

Pedestrians Should

- **Always look both ways** before leaving the curb.
- Pedestrians have the right-of-way at all intersection crosswalks, whether marked or unmarked, and even if cross traffic has no stop sign. However, allow motorists and bicyclists enough time and distance to stop before you leave the curb. Don't suddenly enter their path so close that they would need to brake abruptly.
- **When using a crosswalk on a multi-lane road**, even if a motorist in one lane stops for you, be aware that a second vehicle might be hidden by the stopped vehicle, and its driver may not see you. Check every lane on your way across!
- **Make eye contact** with motorists and bicyclists to let them know that you are ready to cross the street.
- **Be visible**, especially at night. Wear light or reflective clothing.

Additional Information

Bicyclists:

California Vehicle Code (CVC) sections specific to bicycles

<http://tinyurl.com/cvc-art-4>

DMV Safety Tips

<http://tinyurl.com/dmv-safety-tips>

Commute.org Safe Bicycling Brochure

<http://tinyurl.com/commute-org>

Pedestrians:

California Vehicle code, Pedestrians rights and duties

<http://tinyurl.com/cvc-chap-5>

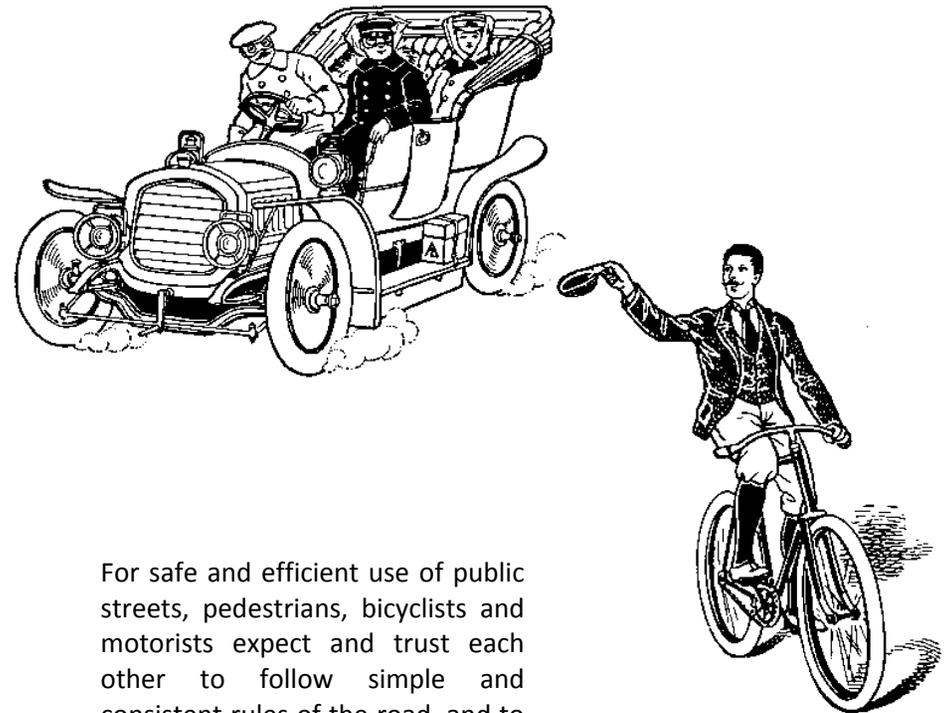
Bike San Mateo County

www.bikesmc.org

The Courteous Road User's Guide

Simple Rules ∞∞

*for Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Motorists
to safely and efficiently share the road*



For safe and efficient use of public streets, pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists expect and trust each other to follow simple and consistent rules of the road, and to be predictable, visible and considerate.

For everyone to enjoy safe daily locomotion, we all have a responsibility to treat each other with patience, courtesy and common sense.

This guide offers practical suggestions to achieve that necessary mutual accord.

Bicycle Drivers (Bicyclists) Should

- **Obey traffic laws**, including stop signs, traffic signals and speed limits.
- **Always ride** in the same direction as motor traffic.
- **Walk your bike** on sidewalks and in crosswalks, and always yield to pedestrians in these areas.
- **Be considerate to motorists**, but claim the lane when required for your safety.
 - Between intersections, ride to the right of motor traffic if slower AND if your lane or space is wide enough that motorists can pass you safely within it.
 - However, ride far enough to the left of parked cars to avoid being hit by opening doors. If you're worried that a door might open, you're too close.
 - If you are moving as fast as motor traffic, or if the lane or space is too narrow for safe passing, get in line with other traffic to be safer.
 - Hold your line away from parked cars – don't dart into empty parking spaces. Riding predictably helps motorists keep enough space for safe passing.
 - **Hint:** Do not unnecessarily delay other road users; allow passing when it is safe to do so. With a simple hand wave, thank motorists for their understanding.
- **When going straight through an intersection**, ride far enough from the curb – to show motorists that you aren't turning right and to deter them from making an unsafe right turn from your left side.
- **Courtesy Suggestion:** When waiting to go through at a signal, check behind to see if a motorist is waiting to turn right. If it would be safe to shift your bike to the left to enable this, consider making this generous gesture.
- **Be seen, be heard, and be predictable.** Whenever possible, use eye contact to communicate. Use hand signals to inform others of your intentions. To pass others on paths, move into passing position and then warn courteously with your bike bell or verbally. At night, use a front white light and a red rear light, and wear reflective clothing.

Motor Vehicle Drivers Should

- **Obey traffic laws**, including stop signs, traffic signals and speed limits.
- **Understand bicyclists and their lane positioning:**
 - Bicyclists need to ride far enough to the left of parked cars to avoid being hit or surprised by carelessly opened car doors.
 - When the roadway is too narrow for cars to safely pass a bicycle, or when traveling as fast or faster than motor traffic, bicyclists will take the lane to prevent unsafe passing. While they are doing so, wait until there is adequate space to safely pass. **Hint:** Be patient; a considerate bicyclist will move right or indicate as soon as it is safe for you to pass.
- **When making a right turn** at an intersection, always check for bicyclists to your right – don't assume they are turning right. Some bicyclists don't realize that they should move away from the curb to deter right turn "hooks." Wait before making your right turn to allow the bicyclist to proceed straight or to make a right turn.
 - **Hint:** The "right hook," when a motorist cuts off a bicyclist during a right turn, is common and dangerous. Both parties can avoid "right hooks" with understanding and road positioning.
- **Always signal when turning left or right**, changing lanes, slowing down, or stopping. This lets other drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians know your intentions.
- **Establish eye contact** with bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **Allow adequate clearance when passing bicyclists.** Below 15 mph, 3 feet is acceptable. At higher speeds, allow 5 feet or more. If you don't have the space, wait to pass.
- **Always check your rear view mirrors before opening car doors.** Dooring of bicyclists is common and dangerous. It is your responsibility under the law.
- **Use your horn** only as a warning to errant bicyclists and pedestrians.