



THE LONDON BOROUGH
www.bromley.gov.uk

BIKEWISE

Your guide to road safety

[click here](#)



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*Cycling proficiency
for the 21st century*

Enjoy the ride

The wind on your face and the freedom to roam means there is no better vehicle for young people than the bike.

An essential part of the journey for any cyclist is absolute safety as the road can be a challenging place without the correct care and attention.

This guide is a reference point for all young cyclists that are making their first journeys on the road.

So to help you on your journey, we've detailed everything you need to know from helmets to hand signals and traffic to T-junctions.

So just remember, use your eyes and ears, **SEE AND be SEEN**. Enjoy!

The important bit

Cyclists attending the course can only take part if they have a suitable roadworthy bike, a well fitting helmet and are familiar and comfortable with their equipment.

[click here](#)



“Always wear a helmet, even if you are riding off road. It will protect your head at all times.”

KELLY PADWICK
Cycle Training
Officer.



Helmets

A helmet will only protect you properly if it fits right. When you buy one, try it on first.

A helmet is worn to protect your brain so it must be worn level on your head with a two finger gap above your eyebrows. It's no good if it's sitting on the back of your head. Adjust the straps so that the 'y' shape is around your

ears and make sure it is done up tightly enough so it doesn't wobble around when you shake your head gently.

Think of any professional cyclist, like Bradley Wiggins or Victoria Pendleton, and you won't ever see them riding a bike without wearing a helmet.

What to wear >>>>> BIKEWISE

Your guide to road safety

Shoes

Shoes or trainers are sensible. If your shoes have laces, remember to tuck them in or they can get caught in the chain and make you fall off.



Gloves

If it's cold or wet, gloves will keep your fingers warm and dry. It's hard to pull on your brake levers with cold, stiff fingers. Gloves are a good idea because if you fall off your bike you will probably put your hands out first, just like you would if you were falling over. Gloves will protect your hands from getting grazed or bruised.

Carrying stuff on your bike

If you need to carry stuff on your bike, use a rucksack or a pannier which is a special bike bag.

[click here](#)

Riding in the dark

“Always ride with lights and hi-vis reflectors. **Be safe, be seen.**”

GEORGIE COOPER
Cycle Training Officer.

Tip

It's also a good idea to tuck wide trouser legs into your socks or wear clips. If your trousers catch in the chain you could fall off your bike.

If you are riding your bike in the dark it is sensible to wear clothes that will help other road users to see you.

Cycling clothes tend to be made from special materials; fluorescent for the day and reflective for riding in the dark.

If you haven't got these clothes, then choose to wear a bright colour when you ride your bike, white or yellow. Avoid dark colours like navy blue or black.



Lights and reflectors

At night, your bike must have a red light at the back and a white light at the front. You must also have a red reflector at the back and two amber reflectors on each pedal. A white reflector at the front and on the spokes is also a good idea.

Don't forget, in winter it gets dark earlier and sometimes it can be dark if it is raining or cloudy, so use your lights!



Bad weather

You want to be comfortable when you ride your bike so it makes sense to wear something waterproof if it's raining.

[click here](#)



The saddle

When you are sitting on your saddle you should be able to reach the ground with both feet.

You want to be able to get just the balls of your feet on the ground. Like this you are at the right height to push down on the pedals as you cycle, which makes pedalling easy. If you are too low, it is harder to pedal and you will wobble. If you are too high you won't be able to stay upright when you stop!

Adjust the saddle so it is level and make sure it is done up tightly so it doesn't move around.

Brake levers

When you are cycling on the road, you may need to have one hand off the handlebar to signal.

It is important that you can reach both brake levers easily and pull them on either together or one at a time. You should rest your fingertips over the brake levers. We call this 'covering your brakes'.



A bell

Useful to warn pedestrians of your approach.

brriing!!

Bike care

Your bike will work better and last longer if it is properly looked after. It is important to check your bike regularly:

Air in your tyres

Make sure tyres are really hard. Hard tyres make your bike easier to control and reduce the risk of a puncture.

Brakes

Your bike must have two working brakes. Your brakes slow you down and make you stop.

Chain

Your chain must be able to move freely and be silver/black in colour.

[click here](#)

Your bike >>>>>

The road is a busy and potentially hazardous place for any cyclist, but by following some basic rules, there is no reason why every journey can't be a good journey.

Controlling your bike

If you are going to ride your bike on the road you must be able to control it properly. Sometimes you will have to take one hand off the handle bar to signal left or right so you should practise doing this without wobbling – before you start to cycle on the road.

“Practise somewhere safe first, off the road.”

TRISH WEBB
Cycle Training Officer.

Keep pedalling!

The only thing which stops your bike from falling over is the forward motion. Have you noticed how, when you stop pedalling, the bike wobbles a bit? If you are always pedalling then the bike will stay upright. If you need to slow down use the brakes but keep pedalling. Sounds strange, but it works.

Using the gears

Most bikes have gears which help to make cycling easier and more enjoyable. Use a low number gear if you are cycling up a steep hill and if you are going fast then a high gear is good.

On the road >>>>> **BIKEWISE** Your guide to road safety



Junctions

Junctions are where roads meet. When you are cycling on the road you will have to deal with junctions.

The white markings on the road show us which road is which. They tell you who has to give way and who can keep going. Without the lines all the vehicles would keep going and crash into each other. The white lines across the road mean that the drivers on the main road have priority. Drivers in the side road must give way.

Which side?

There are two 'sides' to a road. We cycle or drive on the left side in the UK. Vehicles coming towards us are on 'their' left side of the road.

Sometimes there are white markings along the middle of the road so it is easy to see the two 'sides'. Sometimes there aren't any white lines though, so you will have to imagine them there.

[click here](#)



Looking around and using your eyes

When you are riding on the road you are quite small compared to all the other vehicles. You have to be constantly looking around you to see what is going on and be ready to stop if something 'suddenly' happens.

Drivers are not paying proper attention if they are doing the following things:

- Driving and using a mobile phone at the same time
- Going too fast
- Not looking at the road

When you are riding on the road it is important to know what is going on **behind You** as well as knowing what is going on in front of you.

You may need to ride past a parked car or you may need to move out to the middle of the road to turn right. You **MUST** make sure there are no vehicles in your way **BEFORE** you do these things to avoid cycling into the path of a vehicle.

Looking behind means looking over your right and left shoulders. When you look over your shoulder try to turn your head as far round as you can so you can see what's behind you, not just alongside you. You should also look over your left shoulder to gain information.

Looking behind also lets the driver know you are about to do 'something'. This is your first bit of communication with them. Often a driver's response to you looking behind is to slow down.

If **YOU** are looking around then you will be aware of any bad drivers!

[click here](#)





Starting off

Once you have chosen a good place, stand by your bike with your bike alongside the kerb. Always stand on the left hand side of your bike. There are two good reasons for this:

- When you put your bike in the road you will still be standing on the pavement and not in the road
- It keeps you and your trousers away from the chain.

Check there are no vehicles coming before you place your bike into the road and get onto your bike.

Set your pedal

To make sure you have enough **POWER** to pedal away it is best to have your right pedal up, in line with the bar of your bike.

This way, when you cycle off, you will be pushing down on the pedal and will be able to get going quickly and smoothly. If your pedal is not in this position, hook your toe under the pedal to swing the pedal around. When you are waiting by the kerb you must have your left foot on the kerb.

Look over your right shoulder and around you to make sure it is clear to start your journey.

Good Start

Safe places:

- ✓ Where there is a kerb.
- ✓ Where there are no parked cars.
- ✓ Where you can see and be seen.

Bad Start

- ✗ On a drive way.
- ✗ Between parked cars.
- ✗ On a bend.

Stopping

Look out for a suitable place to stop. Look behind you to check there is nothing close to you and then brake gently to stop close to the pavement. Put your left foot down onto the pavement. Look around before getting off your bike and taking your bike out of the road.

General road positioning

A good cycling position is where you can be seen, which is usually about a metre from the kerb and avoiding drains.

[click here](#)



Passing parked cars

Sometimes there will be parked cars in the way and you will have to cycle past them.

Before passing

- ✓ Look behind.
- ✓ Move out if it is clear.
- ✓ Keep a door's width away from the parked car(s).
- ✓ When you have passed the car(s) move back into your general riding position.
- ✓ Stay out where you can be seen if there is a row of parked cars.



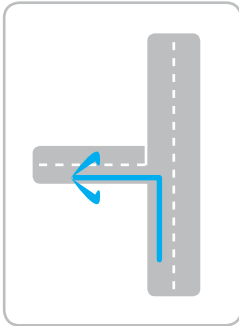
Hand signals

These are the signals you will need to ride on the road.

Before turning

- ✓ Look behind you to check the situation.
- ✓ Raise arm up to shoulder height.
- ✓ Keep your palm facing forwards and your thumb on top.

[click here](#)



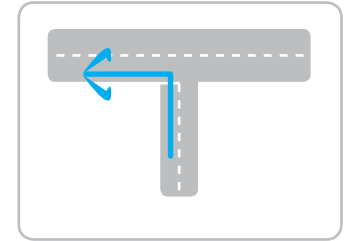
Turning left
from the main
road into the
side road

Before turning

- ✓ Look behind.
- ✓ Signal left.
- ✓ As you get near to the corner put your arm signal down.
- ✓ Keep looking around for traffic and pedestrians including over your left shoulder.
- ✓ Follow the kerb around the corner in your general riding position.
- ✓ Keeping **away** from the kerb.

Turning left
from the side
road into the
main road

You are riding in the side road. You **MUST** stop if there is traffic coming from your right as they will be on the same side of the road that you are going to cycle into.



Before turning

- ✓ Look behind.
- ✓ Signal left.
- ✓ As you get near to the junction put your arm signal down.
- ✓ Gently brake.
- ✓ Look right and left into the main road.

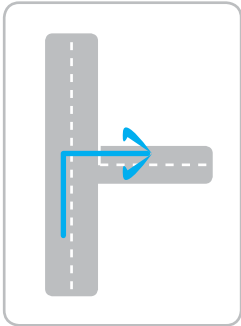
if there is traffic coming

- ✓ Stop between the give way lines, keeping left away from the kerb.
- ✓ Set your pedal.
- ✓ When it is clear, cycle around the corner, into your general riding position.

if it's clear to go

- ✓ Continue around the corner.
- ✓ Keep to the left **away** from the kerb.

[click here](#)



Turning right from the main road into the side road

Vehicles in the side road should stop for you. Vehicles behind you should wait behind you.

You **MUST** stop and give way to vehicles coming towards you, as you are crossing onto their side of the road.

BEFORE turning

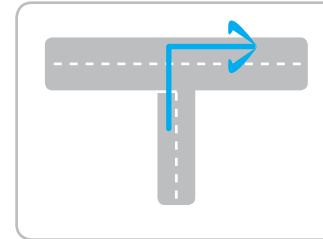
- ✓ Look behind.
- ✓ Signal right.
- ✓ Move to the centre of your side of the road.
- ✓ As you get near to the junction, put your arm signal down.

if it'S clear to go

- ✓ Just before you turn, look over your right shoulder.
- ✓ Turn into the side road so you are in your general cycling position.

if there is traffic coming

- ✓ Slow down or stop.
- ✓ Let the vehicle(s) coming towards you pass first.
- ✓ Just before you turn, look over your right shoulder.
- ✓ Go when it is clear.



Turning right from the side road into the main road

There are give way lines across the end of a side road. You **MUST** give way to traffic on the main road.

When you are riding up to the give way lines start to look for traffic, right and left. If it is clear then you can go straight across the road. If it is busy you will have to stop and wait until it is clear to go.

BEFORE turning

- ✓ Look behind.
- ✓ Signal right.
- ✓ Move to the centre of your side of the road.
- ✓ As you get near to the junction, put your arm signal down.
- ✓ Gently brake.
- ✓ Start to look right and left for traffic.

if it'S clear to go

- ✓ Cycle straight across the road.
- ✓ Turn by the kerb into your general riding position.

if there is traffic coming




- ✓ Stop between the give way lines.
- ✓ Set your pedal.
- ✓ Look left and right and all around.
- ✓ When it is clear, cycle straight across the road.
- ✓ Turn by the kerb into your general riding position.

[click here](#)



Traffic lights and road signs

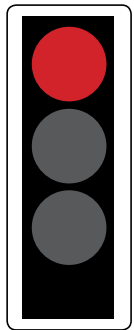
The highway code

Always obey road signs and the signals given by police officers and school crossing patrols. Learn the meaning of road signs and markings. Circular signs  usually give orders, triangular signs  give warnings and rectangular signs  give information.

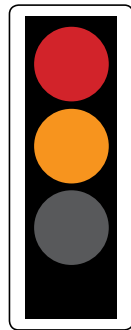
[click here](#)

Traffic lights

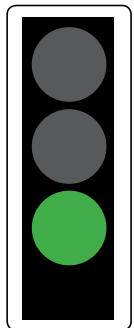
Traffic lights can be very busy junctions, so it may be best to get off your bike and walk across the road.



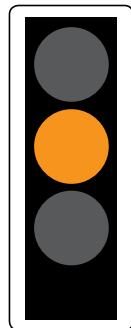
STOP
red



STOP
red /amber



Go, if it's
safe green



STOP
amber

Round and blue, you must do

Signs that are round and blue but no red border mostly give positive instructions.



Ahead only



Keep left
(right if symbol
reversed)



Route to be
used by pedal
cycles only



Segregated
pedal cycle
and pedestrian
route



Mini-roundabout

Round and red, prohibited

Signs with red circles are mostly prohibited.



Maximum
speed



No cycling



No right turn



No left turn

Info signs

Rectangular signs give info.



Warning sign, take your time

Mostly triangular



School crossing
patrol ahead



Slippery road



Steep hill
downwards



Steep hill
upwards



Bend in the road



Give way

[click here](#)

Continue your journey with the complete cycling course.

Bikeability level 3 >>>>> Year 7+

BIKEWISE
Your guide to road safety

Level 3 deals with busy complex roads including traffic lights, roundabouts and multi-lane junctions. This is advanced cycling, so you will need to work hard on all those level 1 and 2 skills you learn before you are ready to progress to level 3.

What you need to be a level 3 cyclist

- ✓ Physically stronger so you can get the speed to keep up with the traffic.
- ✓ Maturity to make good decisions on the road.
- ✓ Confidence and consistency.

What you have to do to ride on level 3 roads

Communicate

Looking behind: This warns the driver that you are about to do 'something' and it's usually the first bit of communication you make with other road users. This is also for your benefit to take in the information behind you in order to make your next decision.

Road Positioning: Your position in the road allows you to be seen by other road users and it indicates which way you are going

Eye contact: Once you have eye contact with someone, you know they have seen you

Speed: This tells the driver that you are carrying on your journey through speeding up, but if you slow down they may think you're letting them go. Even if you are cycling slowly, stay pedalling!

Signalling: Just like in level 2, it tells other road users which way you are turning

Anticipate

You need to be thinking and looking ahead on busy roads in order to make a decision on what you will be doing next.

Negotiate

Sometimes you are in a situation where it's not obvious who is going to pull out first, or who's going to give way to who. By communicating through eye contact and hand gestures you negotiate with other road users to reach an understanding before making your next move.



[click here](#)

Adult Stuff

It's really important that your bike is technically safe to ride, so make sure you go over all the following pages with an adult before starting the cycling course.

[click here](#)

Checking your bike

This is what your bike looks like and where everything should be. To check that your own bike is in good working order, you need to make sure that it has all of the parts in the diagram and spot any things that may be faulty.

Cyclists attending the course can only take part if they have a suitable roadworthy bike, a well fitting helmet and are familiar and comfortable with their equipment

1 Wheels

Should be securely fixed, no broken/missing spokes, good rim.

2 Tyres

Tyres should be pumped hard using a good pump to check the recommended pressure printed on the tyre side wall. Check with a pressure gauge. Should have good tread; no splits cracks or holes, valves straight.

3 Brakes/Lever

For the front brake: hold the brake on and try to push the bike forwards whilst keeping the back wheel on the ground. It should not be able to move. For the back brake: hold the brake on and try to push the bike backwards whilst keeping the front wheel on the ground.

4 Steering

Put the wheel between your legs and try to turn the handle bars without moving the wheel - should not be able to move. Bars should be right angles to the wheel.

5 Handlebars

Not distorted; ends protected.

6 Front Forks

Appears true and undamaged.

7 Frame

Appears true and undamaged.

8 Chain

Not too worn; not slack; lightly oiled not rusty.

9 Chain Ring

Not bent, teeth not worn.

10 Gears

Properly adjusted; lubricated sufficiently.

11 Pedals

Complete turning freely, not bent.

12 Pedal Cranks

Straight, no side to side wobble or looseness.

13 Saddle

Safely fixed; appropriate height



[click here](#)

Bicycle safety check

Cyclists attending a course can only take part if they have a roadworthy bike, a well fitting helmet and are familiar and comfortable with their equipment.

Usually a bike that a cyclist is used to is far better than a

brand new bike that they are not confident on (The cycling team or bike shop will be able to advise you).

The bike shops recommend that bike, rider and helmet are brought in together for checking.

Keeping your bike safe

Use a padlock to put off a thief. You must bike lock it to something solid – like a railing or post – or a thief could just pick the bike up and carry it off. Make sure the padlock goes through part of the frame of the bike.

If you just use the wheel to attach the padlock someone could take the wheel off and steal the rest of your bike.



Local stores that can help you check

Please call the shop of your choice to make arrangements.

Giant

173/175 Widmore Road,
Bromley. BR1 3AX
Tel: 020 8290 0033

Cycles SE20

160 Maple Road
Penge. SE20 8JB
Tel: 0208 778 2023

Queensway Autos

99 Queensway, Petts Wood
Orpington. BR5 1DQ
Tel: 01689 821382

Deen's Garage

439 Croydon Road,
Beckenham. BR3 3PP
Tel: 020 8650 0630

Cycles UK

247 High Street,
Orpington. BR6 0MY
Tel: 01689 898923

The safety check

This bike check will ensure that the bike fits, is in a roadworthy condition with brakes that the cyclist can operate.



[click here](#)

Useful information >>>>>

BikeRouteToaster.com

A course creation application that's useful for planning rides.
www.bikeroutetoaster.com

Bromley Cyclists

A local cycling club that arranges rides for all abilities.
www.bromleycyclists.org.uk

Cycle Bromley

Download cycle maps and locate local cycle storage.
www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200123/cycling

LCC London Cycling Campaign

A registered charity that has been actively promoting cycling for over 30 years.
www.lcc.org.uk

Park Tool

A technical website that helps with repairs for your bike.
www.parktool.com/blog/repair-help

Transport for London (TFL) – Cycling

Order **FREE** cycle guides giving you routes in and around Greater London. Information on cycle hire, bikes on public transport, cycle training and more.
<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/11645.aspx>

West Kent CTC

Information on the 13 different cycling groups within the West Kent area, together with details of cycle rides, cycling holidays and social rides.
www.westkentctc.org.uk

Ride London

Whether new to cycling or a life long fan, this website offers a unique opportunity to be one of thousands of cyclists experiencing riding through London on traffic free streets.
www.ridelondon.co.uk

Visit Kent

Family cycle routes taking you through Kent's dramatic countryside.
www.visitkent.co.uk/explore/cycling.asp

British Cycling

A guide to beginning your cycling career and with more events and rides than ever, there's never been a better time to start cycling.
www.britishcycling.org.uk

Sustrans

Information on guidelines, best practice and research to benefit Sustrans partners and interested parties.
www.sustrans.org.uk

Bikeability

Information on the three Bikeability Levels.
www.dft.gov.uk/bikeability

Change4Life

Small, easy, steps you can make to help put you and your family happily on your way.
www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/bike-for-life.aspx

Tales of the road

General road safety advice for children.
www.talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk

CONTACT US

Cycling Team -

Road Safety Unit

London Borough of Bromley

Tel: 0208 313 4546

road.safety@bromley.gov.uk

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