

fact sheet

Bicycle Safety

Cycling can be fun, a great form of exercise and environmentally friendly, however many accidents occur as a result of bicycles. Not all injuries involve another vehicle, many accidents are as a result of falling off the bicycle or crashing into something.

Under State laws, a bicycle is a vehicle and therefore the rider (whatever age) is required to **OBEY ALL ROAD RULES** – the same as a motorist.



Cyclists need to be highly visible to other road users so wearing light coloured or reflective clothing is an important safety issue.

Children should ride on footpaths, but **remember that driveways are dangerous.**

Cyclists must:

- ◆ Give clear hand signals when turning or stopping
- ◆ Ride on the left hand side of the road or use the marked bike lane if there is one
- ◆ Not double on a bicycle. These vehicles are designed to carry one person so doubling is not permitted
- ◆ Ride no more than two abreast – not more than 1.5 metres apart
- ◆ Ride a bicycle that is the correct size for the rider
- ◆ Children in children's seats must wear a properly fitted standard approved helmet

Cyclists should also:

- ◆ Keep at least 1metre from or behind other moving vehicles
- ◆ Watch out for opening car doors
- ◆ Look out for motor vehicles pulling out from the kerb without indicating
- ◆ Give way to pedestrians on footpaths and shared ways
- ◆ Dismount to cross roadways
- ◆ Not ride on footpaths in shopping centers or where signs prohibit them
- ◆ Exercise care near driveways and watch out for cars entering and exiting driveways

SAFE RIDING FOR CHILDREN

Ensure supervised riding:

Children under 10 years should NOT ride on the road unaccompanied for the following reasons:

- ◆ They do not have the mental capacity to cope with complete traffic situations.
- ◆ They have poor perception of: speed, distance and time
- ◆ Their peripheral vision is not fully developed

Learn the rules of the Road:

Before children are allowed to ride by themselves, ensure they have been taught the rules of the road for safe cycling practices.

Know the dangers of the driveway:

Children should know that driveways are dangerous. They should always stop before entering the road, scan for cars and pedestrians, listen and think if it is safe to enter the road.

THE BICYCLE

Make sure the bicycle fits: A bike that is too big or too small is a safety hazard. When sitting on the bike, their feet should at least touch the ground on both sides.

Do equipment spot checks:



Parents should ensure that children's bicycles are equipped with proper safety devices such as lights (AS3562), reflectors (AS2142) and a bell or a horn. A helmet (AS2063) should accompany each

bicycle.

Be a role model: Set a good example when cycling with your children and ensure that your bicycle meets all the safety requirements and that you wear a helmet.

Make bicycles safer: Buy bikes with spoke guards and safety guards. Fit safety devices such as reflectors and safety lights.

Bicycle Safety

HELMETS—SAVE LIVES

Head injuries are the main cause of death and disability to cyclists. Bike helmets help reduce injury.

In all Australian States and Territories cyclists are required by law to wear a properly fitted and Australian Standard (AS2063) helmet. The helmet should sit straight and must be done up firmly so it cannot move.

MOST CYCLING CRASHES USUALLY DON'T INVOLVE ANOTHER VEHICLE

- ◆ Riders simply lose control of the bike, this can happen to the most experienced riders
- ◆ Rural children face the same risks as city children—many people think that it is safer to ride your bike in the country this is not true
- ◆ Country riders also have to deal with a range of road conditions such as gravel, potholes, slippery surfaces etc. Traffic is also permitted to travel at greater speeds in some country areas.

Choosing a Helmet

- ◆ Involve the rider in buying the helmet. Make sure they are happy with the appearance
- ◆ Try it on for comfort and fit. Not every helmet fits snugly
- ◆ Test the fit - Adjust the straps and do it up. Place your palm under the front of the helmet and push up and back, the helmet should not move
- ◆ Don't buy a helmet that is too big, thinking a child can grow into it. It will be too big and offer no protection now.
- ◆ Ensure you purchase a child helmet up to the age 5 or 6. After that their head is almost adult size and they should be able to wear an adult helmet
- ◆ The helmet should feel comfortable and have a good airflow, particularly if you live in a warm climate.
- ◆ Look for the Australian Standards Mark (AS2063). These helmets have been tested and are Australian approved
- ◆ Second-hand helmets may not be a bargain. It can be difficult to see if any damage has been caused to the foam lining. A damaged helmet will not protect the rider. With second-hand helmets you have little choice for comfort and fit.



Ensure you regularly complete the following Bicycle Safety Checklist:

BICYCLE SAFETY CHECKLIST

- BRAKES - ensure brake blocks are not worn down and fitted correctly. Foot brake should be effective
- CHAIN - should be frequently oiled and not loose
- TYRES - look for bald spots, bulges and cuts. They should not 'squash' when firmly squeezed
- PEDALS - must spin freely
- SEAT - should be adjusted to be the right height for the rider
- REFLECTORS and LIGHTS - should be secure, properly aligned, clean and working
- BELL or HORN - working properly, loud enough for others to hear
- HAND GRIPS - should be covering the handles
- WHEEL NUTS - should always be tight not loose
- STEERING HEAD - should not be loose



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