

# Cyclists' Safety Guidelines

Whether riding solo or in a group, you need to ride safely.

1. It is important to ensure your bike is in good condition. Brakes & gears should be well adjusted, tyres pumped up, wheels true and headset adjusted properly.
2. You must ensure that you are dressed appropriately for the weather. Wear a helmet, gloves and eyewear, and always carry a waterproof whatever the weather. In severe bad weather, the group leader should take a decision to abandon or not, and if necessary let riders know in good time.
3. When riding it is good practice to ride approximately 50 cm from the kerb, not in the gutter. That helps drivers to see you sooner and discourages close passes, (when motorists try to overtake but stay in their carriageway, ie they don't cross the centre line of road).
4. Potholes are dangerous, and need to be spotted early. Ideally they should be indicated to those riding behind.
5. Turns should be clearly indicated in plenty of time and any manoeuvre should be preceded by a look over the shoulder first.
6. If on a longer ride, ie over an hour in duration, take food and drink to sustain your efforts.
7. Have you got the basic tools necessary to fix a puncture? eg tyre levers, spare inner tube, patches for repair and a pump to reinflate a tyre.
8. You should carry a phone so that you can get help if stranded. Take some money in cash to give you flexibility in any situation.
9. If riding in less than perfect visibility, do you have lights, front and rear? To maximise your presence on the road, there is also a good argument for high viz clothing.
10. If you encounter horses on the road, slow down and give them plenty of warning verbally that you are there, then pass on the opposite side of the road. (using your bell may scare the horse)
11. Pedestrians should also be given plenty of space. Slow down if on a busy path and give ample warnings where necessary. Dog or pet walkers may need to be given extra time to control their animals.
12. If cars approach, particularly from the rear, issue a warning to the group and if necessary single out. This will depend on the width of the road at the time. Motorists are required to give you at least 5' when passing you, and it is a courtesy to acknowledge safe passing with a wave of your arm.

13. Groups larger than 8 people should be split into two groups by the leader. Use common sense to keep the two groups in touch. When in a group do not ride too close to the rider in front as you could clip their wheel. Also do not make any sudden changes of direction or brake suddenly as this could cause an accident. Indicate if you intend to stop by calling out and pointing. Use common sense when to single out if riding doubled up. Take extra care to ensure your personal safety at junctions and when crossing main roads; make your own decision to proceed, don't rely on others.

14. If leading a group, make riders aware of areas on the route where they need to take particular care, eg busy roads, junctions, very narrow sections, rough surfaces, and steep hills. When stopping en route, do not stop right on a junction; ideally find a layby or place where you can assemble off the road.

15. Other hazards on the road include drivers who open car doors without looking, ice, floods, oncoming cars not giving way, headlights at night, tramlines, street furniture, roundabouts etc. This list is not exhaustive!

16. Try to anticipate problems and adjust your riding accordingly. Eg slow down when approaching a zebra crossing if pedestrians are in the vicinity!

17. If involved in an accident or you are witness to one, assess the situation and phone for help if needed, (ambulance/police, transport home). Check your bike to see if it is safe to carry on riding.

18. In case of injury or illness to one of the group, it is good practice for individuals to have an entry in their mobile phone contacts indicating who to get in touch with In Case of Emergency (ICE). For example 'ICE1 07234567890 Partner'. Emergency services will look for any such number first. Similarly, carry an ICE card in your jacket or bag giving those details, together with allergies, medications, blood type etc.

Note Our u3a cycling group is covered by the Third Age Trust's Public Liability Insurance Policy. This gives cover in the event of detrimental third party actions, but does not give personal accident cover for injuries not resulting from the actions of third parties. It may be prudent to ensure you have such cover.