

Sharing the road with buses

Buses and cycles share the same road space, especially on designated bus and cycle lanes.

- **Can you use that bus lane?**

Markings on the road and road-side signs will indicate whether it is designated for cyclists.

- **Buses have priority**

If a bus needs to move out (from a stop or to change lanes), you should always give way to it, provided it is safe to do so.

- **Buses have a blind spot**

Bus drivers might not be able to see you in their mirrors because you are in the vehicle's blind spot. Assume you have not been seen.

- **Look for bus stops ahead of you**

If a bus is behind you, be aware that it may attempt to overtake and stop in front of you, when it may not be safe for it to do so.

- **The cycle lane is not obligatory**

You do not have to use the bus lanes or cycle lanes if you do not want to. If you feel safer cycling on the road and away from the buses, you may do so.



Cycling tips

Always be aware, pay attention and concentrate.

- **Read the Highway Code**

The Highway Code has rules specially for cyclists.

- **Look behind you**

Always look behind you before making a manoeuvre and especially when turning right.

- **When traffic is stationary**

If you are not on a designated cycle lane try to overtake rather than undertake - you will be much more visible that way.

- **Signal clearly**

Be sure other road users see your intended moves before you manoeuvre by making clear hand signals.

- **Never go through red lights**

It is unsafe to do so, it is illegal and it gives cycling a bad image.

- **Look out for obstacles in the road**

Look ahead for any debris, grids or potholes and gently steer around them. Avoid having to swerve erratically to go round them.



You and your bike

It should always be roadworthy and in good condition.

- **Seat height**

You should be able to touch the ground with the balls of your feet.

- **Maintain your bicycle**

Regularly check your bike and tighten nuts and bolts.

- **High-visibility clothing**

Wear brightly-coloured clothes in the daytime, and high visibility and reflective gear at night.

- **Lights and reflectors**

Your bicycle must have a rear facing reflector at all times. If you use it during hours of darkness it must also have front and rear lights and reflectors on the pedals. Other reflectors are optional.

- **Brakes**

Test these before you set off and adjust them if necessary.

- **Inspect your tyres regularly**

Check your tyres are correctly inflated, in a good condition with sufficient tread.



Practice and training

If you are a beginner or if you have not ridden a bicycle for a long time, it is important to practice your skills. Try to build up your confidence and roadcraft gradually.

- **Read the Highway Code**

The Highway Code has rules specially for cyclists.

- **Practice in a car-free place**

Find a quiet side street or empty car park to practice.

- **Explore car-free cycle routes**

Car-free cycle routes are a good place to get used to your bike and to learn safe cycling.

- **Build up your cycling skills**

Cycle on side roads at quiet times of day, before going on busy roads, roundabouts and junctions.

- **Training courses**

Many cycle training courses are available from Local Authorities and other organisations such as www.bikeright.co.uk



Cycling tips

Always be aware, pay attention and concentrate.

- **Ride approximately 1 metre from the kerb**

This will avoid obstacles and make you more visible to other road users.

- **Consider wearing a helmet**

They are not compulsory, but offer some protection.

- **Never tailgate another vehicle**

Keep your distance from the vehicle in front and do not tailgate them, especially buses and lorries - other road users might not see you.

- **Do not use a phone or wear headphones**

You need to concentrate and hear what is happening around you.

- **Cycling in a group or family**

It is recommended that you ride in single file, especially on narrow roads. Never ride with more than two bikes abreast.

- **Take the safe option**

If you feel in danger on the road or in traffic, stop and work out a safer option.



Other road users

Be considerate to others.

- **Do not cycle on the pavement**

Unless it has been designated as a cycle lane or shared route with pedestrians, it is against the law to ride your bicycle on the pavement. You may push your bike on the pavement.

- **Use your bell**

All new bikes have a bell - use it. If you do not have a bell, fit one.

- **Do not cross pedestrian crossings on red**

Always stop.

- **Subways, walkways and footbridges**

If you need to use a subway, walkway or footbridge, get off your bike and push it unless there are signs allowing cycling.

- **Look, signal, manoeuvre**

Always look before you make a move and signal clearly to other road users.





Things to look out for

- Drivers often underestimate a bicycle's speed and pull out in front of you.
- **Left hand side streets**
Be aware of traffic pulling out from left hand side streets and into your path. The driver may not see you, so be prepared to brake.
- **Parked car door opening**
When you pass a parked car, leave space of more than a door's width between you and the car.
- **The blind spot**
Vehicles, especially buses and lorries, may not be able to see you. Assume they cannot.
- **Vehicle overtakes you approaching junction**
Be aware that the vehicle might try to turn left in front of you.
- **Narrowing of the road ahead of you**
If the road narrows, try to move to the middle of the lane. Do not squeeze to the kerb as you will be inviting vehicles to pass when there isn't enough room.









More road signs for cyclists

			
Get off your bicycle and push it	With-flow pedal cycle lane	Segregated pedal cycle and pedestrian route	Recommended route for pedal cycles
			
CYCLISTS DISMOUNT	With-flow cycle lane designated for bus and taxi use	Segregated pedal cycle and pedestrian route	Recommended route for pedal cycles



Road signs for cyclists

The Highway Code has a range of signs relating to cycling. You should learn their meanings and obey them.

		
No cycling	Cycle route ahead	Route to be used by pedal cycles only
		
With-flow bus and pedal cycle lane	Contra-flow pedal cycle lane	Shared route for pedal cycles and pedestrians only

Cycling is fun, healthy, cheap and often the quickest option.


If you follow a few basic rules, it is also safe.


Please take a few minutes to read this leaflet and follow the advice.

You can find more at www.loveyourbike.org



A Pocket Guide to



Cycling 



This leaflet is produced with the support of the London Borough of Merton www.merton.gov.uk



The information in this leaflet is intended as advice only. Please consult our website at www.loveyourbike.org for further information.



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