

BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS

From The League of American Bicyclists

Courtesy of BIKE & WALK MONTCLAIR

<http://bikewalkmontclair.org>

Wheels are turning again. As our children return to school, more cars, school buses, and bicycles are on the roads. In particular, safety is a concern for those who bike to and from school. Below are some basic tips for helping your children learn to be confident and safe cyclists.

Always follow the rules of the road: The golden rule for riding a bicycle on the road is to

Be predictable:

- Ride in a straight line, not in and out of parked cars
- Always indicate your intention to turn or pass

Be visible:

- Wear brightly colored clothing, whenever possible
- Make eye contact with motorists so they know you are there. Don't assume they can see you.
- Ride where drivers are expecting you to be (right side of the road, not on sidewalk where possible).

1. Always wear a helmet that fits well with the chinstrap snug to the neck.
2. Perform **ABC Quick Check** before each ride: **A**ir in the tires -inflate to rated psi pressure marked on sidewall of tire, **B**rakes working properly, hand brakes thumb distance between brake lever and handlebar, **C**hains/Cassettes not gunky, gears change easily. Pay extra attention to your bike at the start of each ride to insure that everything works the way it should.
3. Stop for all stop signs and traffic signals. Obey all traffic laws and lane markings.
4. Check for oncoming traffic – in all directions – at intersections, driveways, parking lots. **SCAN TWICE BEFORE PROCEEDING.**
5. Keep both hands on the handlebars at all times, except when signaling lane changes or turns.
6. A heavy backpack filled with books and other items can dangerously affect a rider's balance. Use a properly installed bike basket instead when possible. Otherwise, make sure backpacks are tight to the shoulders and back, with the waist strap (if it has one) connected and snug. Ride slower when carrying a backpack of any kind.
7. **BE COURTEOUS. SHARE THE ROAD.**

Motorists:

- Drive at posted speed limits (25 mph is there to protect the children).

- Assume there are kids behind every parked car, and coming out of every driveway during school hours.
- Scan for bikers at bumper level. Often kids cannot be seen over the hood of parked cars.
- Check for oncoming bike traffic – in all directions – at intersections, driveways, parking lots. Scan twice before proceeding.
- Streets Are For Everyone (S.A.F.E.). SHARE THE ROAD.
- BE COURTEOUS.