

SHARE THE ROAD

RULES FOR MOTORISTS

Using Washington's roads requires care and courtesy whether you are driving a car or riding a bicycle. Washington law requires every driver to respect the rights of others to be on the road. You can do your part by being a safe and courteous driver every time you get behind the wheel. Share The Road.



Bicyclists and motorists in Washington have exactly the same rights and responsibilities. As a motorist, you should drive carefully around bicyclists. In some areas, bicycling is very popular and you may encounter groups of bicyclists. It is legal for bicyclists in Washington to ride two-abreast [RCW 46.61.770]. However, bicyclists must

show courtesy and not impede other road users. Some of the roads that are popular with bicyclists have curves, blind corners and uphill: be aware that you might suddenly come across a single rider or a group of bicyclists on scenic roads and drive accordingly. Here are some tips to more safely share the road with bicyclists:



Reduce your speed when passing bicyclists, especially if the roadway is narrow.

Don't blast your horn when approaching bicyclists – you could startle them and cause an accident.

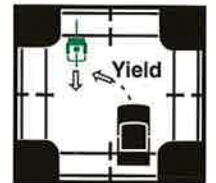


Don't make a right-turn in front of bicyclists. Assume bicyclists are traveling straight ahead at intersections unless they have signaled otherwise. If you are making a right-turn, do so only when it is safe to do so. Remember, bicyclists may be traveling faster than you realize.

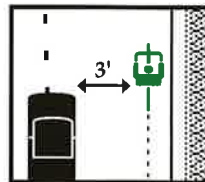


Give bicyclists adequate space to maneuver around such hazards as lowered drain grates, potholes, debris and glass. These might not be a problem for a motor vehicle but are potentially dangerous to bicyclists.

Yield on left turns to oncoming bicyclists. Bicyclists may be traveling faster than you realize. Yield to bike riders as you would any other vehicle.



Pass with at least 3 feet to spare. Ample space between your vehicle and the bicyclist you are passing creates a zone for the bicyclist that's safe from the effects of a passing car.

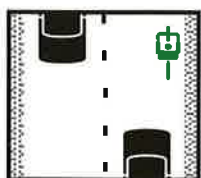


Look before you open a car door. Bicyclists are often hit by unthinking motorists and passengers who open their car doors without looking carefully. Be sure you check for bicyclists before you open your door.



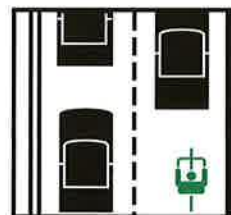
Provide extra passing room to bicyclists during rain and other bad weather.

Wait to pass if you are uncertain about road or weather conditions.



Do not pass bicyclists if oncoming traffic is near. Wait as you would with any slow-moving vehicle. It's required by state law [RCW 46.61.125 (1)(d)].

Allow for the inexperience of children on bicycles. Extra care is needed when near kids on bikes. Make sure you anticipate the unexpected turn or swerve.



NOTE: On roads that are too narrow to permit a bicycle and a car to safely share a lane, bicyclists are permitted to "take the travel lane" which means riding in the center of the travel lane.

Check before you move back into your lane. Some bicyclists may be traveling at 25-30mph. Make sure you provide adequate distance between you and the bicyclists before merging back into your travel lane.



Provided by Washington Department of Licensing and the Bicycle Alliance of Washington.

Graphics courtesy of Bicycle Coalition of Maine.