

Keeping your bicycle roadworthy

- Your brakes, tyres, chain, lights, reflector and bell must all be in good working order.
- Your bicycle should be the right size to allow you to touch the ground with both feet.
- When carrying goods, you should use a proper carrier or basket and take care that nothing is hanging loose.
- At night you must carry a lamp showing a white or yellow light to the front and a lamp showing a red light to the back. These are the minimum lighting requirements laid down by law. However, to be even more visible to motorists at night, you should:
 - add strips of reflective material to the bike (white to the front and red to the back),
 - wear a reflective armband, and
 - wear a "Sam Browne" reflective belt or reflective vest.



Bicycle checklist

- Handlebars should be square with the frame and level with the saddle. Movement should be neither too stiff nor too loose.
- When on the saddle, both feet should just touch the ground.
- Your wheels should be straight and in line. Replace wheels if they are buckled or out of alignment.
- Tighten loose spokes and replace any that are damaged.
- Make sure your tyres are properly inflated, with a good tread.
- Make sure mudguards are secure and well clear of the wheels.
- Check your gears and get them adjusted when necessary.
- Check your brake cables and adjust them when necessary. Replace them when frayed.
- Make sure the closed ends of brake shoes face the front.
- Make sure brake blocks are close to the rim of the wheel. Replace worn blocks.

- Check pedals and replace them when worn or broken.
- Make sure your lamps are white or yellow to the front and red at the back. Use a red reflector. Replace batteries when necessary and clean lenses.
- Make sure your bell is within easy reach of your thumb.
- Oil all moving parts.
- Wear a cycle helmet at all times.

A bicycle should have the following braking system:

- If it has one fixed wheel or is designed for a child under 7 years of age, it should have at least one brake;
- If it is designed for an older child or an adult or neither wheel is fixed, it should have one brake acting on the front wheel and another for the back wheel.

Cyclists' protective clothing and equipment

As a cyclist, you are a vulnerable road user and your bicycle will not protect you if there is a crash. The law does not require you to wear a helmet. However, in the interest of road safety, and in your personal interest, you should wear a helmet at all times.

When buying a helmet:

- look for a mark to show that it has been made to a recognised national standard, and
- check that it does not restrict your field of vision or your hearing.

When you own a helmet you should:

- replace it when it is damaged or dropped,
- adjust the straps on your helmet to fit you correctly. Always check the manufacturers instructions.



Cycling safely

- You must obey the rules applying at traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, pelican crossings and zebra crossings.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars except when signalling or changing gears.
- Keep both feet on the pedals.
- Make sure you keep to the left. Always look behind and give the proper signal before moving off, changing lanes or making a turn.

- Do not take up a position on the 'inside' of a large vehicle out of view of the driver. Instead, stay behind if the large vehicle has stopped at a junction with the intention of turning left.
- When turning left, keep close to the left-hand side of the road and watch out for pedestrians.
- When turning right, get into the left side of the right-turning lane, look behind and give the proper signal before you move out and ensure traffic in that lane is not going straight ahead. On steep hills or busy roads, pull into the left-hand side of the road and wait until there is a break in traffic in both directions to let you make the turn safely.
- When cycling alongside traffic stopped in line, be aware of gaps in the traffic to allow other vehicles to turn across the stationary lane. The view of the car that is turning may be blocked due to the traffic build-up.
- In poor weather conditions, it may be safer to dismount and cross the roadway on foot. Where available, you should use a pedestrian or controlled crossing.
- Wear reflective clothing at all times.



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Cycle tracks

A cycle track or lane is a reserved part of a roadway for bicycles (not motorcycles) and can be either:

- mandatory, or
- non-mandatory.

A mandatory cycle track is bordered by a continuous white line on the righthand side. It is only for bicycles and motorised wheelchairs, so no other drivers may use it or park in it.

A non-mandatory cycle track has a broken white line on the right-hand side. The cyclist may leave this type of cycle track if:

- they have already indicated they want to change direction,
- a bus is letting passengers on or off at a bus stop located beside the track, or
- a vehicle is parked in the track while loading or unloading (see Section 10).
- Mandatory cycle tracks are reserved 24 hours a day, unless an upright information sign at the start of and/or the side of the track shows another period of time.

A cycle track can also be a reserved part of a footpath or other area off the road. A cyclist must use a cycle track if it is provided. If a cycle track is two-way, meaning bicycles travelling in opposite directions at the same time can use it, cyclists should stay as near as possible to the left-hand side of their track.

You must obey cycle track lights.

Rules on cycle tracks for other road users

Driving

No vehicle (other than a motorised wheelchair) may cross into or over a mandatory cycle track unless the driver is entering or leaving a place or a side road.

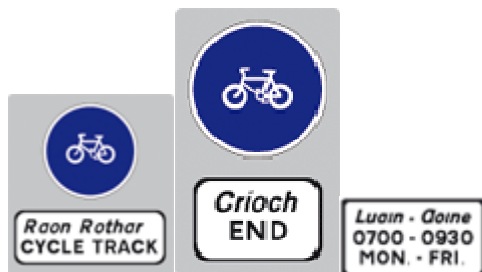
Parking

No driver may park a vehicle in a mandatory cycle track.

A driver may park in a non-mandatory cycle track for up to 30 minutes, but only if they are loading or unloading their vehicle and there is no alternative parking available. Remember the basic duty of care and do not obstruct a cycle track.

If a driver parks their vehicle in a cycle track that operates for only some of the day (shown on an information plate under the cycle track sign), they must move the vehicle by the time the next operating period starts.

If there is no information plate, it means the cycle track operates all the time and no parking is allowed.



The table below sets down particular road traffic rules on cycling which you must obey.

Do's

- Do cycle in single file when overtaking.
- Do allow extra space when overtaking parked vehicles as the doors may open suddenly.
- Do cycle on cycle tracks where they are provided.
- Do cycle in single file if cycling beside another person would endanger, inconvenience or block other traffic or pedestrians.
- Do cycle in single file in heavy traffic.
- Do give your name and address, if requested, to a Garda.
- Do obey signals given by a Garda or school warden.

Do obey all rules applying to road traffic signs and road markings, including signs and signals at traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, pelican crossings, level crossings and zebra crossings.

Do know the meaning of hand signals for cyclists and use them when cycling.

Don'ts

Don't ever ride or attempt to ride a bicycle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Don't ever ride on or across a footpath, other than where a cycle track is provided on the footpath.

Don't ever hold on to a moving vehicle.

Don't ever cycle side-by-side with more than one cyclist.

Don't ever cycle against the flow of traffic on one-way streets.

Don't ever cycle through red traffic lights or pedestrian lights.

Don't ever cycle on a motorway.

Don't ever cycle in a contra-flow bus lane.

Don't ever cycle without appropriate lighting during hours of darkness.

The table below lists the actions that you should take or avoid taking in the interests of your safety and that of other road users.

Do's

Do keep well back when cycling behind a motor vehicle in slowmoving traffic.

Do take extra care on wet or icy roads or when it is windy.

Do use your bell as a warning device only.

Do take extra care and look well ahead for uneven road surfaces, drains and other obstructions so that you do not have to swerve suddenly in front of another vehicle.

Do use a bus lane, and be extra vigilant when a bus is stopped and about to move off from the stop.

Don'ts

Don't ever hold on to or lean against stationary vehicles.

Don't ever weave in and out of moving traffic.

Don't ever carry a passenger unless your bicycle has been built or specially adapted to carry one.

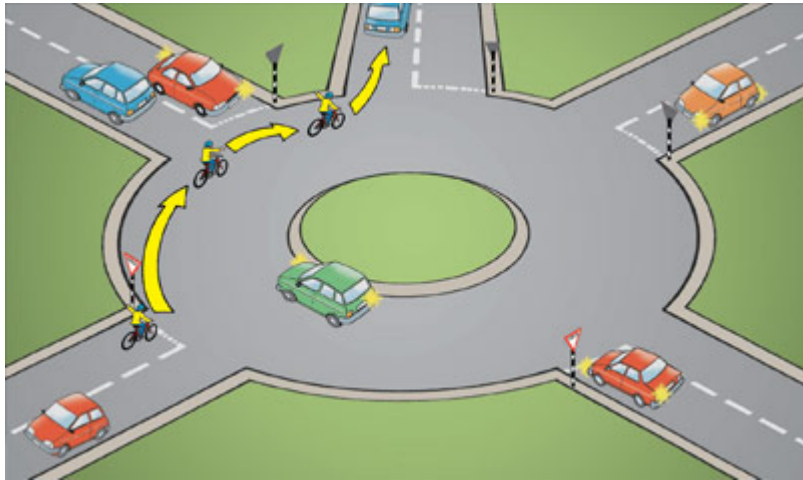
Don't ever use a personal entertainment system when cycling.

Don't ever use a mobile phone while cycling.

Cyclists on roundabouts

- Be particularly careful when approaching a roundabout.
- Be aware that drivers may not see you easily.
- Watch out for vehicles crossing your path as they leave or enter the roundabout.
- Take extra care when cycling across exits.
- Give plenty of room to long vehicles on the roundabout, as they need more space. Do not ride in the spaces they need to use to get around the roundabout. Be aware of the driver's blind spots. If you can't see the driver, they can't see

you. Indeed, it may be safer to wait until they have cleared the roundabout before you go on it.



Walking beside or along the road

- If there is a footpath you must use it.
- If there is no footpath, you must walk as near as possible to the righthand side of the road (facing oncoming traffic).
- Do not walk more than two abreast. If the road is narrow or carries heavy traffic, you should walk in single file.
- You should always wear reflective clothing at night when walking outside built-up areas.
- You should always carry a torch when walking at night time. Crossing the road

Follow the do's and don'ts below to make sure you cross the road safely.

Do's

Do look for a safe place to cross.

Do stop and wait near the edge of the path. If there is no path, stand close to the edge of the road.

Do look right and left and listen for traffic.

Do let any traffic coming in either direction pass, then look right and left again.

Do walk briskly straight across the road when it is clear.

Do continue to watch and listen for traffic while crossing.

Don'ts

Don't cross at a corner or bend in the road.

Don't cross near the brow of a hill.

Don't cross near or at parked vehicles.

Don't cross where there are guard rails along the footpath.

Don't hold onto or climb onto moving vehicles

Don't run across the road.

Taking care near buses or trams

Take extra care if crossing a road where there is a bus lane (especially a contraflow bus lane), cycle lane or tram track. You should also be careful when getting on or off buses and when crossing the road at or near bus stops.

REMEMBER Never cross in front of a stopped bus.

Safe crossing places

Use the following places to cross the road safely.

Zebra crossing

This is marked by yellow flashing beacons. The actual crossing area is marked by black and white "zebra" stripes.



Drivers must stop to let you cross. As they approach the crossing, they should slow and be prepared to stop. They must stop behind the stop line if there is one and must not enter any part of the crossing.

Drivers must not overtake or park within areas covered by zig-zag markings on either side of the crossing. More information in the [Parking section](#).

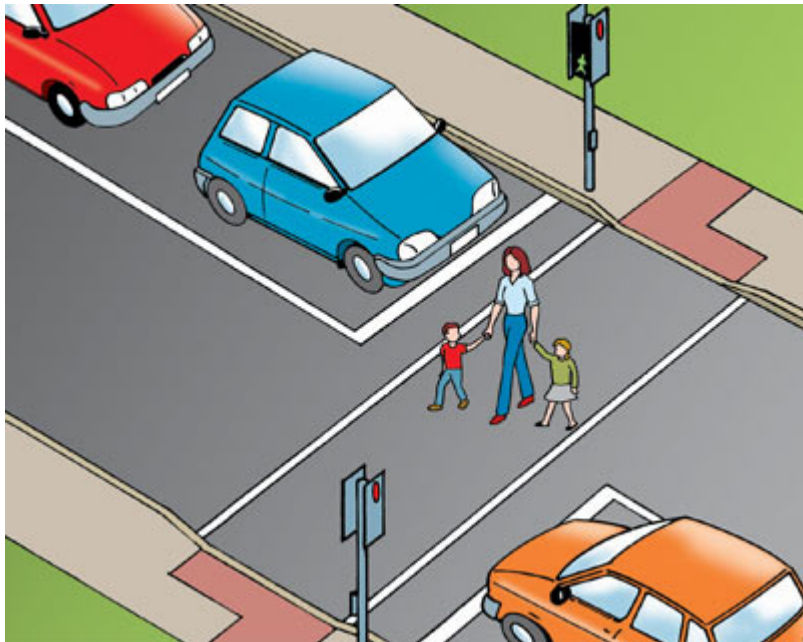
- You do not have the right-of-way over other traffic until you actually step onto the crossing. Never step onto the crossing if this would cause a driver to brake or swerve suddenly.

- You must not cross within the area marked by zig-zag white lines if these are provided on either side of a zebra crossing. If they are not provided, you must not cross within 15 metres of the crossing.
- If there is a central island, treat each side as a separate crossing.
- Always watch carefully for approaching traffic. Place one foot on the crossing to indicate that you wish to cross. Wait until traffic has stopped before you start crossing.

Pedestrian lights

Pedestrian lights consist of a set of traffic lights for drivers and a set of light signals for pedestrians. Usually there is a push button for pedestrians. When you press it, the traffic lights will turn to red after a short while.

- Do not cross while the "wait" or "red man" light is showing.
- Cross with care when the "cross now" or "green man" is showing.
- If there is a central island at the pedestrian lights, the "green man" or "cross now" sign will let you cross only as far as that. You must then press the push button at another set of lights to cross the rest of the way.
- For vision-impaired pedestrians an audible bleep signal and/or vibrating panel on the push button may be in place to indicate when it is safe to cross.



Pelican crossing

At this crossing, an amber light will flash for a short period after the red light for drivers goes out. Similarly, the "green man" light for pedestrians will flash for a short time before changing to the "red man" light. A flashing amber light at a pelican crossing gives priority to pedestrians.



Traffic lights

If you are crossing at traffic lights, but there are no signals for pedestrians, check the lights in both directions. When the traffic on the road you wish to cross is governed by a red light, cross carefully. Look out for traffic that might be turning onto the road you wish to cross and remember that some traffic lights allow traffic to proceed in some lanes when other lanes are stopped. Be especially careful at junctions with filter lanes.

Uncontrolled crossing places

A traffic island is provided to help pedestrians. These are safer places to cross because the crossing is divided into two parts.

Don't cross the road in the area in front of a truck. This is a truck drivers blind spot.

REMEMBER If you can't see the driver, they can't see you.

Information Signs

This section includes road signs showing directions and the location of services or other places of interest to tourists.

Advance direction signs



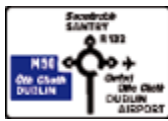
Motorway



National road



National road



Regional road

Direction signs (at junctions)



Motorway direction sign



National road direction signs



Regional road direction sign



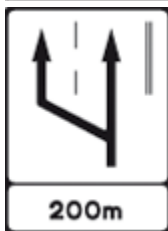
Local road direction sign



Destination distance sign



Town or village sign



Slow lane sign