

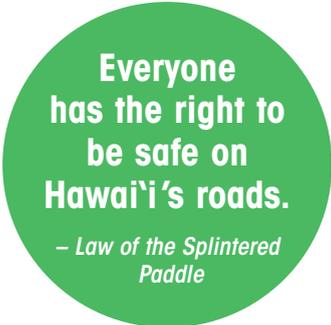
Sharing the Road

A Guide to Safe Bicycling in Hawai'i



Sharing the Road: A Guide to Safe Bicycling in Hawai'i

What Motorists & Bicyclists Should Know



**Everyone
has the right to
be safe on
Hawai'i's roads.**

*– Law of the Splintered
Paddle*

Bicycling and walking are eco-friendly, healthy, and fun options for taking shorter trips. Riding our bikes and walking on streets help make us physically fit and allow us to spend more time outdoors. Bicycling, however, can be challenging and carries similar responsibilities as driving a car when it comes to sharing the road.

AAA Hawai'i offers this guide to help you and your loved ones stay safe on the road. Safe bicycling and walking involves much more than just wearing a helmet on a bike or looking both ways before walking across streets. Bicyclists and motorists can take several steps to make moving around Hawai'i safer and more enjoyable.

Bicycling Laws

Bicyclists are drivers of vehicles and should follow the same basic traffic laws as drivers of motor vehicles, observing traffic signs and signals (stop, yield, etc.), and looking and yielding at intersections and when changing lanes. Bicycling safety rules are generally outlined in Hawai'i's state laws.

Hand Signals is the Law

Most drivers and other bicyclists are unaware where bicyclists plan to go unless they let them know by use of hand signals while riding. Use of hand signals about 100 feet before the turn, like turn signals on cars, help others anticipate a bicyclist's intended movements and reduce the chance of collisions.



Left Turn:

Left hand and arm extended horizontally beyond the side of the bicycle.



Right Turn:

Right hand and arm extended horizontally to the right-hand side of the bicycle **OR** left arm extended upward and hand raised, as shown above.



Stop or Sudden Decrease in Speed:

Left hand and arm extended downward beyond the side of the bicycle.

Stay in Control: Bicyclists should make sure hands are in control of equipment at all times (including brakes) as a condition to using hand signals. Bicyclists need not signal if doing so puts you at risk to crash in the turn.

Riding on Bikeways and Roadways

1. **Ride with traffic.** Riding against the flow of traffic may seem safe but it's actually illegal and more dangerous. Riding with

the flow of traffic is the best way for bicyclists and motorists to share the road.

2. **Use bicycle lanes when available.** Bicyclists should always use bicycle lanes where available, especially when traveling slower than the speed of traffic.
3. **Ride on the right side of the road.** Bicyclists may use the full lane in some cases.

Hawai'i law generally requires bicyclists traveling slower than the normal speed of traffic to ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the road where bike lanes are not available. However, there are several important exceptions where moving toward the center of the lane and using the full lane provides added safety for bicyclists. Bicyclists can ride in the center of the lane with vehicle traffic for their safety:

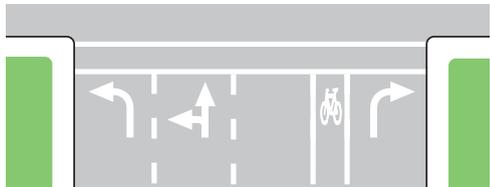
1. to make a left turn at an intersection, private road or driveway,
2. to avoid something dangerous, such as debris or opening car doors,
3. when a travel lane is too narrow to share side by side between a vehicle and a bicycle,
4. to pass another bike or car, or
5. on a multi-lane one-way street it is legal to ride on extreme left or right lanes.

Try to stay at least 3 feet away from parked cars when possible to avoid hitting a suddenly opened car door.

Always scan behind and over your shoulder, signal, and yield as needed before changing position in or across lanes. Only move over when it is safe and courteous to do so.

Approaching Intersections

Riding through busy intersections can be challenging if you lack experience bicycling in traffic. When approaching an intersection, always look around for lane markings, traffic controls and what other motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists are doing.

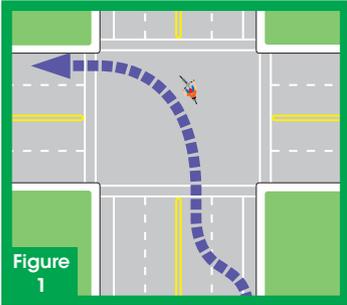


Intersections and Sharing the Road

Right Turns

When making a right turn, the basic requirements for bicyclists are the same as the rules motorists must follow at stop signs or legal turn on red at traffic lights.

Yield to traffic approaching from the left, including pedestrians. Signal right turns with your right or left arm as previously noted.

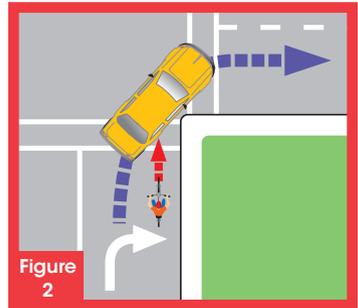


Left Turns

Observe traffic by looking around and changing lanes with caution. Use hand signal to make sure drivers know a left-turn is about to occur and always try to make eye contact with nearby drivers (see Figure 1).

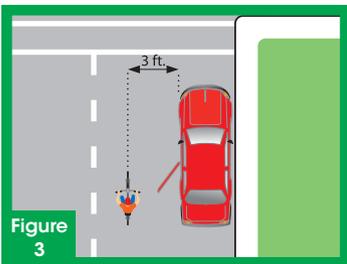
When there is a left-turn lane, move the bicycle to the center or the right side of the left turn lane. Avoid

allowing vehicles to pass on you in the same lane while you make a left. Walking across the intersection as a pedestrian is always a good option for children and bicyclists who feel uncomfortable with their skill level to make left turns with moving traffic. Remember to stop, dismount and walk within the crosswalk as a pedestrian.



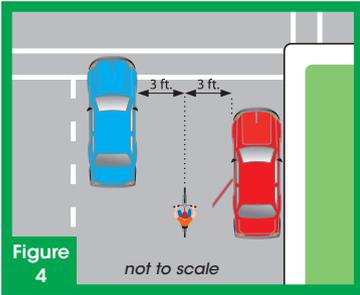
Straight Through

Bicyclists should stay out of right turn only lanes when their intent is



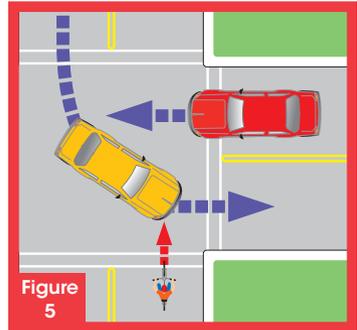
to ride straight through an intersection. Riding through intersections from right-turn only lanes puts bicyclists at risk of getting hit by cars (see Figure 2).

In narrow lanes where there is not sufficient room for both bicyclists and vehicles, ride in the center of the right-most lane and try to stay



at least 3 feet away from parked cars (see Figure 3). In wide lanes where there is at least 3 feet clearance on each side of the bicyclist to ride side by side with vehicles, ride to the right of the traffic line (see Figure 4). Motorists should be able to safely pass with plenty of clearance.

Bicyclists should be visible to vehicles turning left from the opposite direction or driving straight through from their right (see Figure 5). Avoid riding on sidewalks or passing vehicles in intersections as these actions limit the ability of motorists to see bicyclists. Slow down to make eye contact with oncoming traffic if necessary.



Other Ways to Cross

Children and less experienced bicyclists may find it difficult to merge with traffic at busy intersections. These riders should cross as pedestrians by dismounting and walking their bikes within the crosswalk markings.

Riding on Freeway Shoulders & Sidewalks

Bicyclists are prohibited from riding on freeways at all times. Bicyclists should stay off sidewalks and ride on the road with traffic.

Bicyclists who ride on sidewalks pose a risk to both pedestrians and themselves. Motorists turning in and out of driveways are usually looking for other cars or pedestrians, not relatively fast-moving bicycles on sidewalks.

Sidewalks are a major danger zone for bicycling collisions. If you're new to riding or simply uncomfortable riding on busy streets, use routes with easier traffic conditions while learning to ride. Get training from local bicycle safety organizations where available.

Caution!

State law prohibits bicycling on sidewalks in business districts at all times. Where it is legal to ride on the sidewalk, bicyclists must yield to pedestrians, give an audible signal when passing, and ride 10 mph or less.

Bicycle Equipment

Helmets

A properly fitted helmet is the most effective action a bicyclist can take in minimizing the likelihood of brain injuries and deaths from collisions. Helmet use can help prevent 85 percent of all head and brain injuries when worn correctly.

Even though 70% of all fatal bicycle crashes involve head injuries, only 30% of all bicyclists wear bicycle helmets.

It's the law in Hawai'i that everyone under age 16 must wear a helmet while bicycling, but the reality is everyone is better protected with one on. Violators may be fined up to \$40. Make sure your helmet fits well and has the Consumer Product Safety Commission seal of approval.

AAA's Helmet Fitting Tips

1. Correct Size

Helmet must cover the forehead and be worn no more than an inch above the eyebrows.

2. Adjust Pads

Adjust foam pads inside the helmet for a snug fit.

3. Adjust Straps

Ear straps should form a "V" just below each ear.

4. Test Fit

Straps should only move one inch when the helmet is rocked.



Handlebars, Frames & Brakes

Make sure the brakes work and the bicycle fits you as required by law. This means that bicycle handlebars can't rise above the shoulders and obstruct the view. Bicycle frames should fit so bicyclists can stop, support and restart their bikes with ease.

Oversized bike frames that are too big for riders make stopping, supporting and restarting difficult. Bicyclists should be able to stand over the frame with both feet flat on the ground.

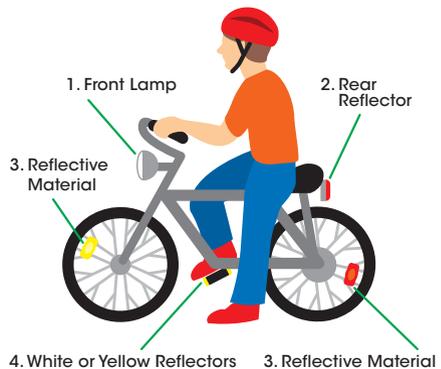
Hawai'i law requires a functioning brake on all bicycles. Being able to slow and stop the bike with good working brakes is probably the most important function for safe riding. Coaster (pedal backward) brakes should be able to lock the rear wheel on level ground. When pressed fully, hand brake levers should not touch (bottom out) on the handlebar.

Bicycling after Dark

There are about 1,500 bicycle collisions a year in Hawai'i that result in injuries or fatalities, many due to a lack of visibility.

It is the law that bicyclists must use headlights and reflectors when riding between thirty minutes after sunset until thirty minutes before sunrise. This equipment must be

1. **Front lamp emitting white light** that can be seen from at least 500 feet away, and
2. **Red rear reflector** that can be seen from 600 feet away, and
3. **Reflective material** or lighted lamps mounted on both wheels visible from at least 600 feet away from the front.



Highly recommended are:

4. **White or yellow reflectors** on each pedal, shoe or ankle visible from 200 feet away.

At night, watch out for motorists, joggers, walkers, wrong-way cyclists, and small animals. Also keep your eyes open for potholes, loose gravel, misplaced construction signs and even trash that will be hard to see at night.

Distracted and Impaired Riding

Alcohol is a contributing factor in 1 out of 4 crashes involving bicycle-related fatalities.

Riding while Drunk is Illegal

Never operate a vehicle with wheels—motorized or otherwise—after drinking or taking drugs. Drunk bicyclists can be fined up to \$250. Cyclists under 21 and over 13 years of age could lose their driver license or have its approval delayed for up to a year as a result of cycling while intoxicated.

Distracted Riding

Bicycling while wearing headphones is unsafe. Listening to music too loudly, talking on the phone or sending text messages while riding reduces alertness and response rate in traffic. Distracted riding endangers everyone.

Young Bicyclists

Not surprisingly, kids under 15 ride bikes four times more often than most adults. Bicycle safety tips



need to fit the age and skill level of individual riders, and the situations in which they will be riding.

Helmets & Other Safety Gear

Never let a child ride without a CPSC-approved helmet and provide plenty of praise when they put one on. Small children and new riders should also consider wearing other safety equipment, such as retro-reflective clothing, knee and elbow pads.

Basic Skills

Young bicyclists still learning basic skills should only ride with experienced cyclists, ride with caution and preferably on streets with slower traffic. Children should be trained to look all ways and yield to cross traffic before leaving a driveway or when entering a roadway from a corner or a crosswalk.

Teaching Kids under Age 8 to Ride

Adults should carefully assess bicycle riding capabilities for kids less than 8 years old. Parents should ride with them to determine if their kids are ready to ride under careful supervision on neighborhood streets. Here are some other tips for kids:

- Practice in a safe place away from moving vehicles, such as an empty parking lot, school playground, or vacant lot.
- Young children, who are not comfortable with riding in traffic, should dismount and walk their bikes across intersections.
- Kids need to know to look all ways (left, right and left again) and to yield before entering streets.
- Parents should be confident of their child's abilities when deciding to let kids ride without supervision.

Top Ten Basic Skills for Bicyclists

1. Mounting
2. Starting
3. Balancing
4. Riding in a straight line
5. Looking
6. Signaling
7. Turning
8. Slowing down
9. Stopping/braking
10. Dismounting

Share The Road...

FOR BICYCLISTS

- Hawai'i law requires helmets for riders under age 16, but it is recommended ALL bicyclists wear one.
- Regardless of riding experience, always choose bicycling routes carefully.
- Follow the same rules of the road as other road users, including riding in the same direction as traffic and following all the same traffic signs and signals.



- Ride on the roadway, bike lane, or shared pathway. Give pedestrians the right-of-way when in close contact.
- A bicyclist is allowed to ride in the center of the travel lane when the lane is too narrow for both car and bicycle to travel safely side by side.
- Maintain a straight line; ride predictably; and avoid swerving between parked cars.
- When riding with others, ride single file to allow motorists to pass you safely.
- Use hand signals to indicate stops, turns, and changes of direction.
- As you approach intersections, be aware of cars behind, beside, and in front of you who may try to cross your path. Motorists may not see bicyclists if they are looking for cars.
- Pay attention to parked cars. Drivers may pull out in front of you or open a door in your path.
- When riding at dusk or after dark, use appropriate lights and reflective gear.
- Keep your bicycle in good working condition.

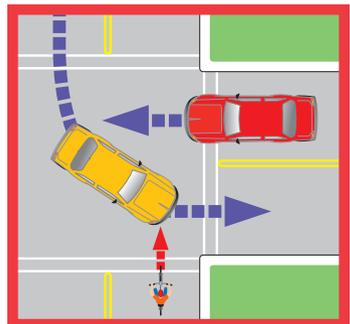
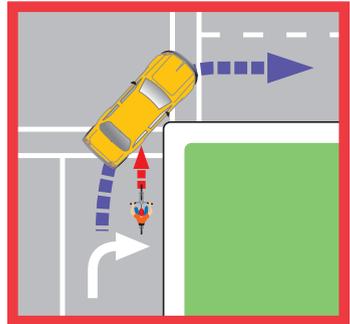
Share The Road...

FOR MOTORISTS

- Stay alert: avoid distractions while driving.
- Remember bicyclists are allowed to use the full lane for their safety when the lane is too narrow for a car and bicycle to pass side by side safely. This rule applies even when the bicyclist is moving slower than traffic. Wait patiently behind a bicyclist and pass to their left when it is safe.
- Slow down when encountering bicyclists or pedestrians.
- Give bicyclists extra room—at least three feet if possible—when passing them on the left. Always pass with caution without interfering with the safe operation of bicyclists.
- When making a right turn, be aware of the possible presence and speed of bicycles in the shoulder or right portion of the lane who may be approaching from the rear. Bicyclists travel faster than motorists think they do. Slow down or yield to bicyclists before turning.

- When making a left turn, be aware of the possible presence and speed of oncoming bicyclists from the opposite direction. Learn to look for bicyclists.
- When parked on the side of a street, look for passing bicyclists before opening your car door.

- Watch for cyclists and pedestrians before exiting a parking space or driveway.
- Avoid using your car horn near bicyclists or pedestrians—it could cause them to swerve into traffic or off the roadway and crash.
- Don't expect kids on bikes, inexperienced bicyclists, and pedestrians to know traffic laws or to behave predictably.



This guide is intended to provide information for safe bicycling in Hawai'i, including the value of using proper equipment, bicycle maintenance and the rules of the road. This guide is equally important for bicyclists and motorists. AAA provides a broad array of community resources and traffic safety information. Please call (800) 541-5552 for more information about safe bicycling or other traffic safety resources.



*This safety guide was prepared
with assistance
from the
Honolulu Department of
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and the
Hawaii Bicycling League.*



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