

CONFIDENT CYCLING

COMMUTING

Driving Your Bike

Purpose:

Here participants will learn the skills to riding safely and comfortably in traffic. Participants will be taught the basics of becoming a confident cyclist including pre-ride checks, rules of the road, and ways to avoid common mistakes. The presentation will explain the common misconceptions regarding the safety of bicycling and the tips to being a better bicyclist and motorist.

Time and Place:

This module is designed to be presented indoors using the associated PowerPoint file. The presentation is expected to last about 20 minutes with a 10 minute discussion period

Learning Objectives:

Participants will learn:

- how to choose a safe and efficient route to work
- how to check the bike and other equipment for safety
- rules of the road for safe cycling
- common mistakes and countermeasures
- myths of traffic safety

Materials:

The instructor will need the following materials:

- PowerPoint presentation with script
- projector and computer and laser pointer
- screen
- large map of the area and markers or pins

<i>Slide Text</i>	Description and script
1. <i>Splash intro of the series and sponsors with logos and titles</i>	The Confident Cycling presentations were produced by the League of American Bicyclists in partnership with the Safe and Active Flint Coalition. The Safe and Active Flint project is funded through the Ruth Mott Foundation and facilitated by the Michigan Fitness Foundation in partnership with the Crim Fitness Foundation.
2. <i>Overview of the series</i>	Bike selection and Fit , Driving Your Bike, Confident Commuting, How to Ride in Inclement Weather, and Creating a Bicycle Friendly Workplace
<i>b. Driving Your Bike</i>	Driving your bike is like driving your car. You obey all the same traffic rules and principles and you drive predictably and alertly. Any time you take your bike out on the road here are some things you should know.
3. <i>Principles of driving in Traffic</i>	There are some things that every driver once knew when they learned to drive and took their driver's license exam: The Principles of Driving in Traffic
<i>a. First come/first served</i>	<p>First come, first served means just that. When you occupy a space on the roadway, that is your space legally and you have a right to clear space in front, in back and on both sides.</p> <p>If you give that space up by riding your bike in a manner that invites drivers of motor-vehicles to take it away you are putting yourself in danger.</p> <p>This principle also means that if you get to a 4-way stop before another driver you have the right to go first.</p>
<i>b. Ride to the right</i>	In the United States we ride to the right in the same direction as other traffic. You have the right to control the lane unless it is wide enough to share safely with another vehicle. However, you should never ride facing traffic.
<i>c. Yield to crossing traffic</i>	If you are driving out of a parking lot or alley you must yield to traffic crossing your line of travel. Most of the other intersections where you must yield are controlled by signs or signals.

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<i>d. Yield when changing lanes</i>	You must yield with changing lanes. Other vehicle drivers have the same rights to their space as you do so don't move over in a manner that makes a motor-vehicle operator have to brake suddenly to avoid you.
<i>e. Speed positioning</i>	Slower vehicles stay to the right and faster vehicles are driven to the left. You should always pass on the left even when you are passing cars.
<i>f. Intersection positioning</i>	Use the right-most lane that leads to your destination. You should always control a lane in the intersection and not let motor-vehicles share it with you.
<i>4. We're all in this together</i>	All users of the public ways have rights and duties. Pedestrians, people with assistive devices like wheelchairs, horse drawn carriages, bicyclists and motorists all have a legal right to the road.
<i>a. Cycling and Driving in common</i>	The first laws of traffic control were written to provide guidance for bicyclists because there were not any motorists when the laws were being written. When motor vehicles came along they were given the same rights and duties as cyclists and the laws in all 50 states continue this legal usage.
<i>b. Differences between cycling and driving in traffic</i>	Cyclists are slower and thinner than most motor-vehicles so we have some special issues.
<i>c. Narrow vehicle = Lane positioning</i>	Cyclists drive narrow vehicles so position within a lane becomes a critical issue. In a lane that is wide enough, about 14 feet, a cyclist may safely share space with an automobile going at speeds up to about 45 mph. Under 14 feet a cyclist is allowed to control a whole lane and should in most urban settings. In suburban or rural riding controlling a lane is a little more risky as speeds are higher and the roads may be winding.

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<i>d. Slow vehicle</i>	We are slow vehicles but we have the same rights and duties as the drivers of other vehicles. If we are going at a reasonable speed we are not impeding traffic but we should be courteous and move over when it safe to let other, faster vehicle operators pass.
<i>e. Vulnerable</i>	We have the same rights as operators of vehicles but because we don't have the protection of a steel cage we are much more vulnerable when on the road. That means that we should be cautious how we exercise our rights in the face of overwhelming force.
<i>5. Preparing to drive your bike</i>	There are some things that we all should do before we go out to ride.
<i>a. ABC Quick Check</i>	<p>The ABC Quick Check is a simple routine that can save you grief from a loose spoke, poorly shifting gears or worn brakes.</p> <p>A is for air and includes checking the pressure in the tire (one the side) as well as the condition of the tires, the spokes and checking to see if the wheel is true.</p> <p>B is for brakes and includes checking to make sure the levers don't touch the handlebars, the pads meet the rim evenly and the cables move easily through the housing.</p> <p>C is for crank, chain and cassette and includes making sure the cranks and bottom bracket are tight, the chain is clean (looks like metal) and runs freely and the cogs making up the rear cassette are clean and not worn</p> <p>Quick is quick release and includes checking the quick releases on the hubs, brakes and seat post if so equipped.</p> <p>Check means to do a short ride in the parking lot to make sure everything that is supposed to move, moves freely and things that are not supposed to move (like the handlebars in relation to the front wheel) don't.</p>

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<i>b. Clothing</i>	For short rides having the right clothing is not critical but for longer rides having padded shorts and a shirt that wicks moisture away from the skin can make the difference between an enjoyable ride and a miserable ride.
<i>6. Rules of the Road</i>	Just a quick review of the rules of the road is in order.
<i>a. Obey all traffic signs and signals</i>	<p>Signs don't change and signals do. The law requires cyclists to obey all the traffic control devices including paint on the road.</p> <p>STOP really means stop but a red light means that you can't pass until it turn green so if you slow down and coast you may be able to get through without stopping.</p> <p>Some traffic signals have sensors that detect vehicles. They should detect a bicycle but if they don't you should walk your bicycle through the intersection and report the signal as malfunctioning.</p>
<i>b. Ride in the same direction as other traffic</i>	We've already talked about this but it bears repeating. Many of the crashes between motor vehicles and cyclists occur because the cyclists was going the wrong way...it is the number one cyclist caused crash.
<i>c. Use hand and arm signals</i>	<p>Technically you are required to signal for a distance of 100 feet before a turn. But as a cyclist your signaling hand is part of your steering system. We ask that you signal for a count of two seconds, place your hand back on the handlebars and then turn.</p> <p>Signaling a left turn is done by pointing your left hand and arm to the left. A right turn is signaled by bending your left arm up and signaling a stop is done by bending the left arm down. In many states signaling a right turn may also be down by pointing right with the right hand and arm.</p>
<i>d. One rider per saddle</i>	The law generally says that you can't ride more people than the vehicle is designed for. That means that unless you have a child seat, a sling or a trailer you shouldn't be riding someone else. Of course a tandem also makes it alright.

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e. <i>One hand on the handlebars</i>	You must always have one hand on the handlebars although two are safer. If the law said two how would you be able to signal?
f. <i>Effective brakes</i>	All bikes must be equipped with effective brakes. Some states say they must be able to make the braked wheel skid but all states have some definition of effective...find out what it means in your state.
g. <i>Lights and reflectors</i>	<p>Finally, lights and reflectors. All states require a white light on the front of your bicycle (or you) so that other operators can see you when you are not in their headlights.</p> <p>Most states require a red reflector on the back and some states also require a red light. Don't put a white light on the back, it is illegal if you are not backing up.</p>
7. <i>Oops, avoid common mistakes</i>	What are the common mistakes that get cyclists in trouble?
a. <i>Ride with traffic</i>	The number one error is riding facing traffic. You can see the cars coming but most drivers, particularly those turning, will not be looking where you are. You can't see the signs and signals as well either.
b. <i>Stop look and listen</i>	<p>Ride outs (riding into traffic in the middle of a block) and running through intersections are two more of the places where cyclists cause crashes.</p> <p>Stop at the edge and look both ways before entering a roadway or an intersection. Don't depend on people stopping at red lights or STOP signs.</p>

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c. <i>Scan</i>	<p>Always look over your shoulder before changing lanes or turning. You need to know what is going on behind you but looking over your shoulder also tells the other driver that you are getting ready to do something.</p> <p>You need to make sure the driver sees you and recognizes what your are intending.</p>
d. <i>Be alert</i>	<p>By learning how to handle a bicycle, obeying the laws and riding predictably and safely, a cyclist can avoid over 90% of the common crashes.</p> <p>Being alert and being willing to stop and get off of the bicycle can sharply reduce the rest of the 10% of the crashes that can't be avoided.</p>

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