

## Bicycle Safety Tips

- Children under 14 must wear an approved helmet\*
- If no bike lane, ride on the far right with traffic\*
- Never ride against traffic\*
- Obey all traffic signs, signals and pavement markings\*
- Use proper hand signals\*
- Yield to emergency vehicles, pedestrians and approaching vehicles\*
- Walk your bike across intersections and busy streets
- Use a headlight and tail light at night,\* and wear reflective clothing if you must ride at night
- Watch out for opening car doors and for cars pulling into traffic
- Wear bright-colored clothing
- Avoid objects on the pavement that may cause you to lose control of your bike
- Keep at least one hand on handlebars at all times\*

\*New York State law

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# Bicycle Safety

and the New York State Helmet Law



Courtesy of...  
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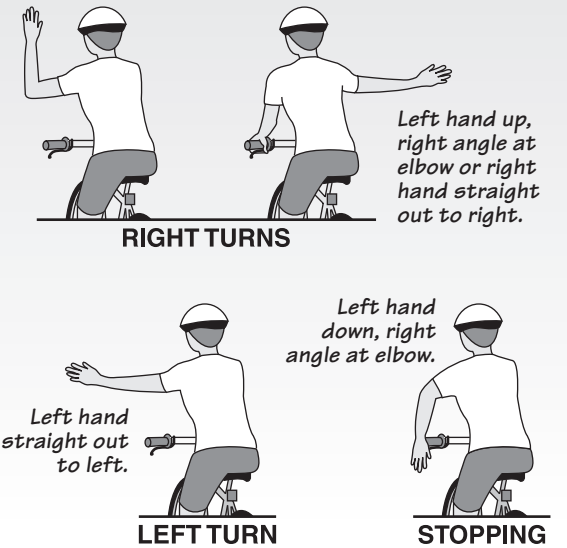
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## Learn and Use Proper Hand Signals

One way to stay safe while biking is to use hand signals when riding on the road. Hand signals help prevent accidents and injuries by letting motorists and other cyclists know when you are turning or stopping.

Make sure you practice the hand signals (illustrated at right) before you ride your bike on the roads.



## Basic Safety Equipment

State law requires bicycles to be equipped with:

- Bell or horn
- Brake
- Reflective devices on front and rear wheels (or reflective tires), and pedals



Use lights at night, both front and rear: front light (white), visible from 500 feet; rear light (red or amber), visible from 300 feet. At least one of these lights should be visible at least 200 feet from the side.

Source: New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee

For additional safety, bicycles should be equipped with chain guards and handle grips. Riders should wear approved helmets, use pant-leg clips and wear bright-colored clothes.

New York State Law requires riders and passengers under the age of 14 to wear approved safety helmets.

## Use your head – **ALWAYS** Wear a helmet!



*Pictures courtesy of Consumer Product Safety Commission*

### To prevent head injuries, your helmet should:

- Fit comfortably, touching the head all the way around; be level and stable enough to resist even violent shakes or hard blows and stay in place
- Have fit pads or rings that can be adjusted to secure the helmet. It should sit level on your head, evenly between the ears, low on your forehead, about two finger widths above the eyebrows
- Have straps adjusted so when you look up, the front rim should be barely visible to your eye; the “Y” of the side straps should meet just below your ear
- Have an adjustable chin strap that is snug against your chin so when you open your mouth very wide, you feel the helmet pull down a little bit. The chin straps should be strong enough to keep your helmet in place during a fall or collision

### A good helmet\*

- The body of the helmet, made of dense crushable material, absorbs the force of impact
- An outer shell with a ventilation hole helps prevent injury to the head
- The padded lining ensures a comfortable fit
- The strong, flexible chin strap helps to keep the helmet on your head
- Helmets made for the U.S. must meet the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission standard. Look for the CPSC label. The American Society for Testing and Materials standard is identical (ASTM F1447), although it is self-certifying, so a manufacturer can state that its helmets meet the ASTM standard without independent certification. The Snell Memorial Foundation standard (B-565) is more strict but seldom used

\*Sources: Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute, [www.bhsi.org](http://www.bhsi.org); U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)



## Parents and children! Take the...

# Bicycle Safety Quiz

Answer TRUE or FALSE

T F

- 1. Bicycles are toys.**
- 2. Hand signals tell other drivers that you can ride with one hand.**
- 3. Traffic signs and signals are only for car drivers.**
- 4. You only need to wear a helmet when riding on busy streets.**
- 5. Before you enter a street from an alley or driveway, you should always stop first.**
- 6. Before you make a left turn, look quickly over your shoulder to find out what is coming from behind.**
- 7. Before riding, make sure you can stand over the top bar of your bike.**
- 8. Your brakes are good enough if your rear wheel skids on loose dirt, but not on dry level pavement.**
- 9. A loose bicycle chain means that it is easier to pedal.**
- 10. Sidewalks are safer to ride on than roads.**
- 11. You don't have to stop at a stop sign if you are on a bike and there are no vehicles coming.**
- 12. It's generally a good idea to ride a bicycle at least four feet out from parked cars even if it means being closer to moving cars.**
- 13. Bicycles should be operated in the middle of traffic lanes.**

ANSWERS: 1. False. Bicycles are human-powered vehicles that must obey the rules of the road. 2. False. Hand signals alert motorists to your actions. 3. False. Everyone using the road must obey traffic signs and signals. 4. False. A helmet should be worn anytime you ride a bicycle and it must be worn by bicyclists under age 14. 5. True. 6. True. 7. True. 8. False. Brakes should provide fast, easy stops without instability or jamming. 9. False. A loose chain can cause chain slippage or derailment, which can cause injury to cyclists. 10. False. Sidewalks can be more dangerous due to the number of sight restrictions, driveways and obstacles. 11. False. Bicyclists must stop at stop signs. 12. True. 13. True. 13. True. 13. True. State law requires bicycles to be operated in bike lanes, or near the right-edge curb or shoulder to avoid undue interference with traffic, unless turning left or avoiding obstructions.

## Rules of the road

- Stop at red lights, stop signs and before entering a roadway
- Never wear more than one earphone attached to a radio or other audio device
- Children under 14 years of age must wear bicycle helmets; child passengers from age one to age four must ride in secure safety seats and the law prohibits carrying passengers under age one. Otherwise, do not carry more passengers than the bicycle is designed to carry
- For any bicycle accident involving death or serious injury, you must file a report with the Department of Motor Vehicles within 10 days
- Ensure the bicycle has the equipment required by law. See front page
- Bicyclists must know and follow the NYS Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL). You will be ticketed for violating the law. Failure to do so is a traffic infraction and could result in fines. Local ordinances may also apply

Source: New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, [www.safety.ny.gov](http://www.safety.ny.gov)

### Riding the right-sized bike helps keep you safe

To be certain the bike is the proper height before you ride, make sure you can stand over the top bar of your bike. Read your owner's manual to adjust your bike to fit you.

Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)