

# Bicycle Book





# Bicycle Book

## This book belongs to

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Address

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Telephone number

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Make of bicycle

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Color of bicycle

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Serial number

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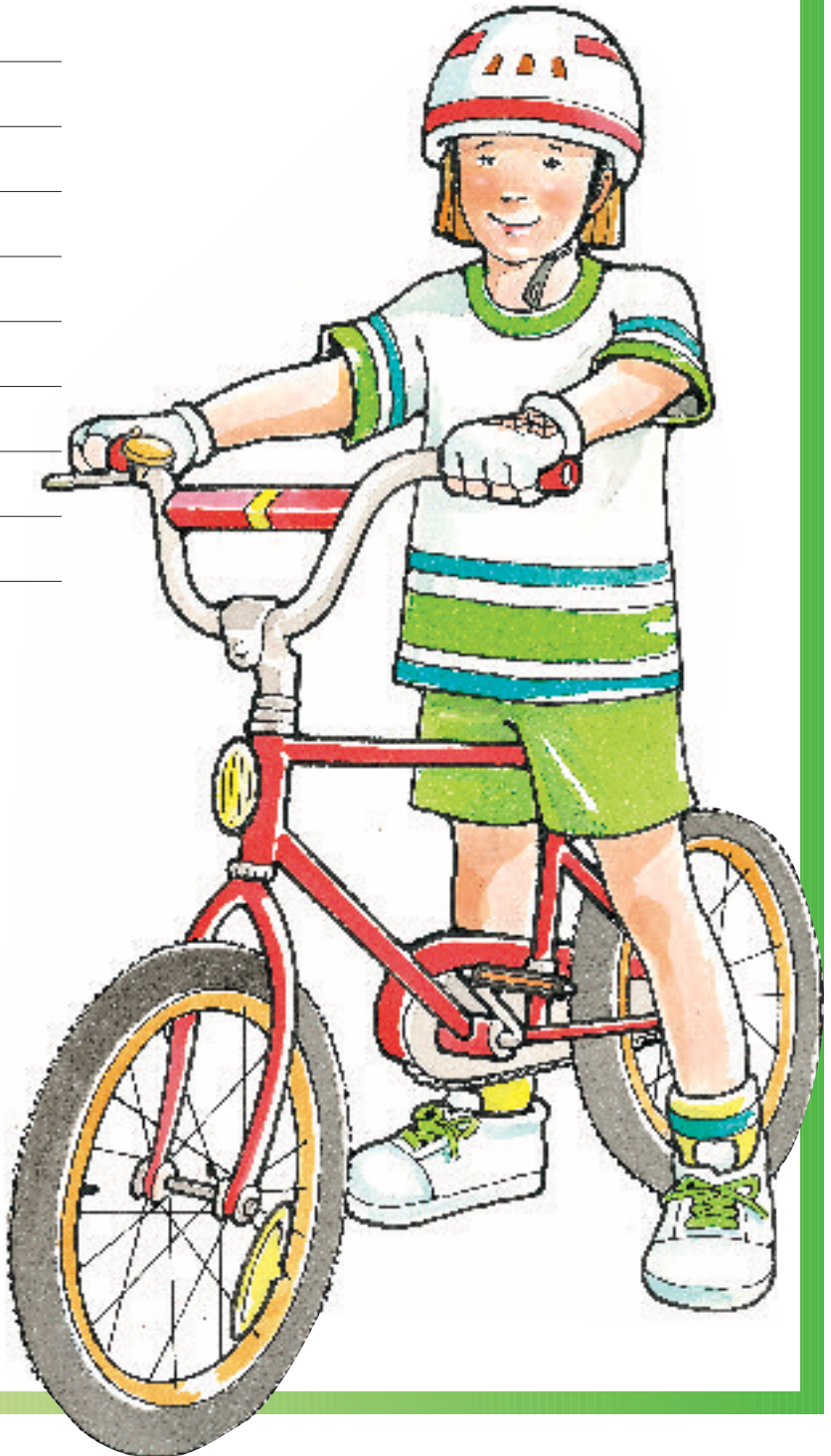
License number

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Other identifying marks

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Transportation and Public Works  
Road Safety Advisory Committee

## Message to Parents

Most children love to ride bicycles and want to do so as soon as they can. But every year, many children are injured while riding bicycles. These injuries could be avoided if the children were more aware of what it takes to be a safe cyclist. You'll have more peace of mind if you know your child is riding safely, and that means riding the right bicycle and knowing the rules of the road.

This booklet tells you about how to choose the correct bicycle and safety equipment, how to care for the bicycle, how to ride safely, and what the traffic laws mean. It can give you a better understanding of what is expected of cyclists and help you to help your child cycle safely. The example you set will speak more clearly to your children than anything you say, so if you ride a bicycle, cycle safely.

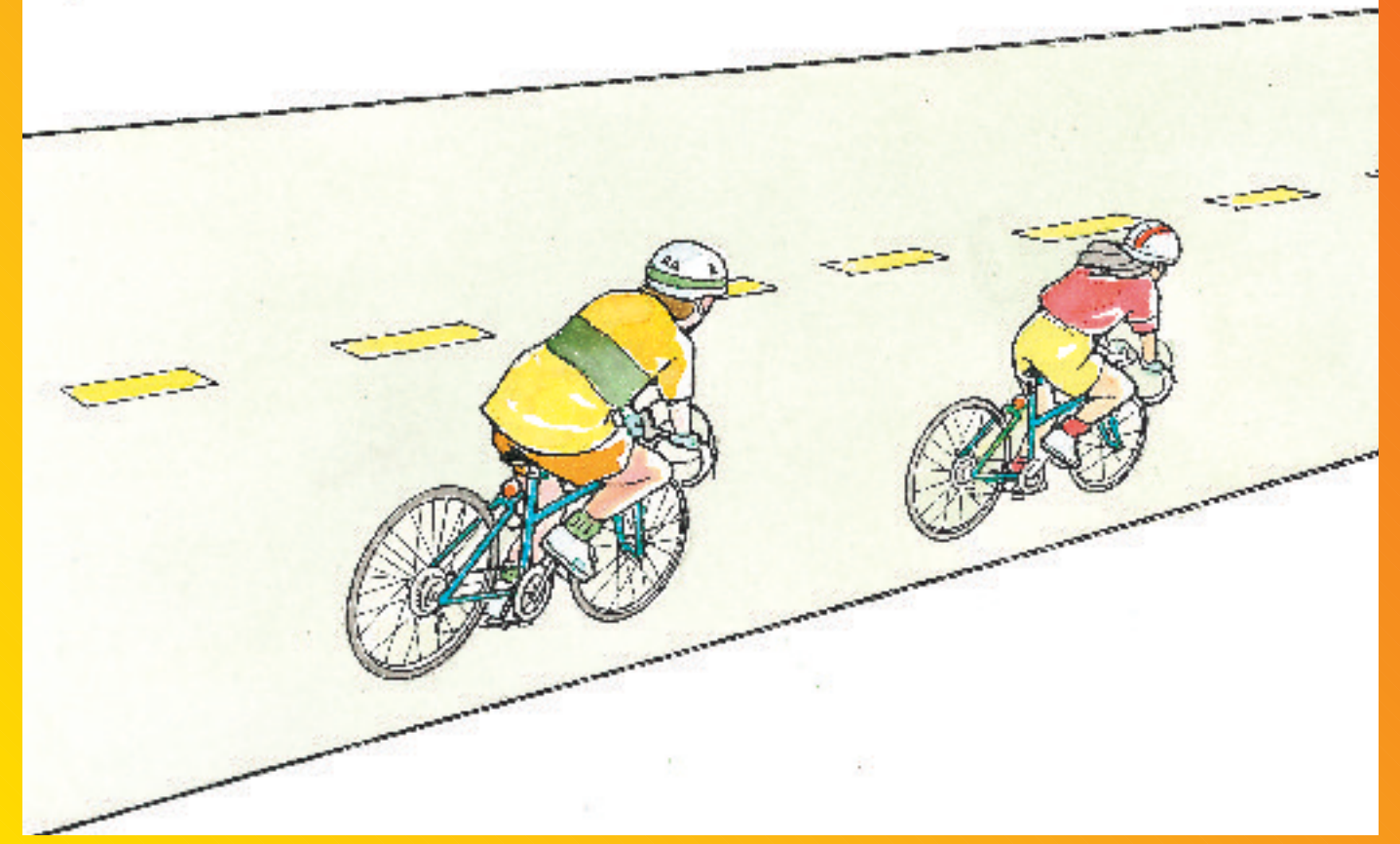
## Message to Cyclists

Bicycling can be fun, but you must ride safely on a bicycle that is right for you. You can be a safe cyclist by practicing the safe riding tips in this booklet. You must share the roads with other vehicles and pedestrians. When all road users cooperate and respect each other, everyone has a better chance of staying safe.



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# Choosing the Right Bicycle

The style of bicycle you choose should depend on your size, age, experience, and the type of riding you wish to do. There are lots of different styles of bicycles available and each style has its own strengths and weaknesses.



COASTER



MOUNTAIN



TEN SPEED

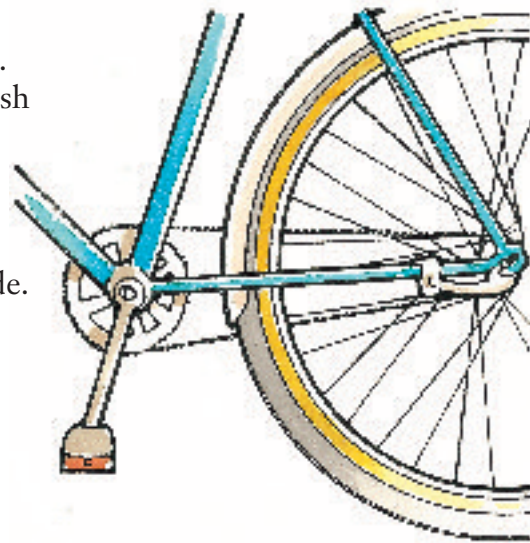


BMX

When you are shopping for a bicycle that is right for you, ask yourself these questions.

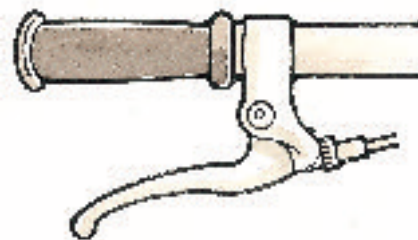
## What kind of brakes do I need?

Coaster brakes are found on single-gear bicycles. They work when you push backwards on the pedals. A bicycle with this kind of braking system is best for the person who is just learning to ride.



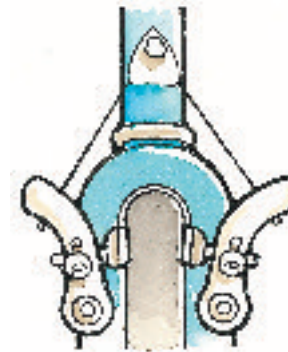
COASTER

Hand control brakes can be found on both the front and rear wheels.



HAND BRAKE

This type of braking system is good for an older rider with a little more experience.



CANTILEVER

## Gearing Up

If you are a beginner rider, you should choose a single-gear bicycle until you are really confident about your cycling skills.

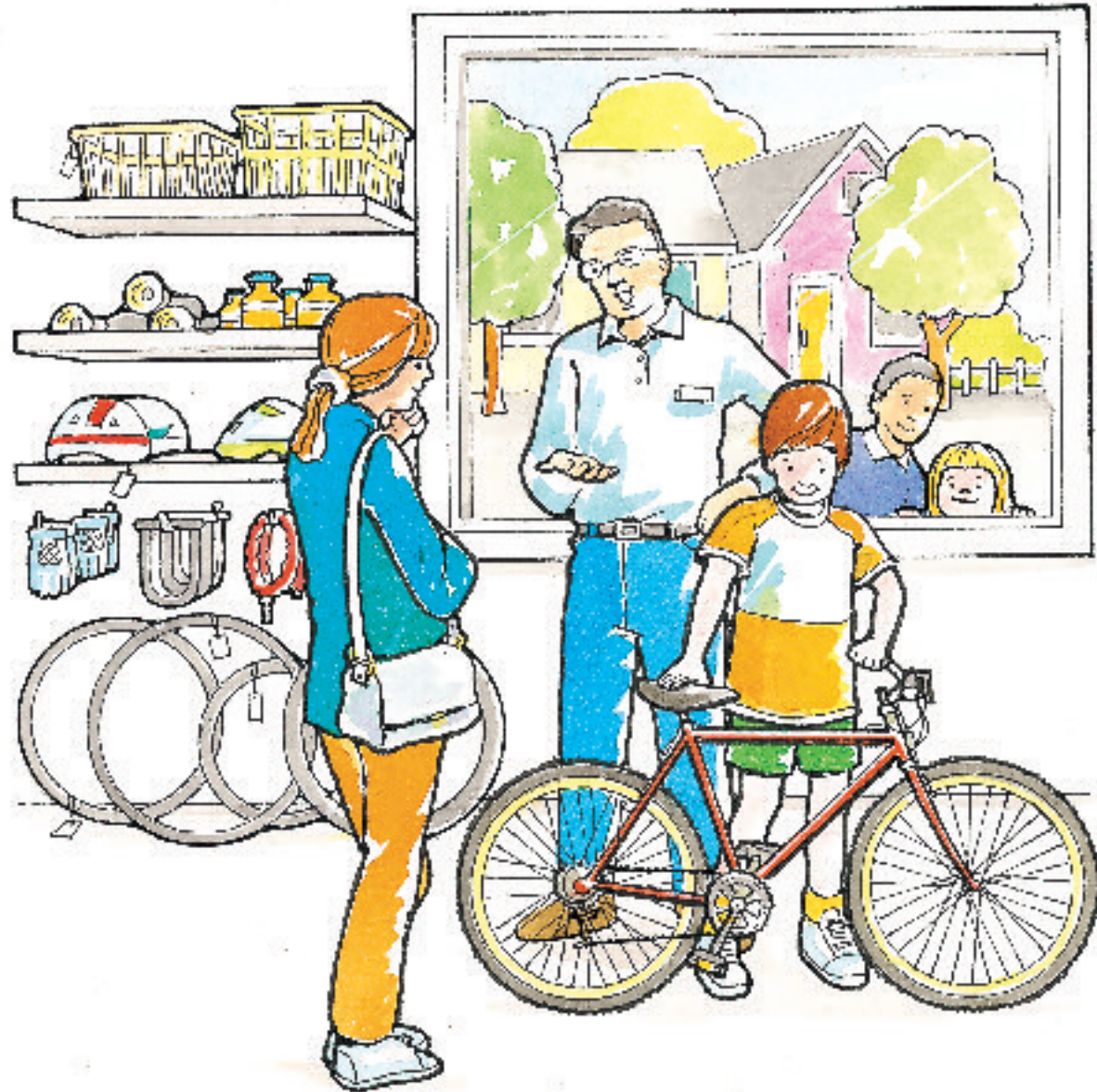
To safely ride a multi-gear bicycle, you must be able to control your bicycle with one hand while shifting gears with the other. If you have been cycling for a few years, you may have the skills to ride a bicycle with an “in-hub,” “rear derailleur,” or “front and rear derailleur” drive train.

If you feel ready for a multi-gear bicycle, shop around for the one that suits you best. Do not be afraid to ask questions about the drive train and how the gears work.



# Getting the Right Fit

**M**ake sure you find the bicycle that fits you. You should be able to find the kind of bicycle you have chosen in a few different frame and wheel sizes. Visit one or two bicycle shops and “try on” a few bicycles.



**W**ith both feet on the ground, you should be able to straddle the crossbar of the bicycle like this, with 2 to 5 cm (one to two inches) of clearance.

Remember, never ride a bicycle that is too large or too small for you. You will be uncomfortable but, worse, the bicycle will be hard to control and dangerous to ride.

The seat should also be set at the right height. You can test it by sitting on the seat and placing the ball of one foot on the low pedal. Your knee should bend slightly.



You should allow for more clearance if you want to ride off-road on a mountain bicycle.





# Getting Ready to Ride

Now that you have chosen a bicycle, make sure it is ready to ride.

1. Make sure you have a horn or bell.

2. Are all bolts tight?

3. Are all moving parts and cables lubricated?



4. Make sure that the handlebars of your bicycle are even with the seat, or 2 to 5 cm (one to two inches) lower than the seat.

5. Is the tire pressure correct?

6. Have someone hold the bicycle off the ground while you check to make sure that the brakes and gears are working properly. If you are not sure of how to do this, ask an older person to help you.





# Riding Your Bicycle

Here are some tips for riding safely.

**1.** Keep your head up and your eyes open. Watch for hazards ahead.

**2.** Ride with the balls of your feet over the centre of the pedal. This will allow you to use your ankles when pedaling.

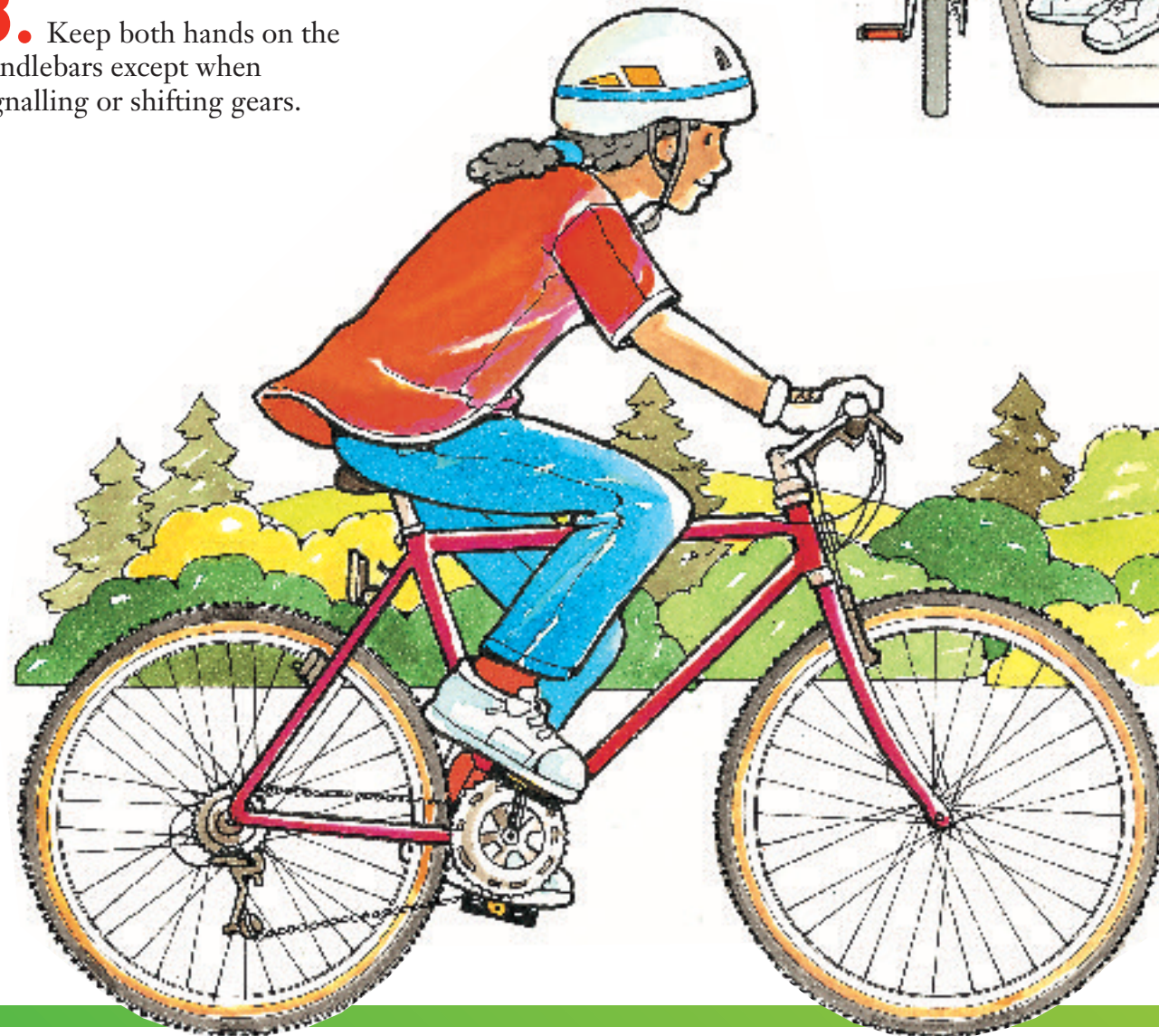
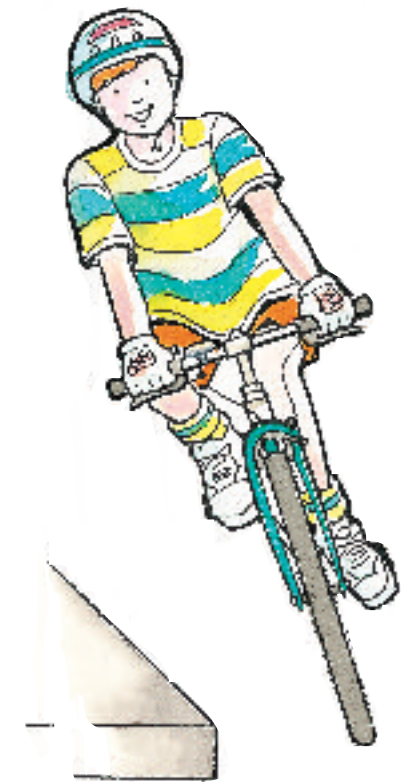
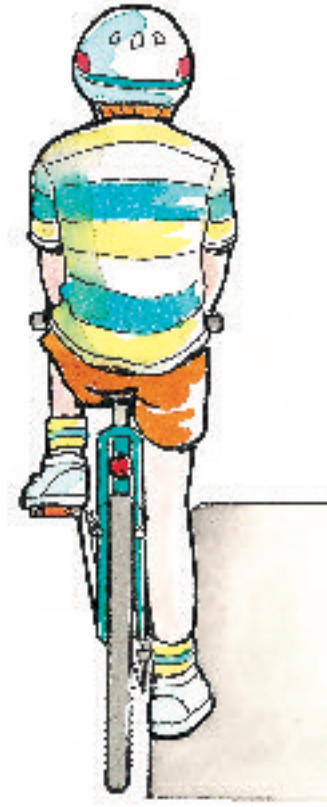
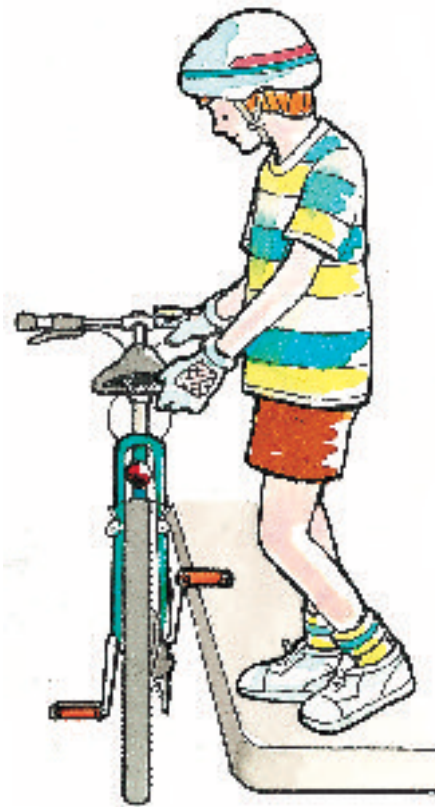
**3.** Keep both hands on the handlebars except when signalling or shifting gears.

**4.** When riding your bicycle in the street, get on and off your bicycle from the curb side.

**5.** When leaving a stop light or a stop sign, keep your left pedal high and push off from the curb with your right foot.

**6.** When turning a corner, keep the inside pedal high so it does not hit the ground and cause you to crash.

**7.** When you come to a complete stop, straddle the crossbar of your bicycle. Keep both feet on the ground.

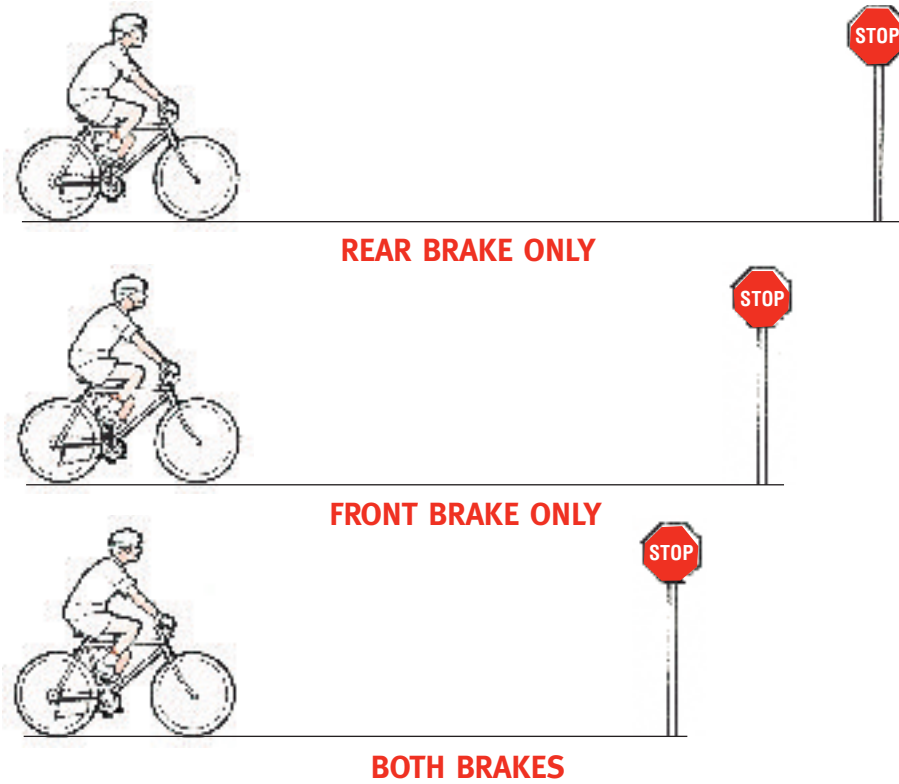




# Know the Basics

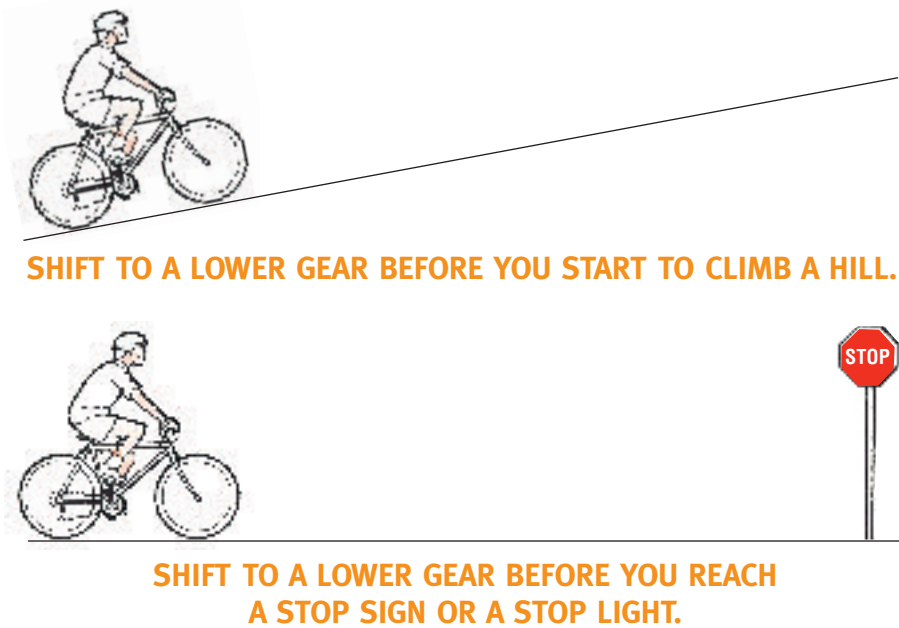
## Braking

If you have both front and rear brakes, use them. You can stop faster if you use both brakes. Practise stopping, using both brakes. Remember, if your brakes are wet, they will not stop you as quickly—slow down.



## Gearing

The gears on your bicycle will help you to move faster or slower while pedaling at the same speed. Instead of trying to pedal too fast, simply shift to a higher gear to make your bicycle move faster.



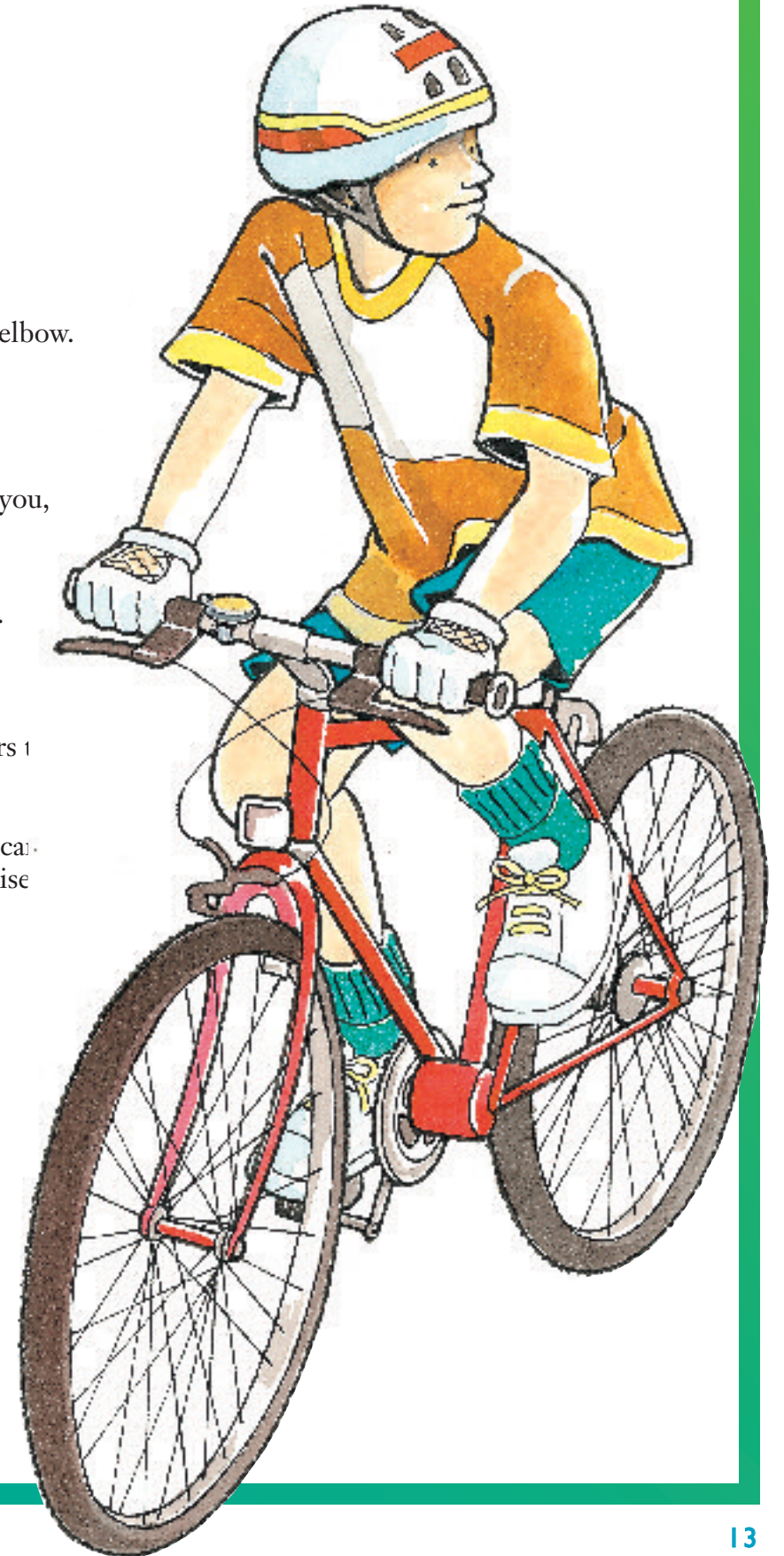
## Shoulder Checking

To make a shoulder check:

1. Bend and twist your upper body.
2. Drop your shoulder and bend your elbow.
3. Look over your shoulder.
4. Once you have seen what is behind you, face forward again.

Shoulder checking is a very important skill. Though it takes only a few seconds, doing it properly and at the right time could save your life. When you turn to check what is behind you, let your shoulders move with your head.

Practise this skill in a parking lot until you can master it without weaving. Be sure to practise shoulder checking to both sides.



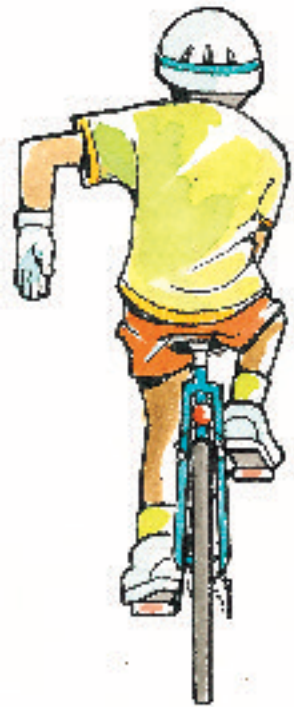


## Signalling

Signalling what you are about to do is a traffic law. You must signal so that other drivers know what you are about to do. Make sure that you signal your intentions at least 15 m before you reach an intersection. Then, put both hands back on the handlebars to make your turn.

### Stop

Bend your left arm at the elbow and point downwards.



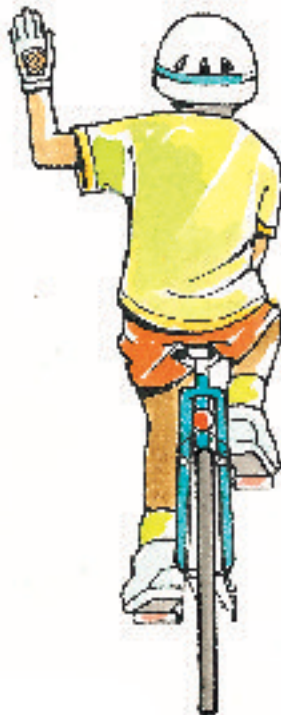
### Left Turn

Extent your left arm straight out from your side.



### Right Turn

Bend your left arm at the elbow and point upwards.



## Parking Lot Exercises

Before riding on the streets, practise your cycling skills in an empty parking lot or playground. For starters, try some of these exercises:

**1.** Try riding in a straight line, wobbling as little as possible.



**2.** Now trying riding a wavy line, moving from side to side as you ride. Remember to keep your inside pedal high.



**3.** To practise dodging, put a piece of cloth or paper on a straight line. Ride along the line. Swerve around the cloth or paper, keeping as close to it as possible.



**R**emember also to practise shoulder checking, signalling, gearing, and using your brakes properly. After learning and practising these skills, you will soon be a better cyclist—more sure of yourself and of the safe way to ride your bicycle.



# Rules of the Road

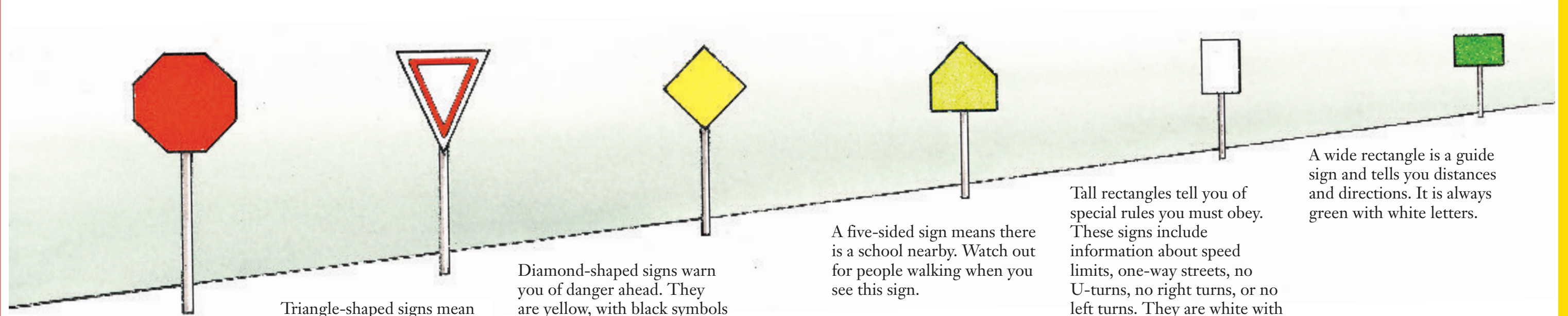
To safely share the road with vehicles and other cyclists, you must understand and practise the rules of the road.

Ride along the right edge of the road unless you are going to make a left turn or pass a vehicle or cyclist. To avoid sewer grates, bumps, and opening car doors, ride approximately one metre from the curb. Always ride straight, without swerving, and stay in single file. It is not legal to ride your bicycle on the sidewalk!

You might see a police officer directing traffic on a busy street. Pay attention and follow the instructions of the police officer.

## Traffic signs

Traffic signs give drivers important information that helps them to drive safely and keep traffic flowing smoothly. Everyone using the streets—drivers and cyclists alike—must understand and obey these signs. The shape of a traffic sign give clues about its message. Traffic signs can be found in six different shapes—each shape telling you something different.



This eight-sided shape is red with white lettering and always means stop.

Triangle-shaped signs mean yield—slow down and get ready to stop for traffic. These signs are red with white centres.

Diamond-shaped signs warn you of danger ahead. They are yellow, with black symbols or letters.

A five-sided sign means there is a school nearby. Watch out for people walking when you see this sign.

Tall rectangles tell you of special rules you must obey. These signs include information about speed limits, one-way streets, no U-turns, no right turns, or no left turns. They are white with black letters or symbols. Some of these signs have green circles or red circles with a diagonal red line. These signs tell you what can or cannot do.

A wide rectangle is a guide sign and tells you distances and directions. It is always green with white letters.





## RULES OF THE ROAD

### Traffic Light Signals

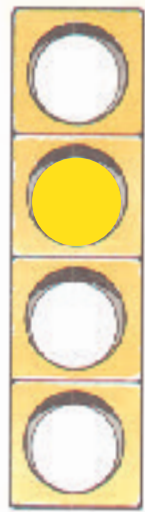
Like road signs, traffic light signals help drivers avoid accidents. They also help traffic move smoothly. Traffic light signals are found at the busiest intersections.

When you see a **red** light, stop at the stop line or crosswalk and wait for the light to turn green.

A **yellow** light warns you that the light is going to change to red. Do not enter the intersection.

A **green** light tells you to go when it is safe.

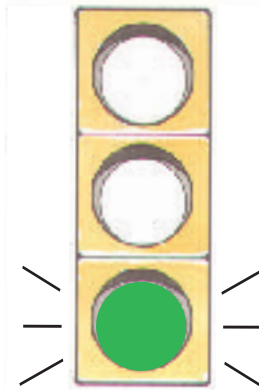
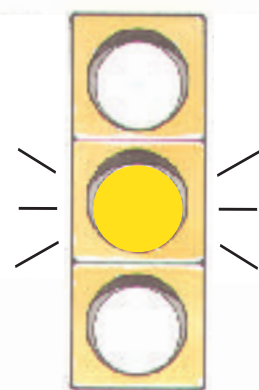
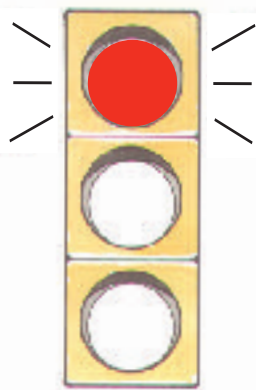
A **green** arrow tells you that you may go in the direction that the arrow is pointing.



A flashing **red** light is just like a stop sign. It means you must come to a complete stop and then go only when it is safe.

A flashing **yellow** light means Caution! Slow down and watch for traffic. Go only when it is safe.

A flashing **green** light means you may go straight ahead or turn left or right. Go only when it is safe.

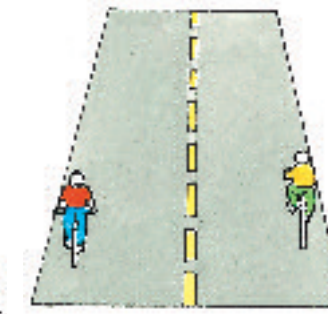
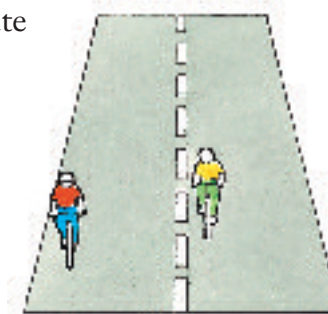


## RULES OF THE ROAD

### Pavement Markings

Pavement markings also give drivers information and help keep traffic moving safely.

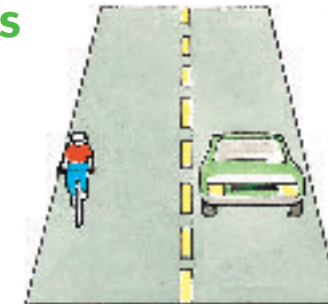
White markings separate traffic moving in the same direction.



Yellow markings separate traffic moving in opposite directions.

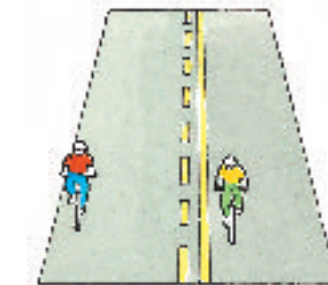
### Two-way Streets

A broken yellow line means vehicles may pass when it is safe.



A single solid yellow line marking the centre of the highway permits passing in either direction when it is safe.

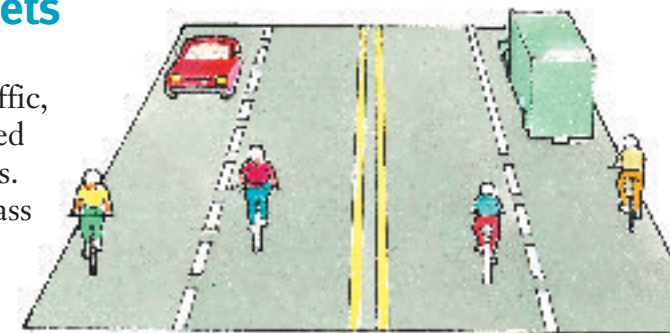
You can pass if the broken line is on your side and it is safe.



You cannot pass if the solid yellow line is on your side.

### Multi-Lane Streets

- When there is more than one lane for traffic, the lanes are separated by broken white lines.
- You are allowed to pass vehicles that are moving in the same direction as you are.



- Never cross the double yellow centre line.
- A solid white line on this kind of street means you should not pass or change lanes.



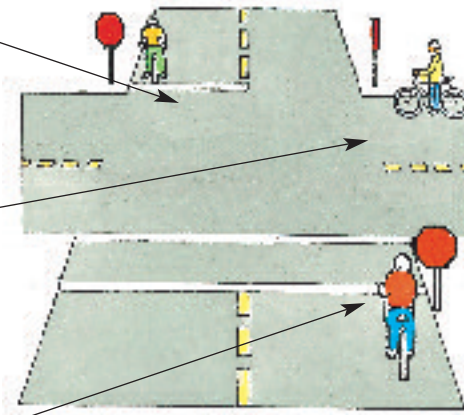
## RULES OF THE ROAD

### Intersections

A white line painted on the road like this is a stop line. You must come to a full stop before you reach the stop line.

If there is no painted crosswalk then you must stop on an imaginary line where the crosswalk would normally be.

If no stop line is painted on the street, you must stop before the crosswalk or the front edge of the sidewalk.



### Pedestrian Crosswalk

Check to see if a pedestrian is in the crosswalk, or if the lights overhead are flashing. You must stop and let the pedestrian cross the street before you can continue on your way.

Pedestrians crossing the street at intersection or using a crosswalk have the right-of-way.



### Right-of-Way Rule

When there are no traffic signs OR signals at an intersection, the driver on the left must give right-of-way to the driver on the right.

### Who has the right-of-way?

Drivers and cyclists must make important decisions when they share the road.

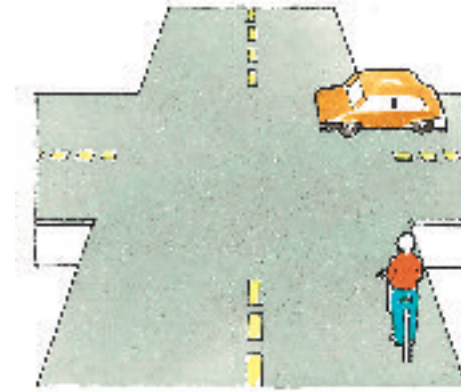
The right-of-way rule lets us know which driver can go ahead of another driver. This rule helps avoid a crash when two drivers want to move forward at the same time.

Sometimes drivers cannot see cyclists. It is safer to give the right-of-way than to take it.

## RULES OF THE ROAD

To help you understand, picture yourself as the cyclist in these examples.

Stop and let the car on your right side go first. The driver of that car has the right-of-way. Go when it is safe.

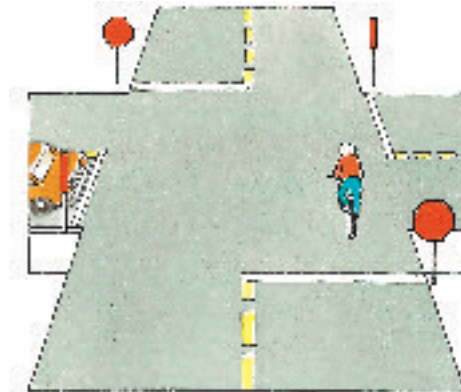


There are no stop signs at the end of your driveway or back lane, but you must always stop to check for pedestrians or traffic on the road. Go only when it is safe.

This intersection is called a two-way stop. Here, you must stop and let the traffic and pedestrians go ahead. The traffic and the pedestrians using the street without stop signs have the right-of-way. Go when it is safe.



At a three-way stop or at a four-way stop, the driver or cyclist who comes to the stop sign first should have the right-of-way to go first. If you and the driver had stopped at the same time, you should have the right-of-way to go first because you are on the driver's right side.

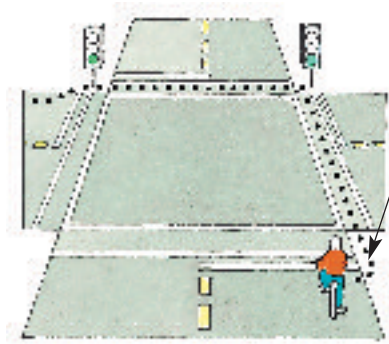




## RULES OF THE ROAD

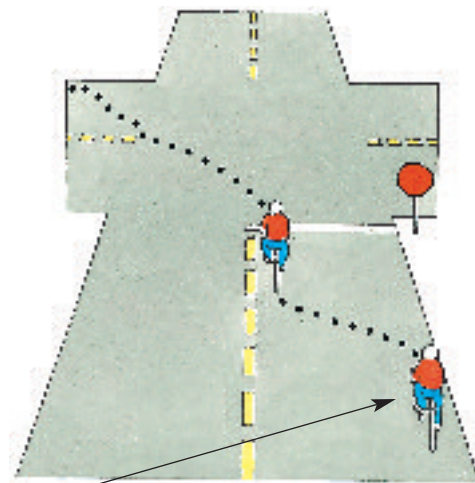
### Taking a Turn for the Best

Turning right or left takes skill and a good understanding of the rules.



The safest way to turn left on a busy street includes a little walking too. Get off your bicycle and walk it across the street using the crosswalk. Wait for the light to change and walk it across to the next corner, using the crosswalk.

Check carefully before getting on your bicycle again, signal, and continue when it is safe.



When turning left, you must signal, do a shoulder check and when it is safe move close to the centre line of the street you are on. Make your turn when it is safe to the right and next to the centre line of the

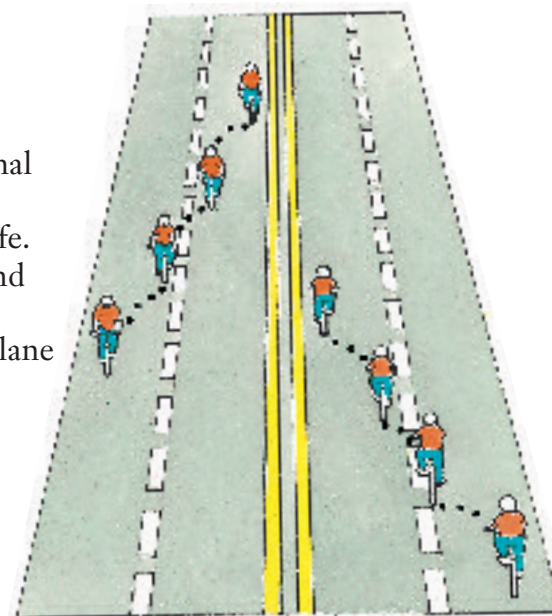
street you are entering. Signal, shoulder check and move to the right side of the road when it is safe.



### Changing Lanes

Only experienced cyclists should change lanes on a busy street. To be able to change lanes safely, you must be sure of your signalling and shoulder checking skills. Here is how it should be done.

- Shoulder check and signal before each move.
- Move only when it is safe.
- Move to the lane line and then across it.
- Then move to the next lane exactly the same way.



## RULES OF THE ROAD

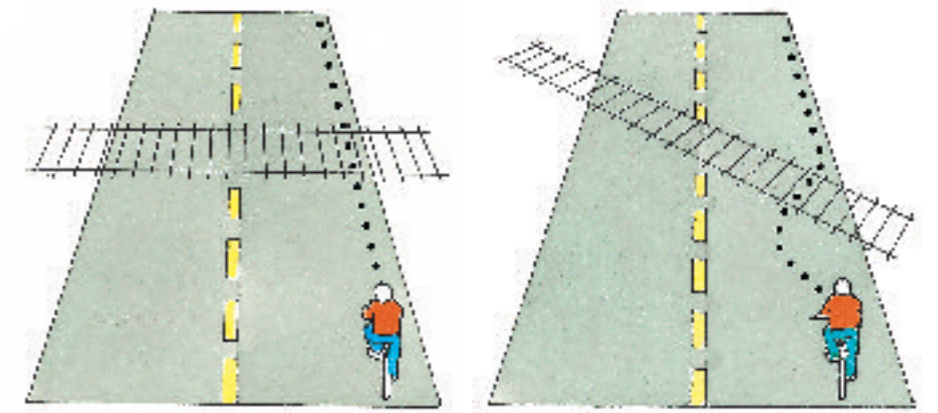
### Eye Contact

Whenever you are on the road, do your best to make sure other drivers see you. You can do this by looking straight into their eyes. This is called making “eye contact.” If you think they have not seen you, be on your guard. Slow down and be prepared to stop or get out of the way.

### Crossing Railway Tracks

How should a cyclist cross angled railway tracks?

Carefully check for approaching trains. If there are no trains, do a shoulder check for other vehicles. Cross tracks at an angle like this so that your front wheels do not get caught.



### Bicycle Paths

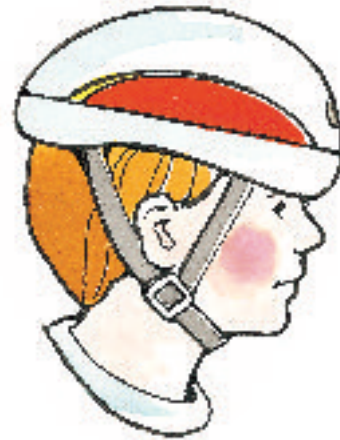


Be responsible and use common sense on bicycle paths too. Keep to the right side of the path. Let others know if you want to pass them by ringing your bell or calling out “on your left.”



# Safe Cycling

**1.** Always wear a helmet. There are many different styles and sizes to choose from. When you buy a helmet, make sure it fits and it has an approval sticker from the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or SNELL.



Some tips for helmets:

- A helmet should cover the top of the forehead but not be tipped too far forward or back.
- Chin straps should be snug against the chin, though not so snug that you cannot open your mouth or breathe properly.
- Ear straps should meet just below the ear, to keep the helmet from sliding backwards.
- The brim of the helmet should touch your head all around the edge.



Some people recommend that you replace your helmet every five years. If the helmet has been in a serious accident, it should be replaced at once.

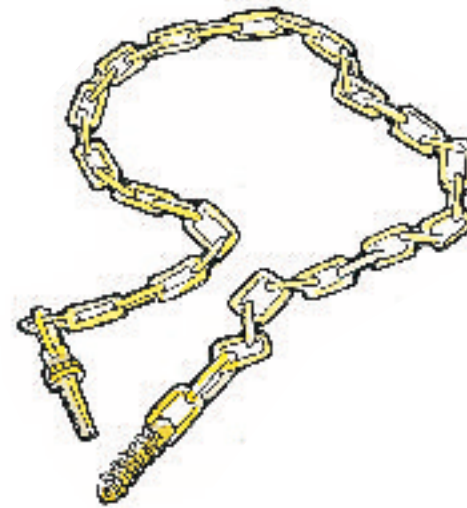
**2.** Wear clothes that are suited to the weather conditions. Wear shoes and gloves. Keep your pant legs tied up.

**3.** Wear light-coloured clothes at all times. You must use lights and reflectors at night or when the weather is rainy or foggy. Put retro-reflective stickers on your bicycle and helmet to make sure others can see you.

**4.** Keep your eyes and ears open. Do not wear headphones. Look for signs and listen for the sounds of traffic or sirens. Be prepared to get out of the way if you have to.

**5.** Use racks and packs to carry parcels. Never carry passengers. Equip your bicycle with carry racks and/or saddlebags. Wear a knapsack to carry books or other parcels.

**6.** Be sure to write down the serial number of your bicycle and keep this number at home. Carry a heavy-duty lock and/or chain with you wherever you ride. Always lock your bicycle securely in a safe place.



**7.** Keep your bicycle in good repair, clean, and well-oiled. Make sure everything is properly adjusted and working well. If a vital part breaks or comes loose, it could cause you to have a collision.

**8.** If you have a collision, get all the information that you can from anyone who was involved, or who saw the collision, then let your parents know the facts.



# Be Your Own Boss

**L**earn and obey the rules of the road and practise the skills you have learned for safe cycling. Do not let your friends decide for you. If something is unsafe, do not do it. You are the person who will get hurt if you do something wrong.



## Bicycle Inspection Sheet

Legend

● Safe

● Repair or Replace

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

STEERING			
Handlebars:	Can they be moved or twisted?		
Stem:	Grip the front wheel between your legs. Will the handlebars move from side to side?		
Headset:	Hold the front brake and try to move the bicycle back and forth. Any rattles?		
Handgrips:	Any loose grips or tape?		
BRAKES			
Brake levers:	Are they easy to reach? Can they be moved or twisted?		
Hand brakes:	Do the brakes stop the wheels from spinning? Do the brake pads touch only the rims?	Front	
	Do the brakes stop the wheels from spinning? Do the brake pads touch only the rims?	Rear	
Coaster brakes:	Does the brake stop the wheel from spinning? Do the brakes slip or only work sometimes?		
WHEELS			
Hubs:	Do the wheels spin freely? Do the bearings seem loose when you shake the wheels?	Front	
	Do the wheels spin freely? Do the bearings seem loose when you shake the wheels?	Rear	
Spokes:	Any loose or missing spokes?	Front	
	Any loose or missing spokes?	Rear	
Tires:	Is the tire pressure right? Any cuts, bulges, or baldness on the tires?	Front	
	Is the tire pressure right? Any cuts, bulges, or baldness on the tires	Rear	
DRIVE TRAIN			
Chain:	Check for stiff links and proper tension. The chain on a one-speed bicycle should sag a bit.		
Pedals:	Do they spin freely? When you hold both pedals and shake them from side to side, do they move?		
Gears:	Are all gears working properly?		
GENERAL			
Seat:	Does the seat move up and down or side to side?		
Frame:	Check for cracks or bends.		
Bolts:	Are all bolts tight?		
Lubrication:	Are all moving parts properly lubricated?		
Reflectors:	Check for red or amber reflectors (required for after dark).		
Lights:	Is there a white light at the front of this bicycle (required for after dark)?		
Horn or bell:	Required by law.		
	SHOULD THIS BICYCLE BE RIDDEN AT NIGHT?	YES	NO
	DOES THIS BICYCLE HAVE A VALID LICENSE (IF REQUIRED)?	YES	NO
	IS THIS BICYCLE THE RIGHT SIZE FOR THE RIDER?	YES	NO
	IS THIS BICYCLE SAFE TO RIDE?	YES	NO
	IS THE CYCLIST WEARING A PROPERLY FITTING HELMET?	YES	NO

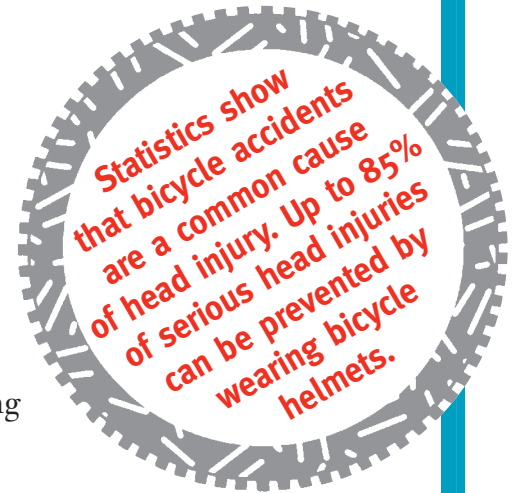


# Use your Head. Wear a Helmet.

## Why wear a bicycle helmet?

Canadian studies show:

1. Head injuries account for a large proportion of injuries to bicyclists, about one third of injuries overall and almost half of injuries to children younger than 10 years.
2. The proportion of serious head injuries is lower, 1.4%, among injured bicycle helmet users than among those not wearing helmets, 3.9%.
3. The proportion of hospital admissions is lower, 6.5%, among injured bicyclists wearing helmets than among those not wearing helmets, 9.2%.



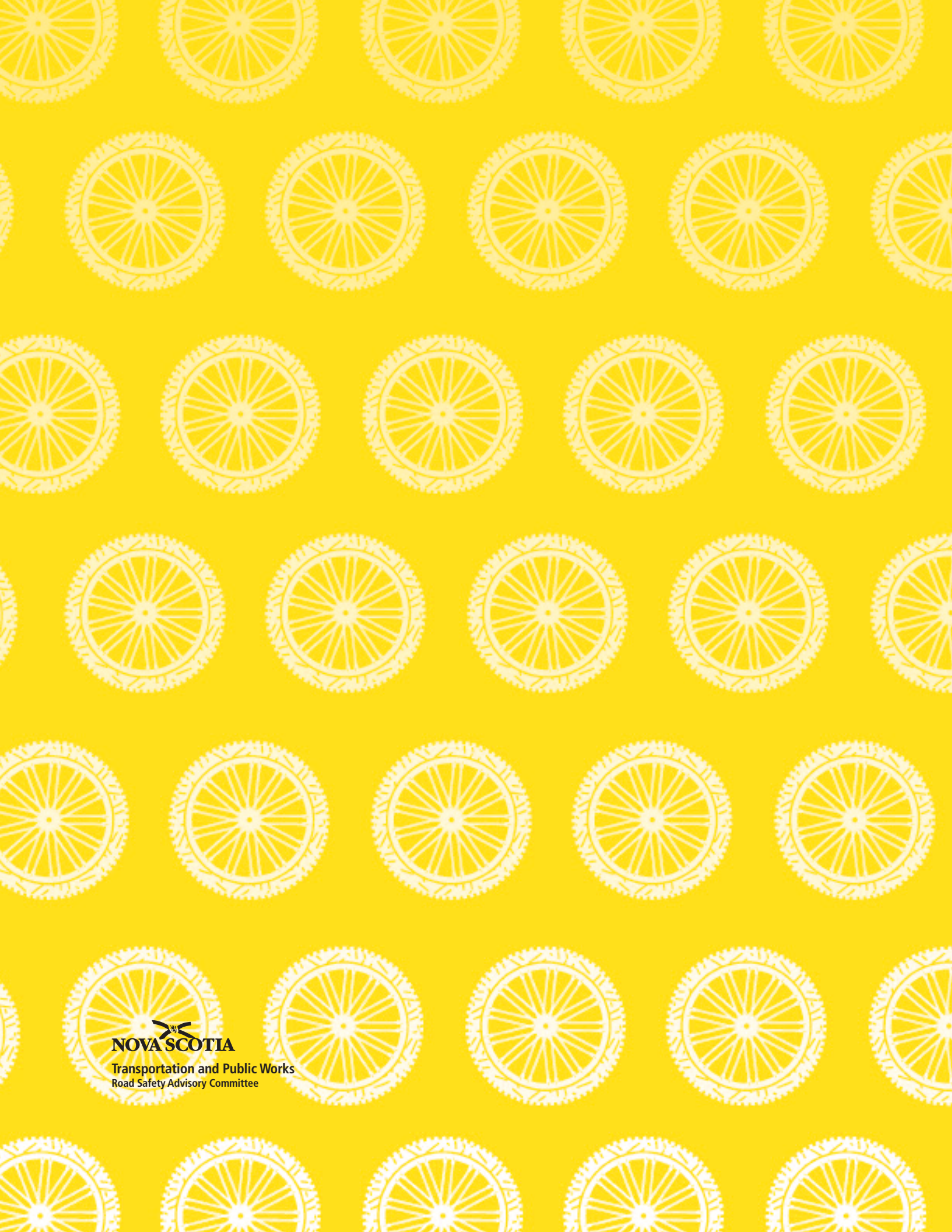
## The Law

Effective July 1, 1997, all bicycle riders in Nova Scotia are required to wear a helmet unless they:

1. have a valid certificate issued by the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations Road Safety Programs certifying that wearing a bicycle helmet would interfere with their religious practices.
2. have a valid certificate issued by the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations Road Safety Programs certifying that they have a head measurement that exceeds 64 cm in circumference.
3. have a valid certificate issued by the Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations Road Safety Programs certifying that they are unable to wear a bicycle helmet for medical reasons.

There is a minimum **\$128.75 FINE** for any adult who doesn't wear a helmet, or for parents who knowingly let their children under age 16 ride without a helmet. Children riding in a trailer towed by a bicycle must also wear helmets.





  
**NOVA SCOTIA**

Transportation and Public Works  
Road Safety Advisory Committee