

ILLINOIS



BICYCLE

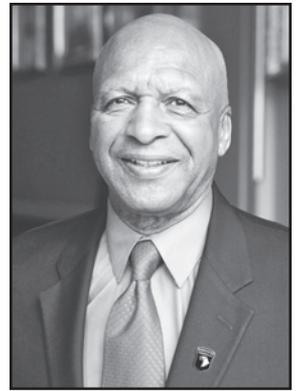
RULES OF THE ROAD

JESSE  WHITE
SECRETARY OF STATE

Bicycle riding is a fun way to exercise and enjoy the outdoors. To remain safe on Illinois roads, bicyclists must obey the same traffic safety laws that govern vehicle drivers.

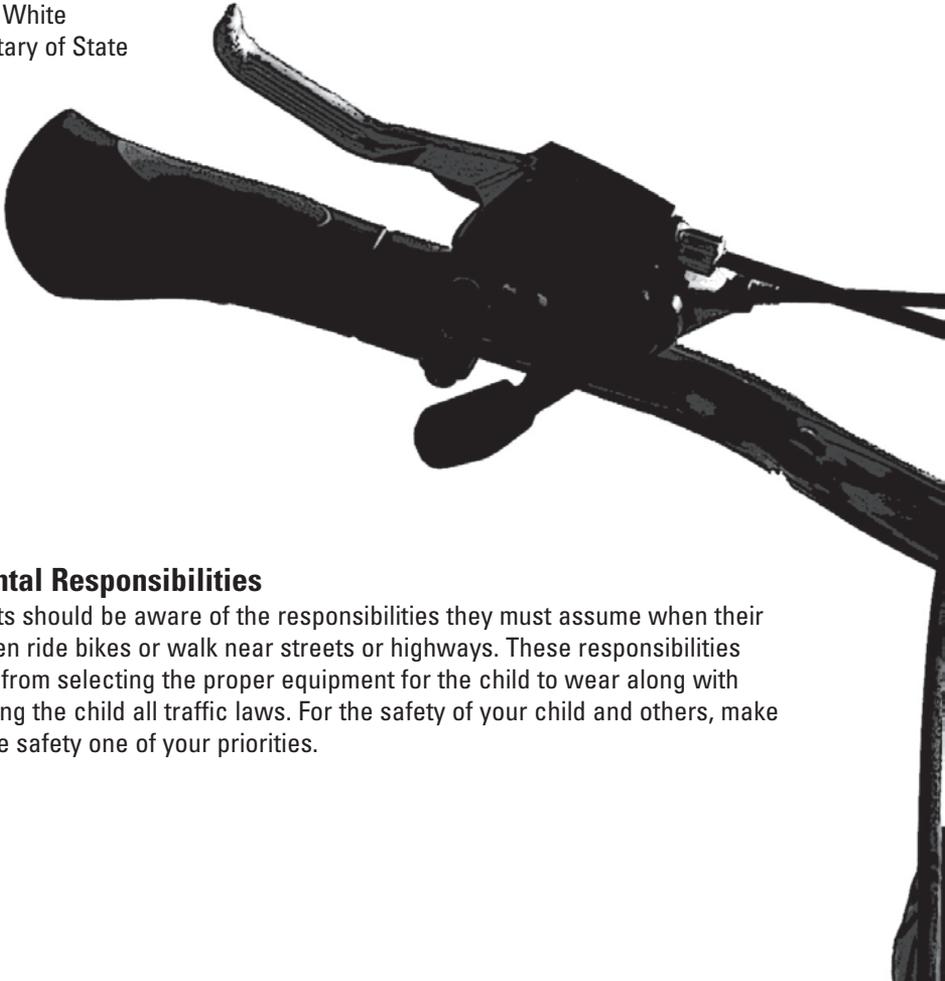
No amount of bicycle safety equipment can adequately protect a rider from the dangerous force of a car or truck if involved in a vehicle collision. The best way to avoid injury is by being prepared for the dangers that streets pose to bicycle riders and by obeying the rules of the road.

This booklet provides bicyclists with the information needed to stay safe while sharing the road with motorists. Learning and practicing bicycle rules of the road are your responsibilities. Take the time to read this booklet and practice what you have learned to provide a lifetime of safe bicycle riding.



Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State



Parental Responsibilities

Parents should be aware of the responsibilities they must assume when their children ride bikes or walk near streets or highways. These responsibilities range from selecting the proper equipment for the child to wear along with teaching the child all traffic laws. For the safety of your child and others, make bicycle safety one of your priorities.

Bicycle Safety Equipment

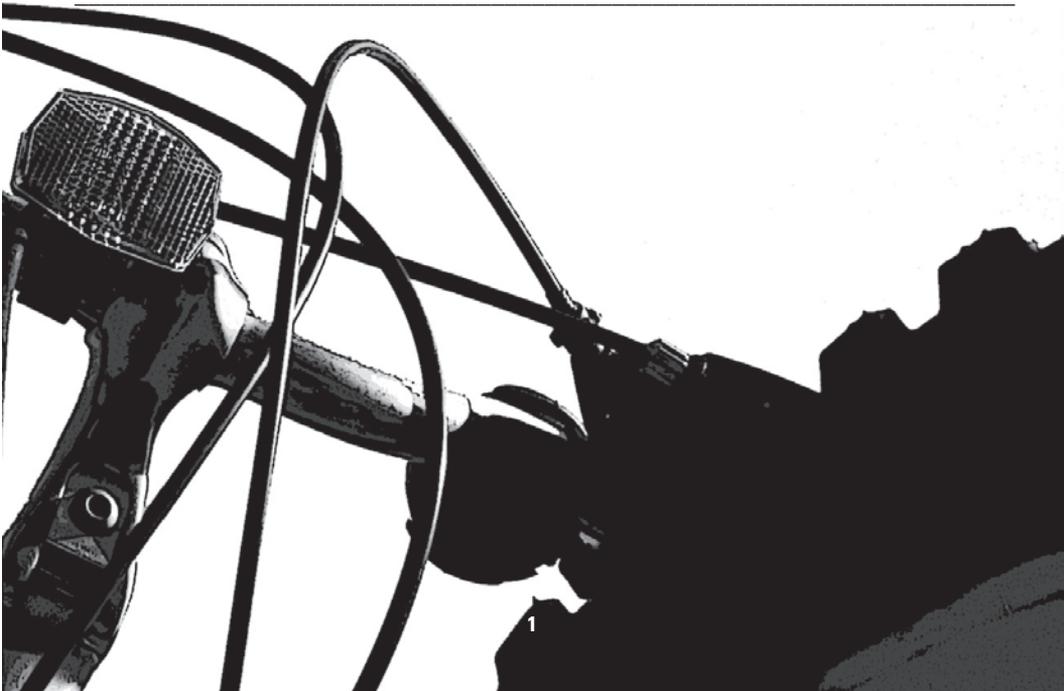
Bicycle helmets are an essential element of bicycle safety and must be properly fitted and adjusted. While riding, always wear an approved safety helmet to protect your head and brain from injury in case of an accident.



Make sure your bicycle has the following safety equipment:

- ✓ Front light visible for at least 500 feet (night riders)
- ✓ Clear front reflector
- ✓ Red rear reflector visible from 100 to 600 feet
- ✓ Horn or bell that can be heard up to 100 feet
- ✓ Reliable, properly adjusted brakes
- ✓ Wheel-mounted side reflectors
- ✓ Reflector pedals
- ✓ Gears that are adjusted and operate smoothly
- ✓ Properly adjusted seat
- ✓ Handlebars and all accessories securely attached

List below any repairs needed on your bicycle:



Obey all Traffic Laws and Signals

- When riding your bicycle on Illinois roadways, you must obey the same traffic laws, signs and signals that apply to motorists.
- Bicyclists must ride in the same direction as other traffic. Riding in the opposite direction of traffic is both dangerous and illegal.
- When passing, motorists are required by law to allow at least 3 feet of space between them and a bicyclist.

Riding on Sidewalks (where permitted)

- When walking or riding your bicycle on a sidewalk or along a crosswalk, you must obey all pedestrian signs and signals.
- Bicyclists must yield the right of way to pedestrians on sidewalks or crosswalks. Slow down and go around pedestrians when possible.
- When approaching a pedestrian from behind, slow down and give an audible signal to alert of your presence before passing them.

Pavement Markings

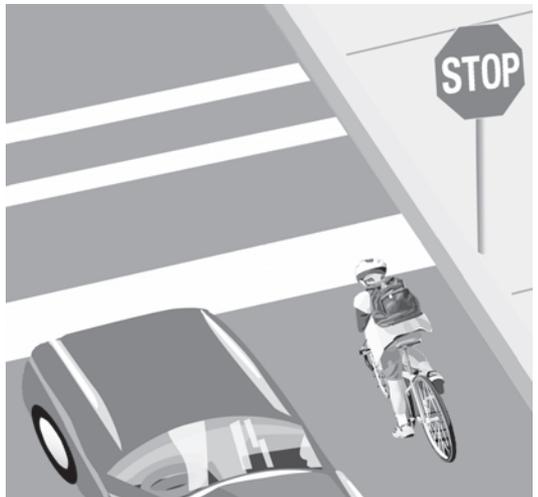
Pavement markings warn and direct drivers and bicycle riders and regulate traffic.

White Stop Line — Shows you where you must come to a complete stop for a traffic light or stop sign.

Pedestrian Crosswalks — Many intersections have white lines that show pedestrian crosswalks. Watch for people walking between these lines. Pedestrians have the right of way (see below).

Center Lines — A double yellow center stripe indicates there is more than one lane of traffic moving in both directions and crossing the line is prohibited (except to turn out of or into a driveway or alley). White dashes mark the lane separations on either side of the double yellow stripe. You should ride on the right side of the right lane, except to pass or make a left turn. When there is only one lane for traffic traveling in each direction and passing is permitted, the center of the street is marked with a broken yellow stripe.

Directions and Arrows — Some busy streets have lanes with specific individual directions painted on them. These directions include “left only” or “right only,” or an arrow pointing straight ahead. You must follow the directions of the arrows painted on the lanes.





Left-turn Signal



Right-turn Signal
(using left arm)



Right-turn Signal
(using right arm)



Stop Signal

Arm Signals

To ride safely in traffic, bicyclists must use their hands and arms to communicate to other motorists around them. There are four important arm signs you must know and use every time you prepare to turn or stop (see above). Remember to signal, using your left or right arm, about one-third of a block before you plan to turn so vehicles traveling behind you have ample time to slow down.

Your eyes are an important safety tool when riding your bike. Watch other drivers closely to make sure they have seen you and your arm signal.

Turning

Right Turns — Right turns must be made from the right lane. Stay as close as necessary to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.

Left Turns — When making a left turn, a bicyclist has two choices:

1. Complete the turn as a vehicle would. When a left-hand lane exists, a bicyclist should stay in the right side of that lane. After entering the intersection, look in all directions and complete the turn when safe.
2. Stay as close as necessary to the right curb or edge of the roadway as you enter the intersection. Proceed straight across the roadway to the opposite corner and wait there out of the way of other traffic. After obeying any traffic control device, you may directly cross the street again to complete the turn in the new direction.

Colors of Signs

Knowing the meanings of the basic colors of signs will help you recognize all signs.



RED

Stop, yield, do not enter or wrong way



YELLOW

General warning



ORANGE

Work-zone warning



BLACK

Regulatory



WHITE

Regulatory



BROWN

Public recreation areas and parks



BLUE

Motorist services guidance



GREEN

Distance, direction and information



YELLOW-GREEN

Pedestrian crossing and school-zone warning



PINK

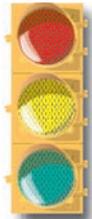
Traffic incident

Traffic Signals and Signs

Traffic signs and signals tell drivers when to stop and when to go. The signs and signals warn of railroad crossings and other hazards and advise you where you may ride your bike. Bicycle riders, as well as drivers, must obey all traffic signs and signals.

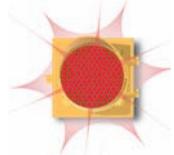
Traffic Light

- Stop at a red light.
- A yellow light is a warning the light is about to turn red. Prepare to stop.
- You may go on a green light, but first look carefully in all directions to see if it is safe to proceed.
- A bicyclist may proceed after yielding the right of way to oncoming traffic if a red light fails to turn green after waiting for at least 120 seconds. Regarding red light left turns, this rule does not apply in all communities.



Flashing Red Light

Stop. Look left, then right, then left again. Proceed when safe to do so.



Flashing Yellow Light

Slow down and ride carefully.





Stop
Come to a complete stop.



Bike Traffic
This sign alerts other drivers that there is bike traffic on a street.



Yield
Slow down and let other vehicles or pedestrians go before you proceed.



Pedestrian Crosswalk
Bicyclists and motorists must always yield the right of way to pedestrians.



One Way
Traffic may go only one way on this street. Ride in the direction the arrow points.



School Crossing
At a school crossing, you must let pedestrians go first.



Wrong Way
This sign advises you are riding in the wrong direction on a street.



Railroad Crossing
Stop, look and listen. Never ride through, around or under any crossing gate.



No Bikes
Where this sign appears, bicycles are not allowed on streets or sidewalks.



Road Construction
Watch for bumpy roads and large equipment.

Approaching a School Bus

When approaching a school bus with flashing signal lights and its STOP arm out, bicyclists must give the stop hand signal and come to a complete stop. A bicyclist may proceed when the STOP arm retracts and the flashing signals stop on the school bus.



Parking

- Bicycles may be parked on the road at any angle to the curb or edge of the roadway where parking is allowed.
- If parking is allowed on a sidewalk, park your bicycle so it is out of the way of pedestrians.

Right of Way Laws

Right of way means that one person has the right to go ahead of another. This applies to bicycle riders, motorists and pedestrians. If others do not follow the rules, let them have the right of way to avoid the risk of an accident.

Two-way Intersections — When you come to a stop sign at a two-way stop intersection, you must yield the right of way to pedestrians and vehicles on the cross street before you go ahead.

Four-way Intersections — At a four-way stop intersection, the driver or bicycle rider who arrives first at the intersection should be the first to proceed. Drivers and bicyclists should proceed one by one through the intersection after coming to a complete stop. Proceed only when it is safe to do so.

Unmarked Intersections — At an unmarked intersection or crossing where there are no traffic signs or signals, the driver or bicycle rider on the left must yield to those on the right. When driving out of an alley or driveway, the bicyclist must stop and yield the right of way to pedestrians and vehicles before crossing the sidewalk or entering the street.

Emergency Vehicles — Emergency vehicles using audible flashing lights always have the right of way. The law requires that bicyclists pull over to the side of the road and stop, if necessary, until the emergency vehicle passes.

Disabled Persons — Blind, hearing impaired or physically disabled persons can be identified by their white canes, support or guide dogs. Bicyclists must always yield the right of way to them.

Police — If a police officer directs otherwise, the right of way laws do not apply; riders and pedestrians must obey the officer's directions.

Vehicles Overtaking a Bicycle on a Highway

A bicycle proceeding in the same direction as a motor vehicle can be overtaken by that vehicle when:

- The bicycle is traveling at a speed of less than half of the posted speed limit.
- The driver is able to overtake and pass the bicycle without exceeding the speed limit.
- There is sufficient space to the left to pass when overtaking the bicyclists.

Bicycle Safety Tips

- ✓ **Make sure your bike is equipped for safety and working properly** (see Page 1). Every bike should have the required reflectors. Check the brakes often to see that they are working. The seat and handlebars should be securely attached and properly adjusted. Wearing a helmet may prevent you from being seriously injured in an accident.
- ✓ **Keep both hands on the handlebars.** Use a backpack or a bike carrier to hold your books, lunch or other items. Ride slower on wet streets, loose gravel or bumpy roads.
- ✓ **Ride single file.** If possible, do not ride next to each other.
- ✓ **Always ride one to a bike.** Your bike is harder to balance with another person on it, and a passenger may block the view of your surroundings.
- ✓ **Ride as close to the right edge of the road as possible.** Certain hazards, such as broken glass, drain grates, parked cars, left turns, rough surfaces and passing, allow bicyclists to move to the left, if necessary.



- ✓ **Ride in the same direction as other traffic**, not against traffic.
- ✓ **Slow down at intersections and railroad crossings** to ensure it is safe to cross.
- ✓ **Avoid riding at night.** If you must ride in the dark, the law requires that your bike have a front light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet and a rear red reflector visible for up to 600 feet. Always wear white and/or reflective clothing when riding at night.
- ✓ **Designated Bicycle Lane.** When the bicycle lane is properly marked on city streets, the bicyclist should always stay within these boundaries. As bicyclists are riding in their designated lane, they should be aware of parked vehicles and the possibility a motorist could unexpectedly open the door. The term “dooring” occurs when a

motorist opens the door without first looking or performing the “Dutch Reach” method. The “Dutch Reach” method is completed when the motorist reaches across with the hand farthest from the vehicle door when preparing to exit. By performing this simple method, motorists would automatically turn their body to the vehicle door, thereby, forcing them to look for oncoming bicyclists or other traffic.



On most roadways, bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as other types of vehicles, including the right of way. Remember to follow these important laws and safety tips regarding bicyclists:

- Some municipalities have roadways with designated bike lanes. Even if bicyclists are not present, vehicles are not allowed to drive, park or idle in this space or pick up passengers in these designated lanes.
- Bicyclists may need to ride outside a bike lane and motorists should be prepared to safely move around them. The bicyclist must be aware of the directions a moving vehicle is traveling when properly completing a left or right turn.
- Bicyclists are prohibited on controlled-access highways, expressways and certain other marked roadways.
- Motorists must yield the right of way to a bicyclist just as they would to another vehicle. Extra caution should be used during bad weather. If a motorist passes too close to a bicyclist and it results in a crash, the motorist may face criminal charges. Crowding or threatening a bicyclist is prohibited.

Bicycle Safety Quiz

1. Always ride a bicycle:
 - a. on the opposite side of traffic.
 - b. in the middle of the road.
 - c. in the same direction as other traffic.
2. A bicyclist has the same rights and responsibilities as a person driving a car.
 True False
3. A person riding a bicycle must:
 - a. never use hand signals.
 - b. always use hand signals.
 - c. use hand signals only when he/she feels like it.
4. When approaching a pedestrian on a sidewalk, a bicyclist:
 - a. must give an audible signal and go around the pedestrian.
 - b. must shout loudly to the pedestrian and tell them to move over.

5. A flashing red light means:
 - a. reduce speed.
 - b. stop.
 - c. caution.
6. Bicyclists should always stop in the middle of a crosswalk.

True False
7. When a school bus has its stop sign out, a bicyclist:
 - a. can ignore it and go on by.
 - b. must give the stop hand signal and come to a complete stop.
 - c. can ride to the other side of the road and continue.
8. When crossing an intersection:
 - a. without looking, quickly ride the bike or walk through it.
 - b. look left, right and left again, and cross when it is safe.
 - c. stop in the middle of the intersection and make the cars stop for you.
9. When cars and bicycles arrive at a four-way stop, who goes first?
 - a. Cars always go first.
 - b. Bicycles go first.
 - c. The one who arrives first goes first.
10. It is permissible to make a right-hand turn on red:
 - a. when you have come to a complete stop, checked the intersection to make sure it is safe to proceed, and checked for signs prohibiting a right-hand turn on red.
 - b. only if you are driving a car.
 - c. anytime you feel like it.



Bicycle Safety Quiz Answers

1. c — Bicyclists should always ride in the same direction as other traffic and stay as close to the right edge of the roadway as necessary.
2. T — Bicyclists must obey the same traffic laws that apply to motorists.
3. b — Many accidents can be avoided if hand signals are used properly. Hand signals advise drivers what bicyclists are going to do.
4. a — Pedestrians have the right of way on sidewalks. When approaching pedestrians, give an audible signal before going around them.
5. b — Bicyclists must always stop at a flashing red light.
6. F — Crosswalks are designed to let people walk across an intersection and should never be obstructed by a car or other vehicles.
7. b — Bicyclists must always signal and stop for a school bus and proceed when the stop arm is retracted and flashing signals stop.
8. b — It is very important to check in all directions before crossing an intersection.
9. c — At a four-way stop, drivers and bicycle riders are expected to take their turns and proceed one by one through the intersection.
10. a — Bicyclists may turn right in Illinois after making a complete stop, checking in all directions, and checking for signs prohibiting a right-hand turn.



**For more information on
bicycle safety, please contact:**

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