caution in areas where children are likely to be riding.



Learn the **hand signals** that bicyclists use to communicate their intentions and look out for them on the road.

Provided by Elm City Cycling. For more information, please visit www.elmcitycycling.org.

For more information on bicycling in traffic, visit www.bicyclesafe.org. Some images and information courtesy of Bicycle Coalition of Maine.