

# STREET SMARTS

## SAFE CYCLING

When you're cycling to and from work or school, it's easy to be distracted or have your mind wander. That can be dangerous, which is why you should always rely on your basic cycling street smarts—wear a helmet, always signal when turning, scan ahead and make eye contact with other road users—to stay safe.

**As a cycling commuter**, you have some special challenges. Typically, you're traveling on roads when traffic is at its peak. You also have to deal with riding in the dark or in weather that would keep recreational cyclists indoors. While "be alert" should guide your commuting habits, here are some other recommendations to help get you to your destination safely.

## TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

- ▶ Prepare for your commute the night before. Check the weather and make the appropriate adjustments in clothing and equipment.
- ▶ Always be predictable and courteous.
- ▶ Remember that you are required to follow the **same rules as motorists**.
- ▶ Join a bike pool or ride with others to increase your **road presence**.
- ▶ Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, and give an **audible signal** before overtaking and passing them.

- ▶ Ride on the street. It's safer than riding on the sidewalk, especially in business areas.
- ▶ **Share the lane** when you're moving slower than traffic and can safely bicycle to the right. **Take the lane** when you're going the same speed as traffic or if there is not enough space to share the road.
- ▶ Do not ride counter to the traffic flow.
- ▶ Be alert to the "**door zone**"—the three to four feet next to parked vehicles where doors can swing open.
- ▶ At intersections, keep in mind that motorists don't always signal, especially on right turns.
- ▶ Use existing bike trails as part of your commute.
- ▶ If it's raining or the roads are wet, pay special attention to metal surfaces, painted traffic markings, wet leaves and oil slicks. All are especially slippery.
- ▶ Avoid riding through puddles if you can't see the bottom—they can be hiding a pothole.
- ▶ When riding at night, use a **headlight** and a **rear reflector** that's visible from 500 feet. Both are required by law.

For more comprehensive information and resources, visit  
**commuteinfo.org**

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DONT BE A **ROAD ZOMBIE**

*Help keep others safe while also helping the environment.  
Pass this card along to a friend, family member or fellow cyclist.*