

Essential Tips for Riders

<http://commutebybike.com>

Wear a helmet You're going for a snug, not tight, fit when the helmet is placed level on your head. Most helmets come with an assortment of foam pads — use them. Adjust the straps so that the triangles are just under your ears and tighten the chin strap up (again, not too tight). Now, if you push on the front of the helmet and it moves enough to expose your forehead, shorten the front straps. Re-tighten the chin strap if necessary. Grab the back of the helmet and act like you're going to peel it off to the front; if it moves enough that it starts to cover your eyes, shorten the back straps. Repeat until you've got it right. If you just can't seem to get it adjusted, you need a different model of helmet

Follow the rules of the road A bicycle is a vehicle, and subject to laws.

Be visible Wear bright colors in daylight hours. At night, wear something reflective—or at least wear something white. Use front and rear lights and reflectors.

Be predictable Make eye contact. Ride on the correct side of the road, not against traffic. Look behind you before you make a turn or lane change, that lets drivers know you're up to something. Use hand signals and don't wobble around. Don't weave in and out of the lane when parked cars are spread out.

Plan your route Try to avoid biking down the busiest street in town. It may add distance to your ride, but choosing a less busy route will be worth the extra 5 minutes.

Ditch the headphones Don't use iPods, MP3 Players or other electronic devices while riding.

Take the lane Don't be afraid to get out in the middle of the lane in stop-an-go traffic, when changing lanes to make a left turn, and to avoid being “doored.” You may be tempted to blow past a line of cars queued up at a stop light; don't just take your place in the middle of the lane and take your turn.

On the other hand, there is no shame in moving off the road for a minute to let a long line of drivers go past you.

Also, make sure to look through the windows of parked cars. You're looking for people in the car that might be trying to exit and also for people who are stepping out into the road in between parked cars.

Glare can blind motorists If the sun is in your eyes, the people driving up behind you don't see you.

Scream It is fine to yell to catch people's attention, but not to express your displeasure.

Common causes of drivers hitting cyclists

Driver turns left in front of an on-coming cyclist who is going straight through an intersection

The driver doesn't stop at a stop sign

Driver passes a cyclist and turns right, directly across their path

