



St. John Ambulance

SAVING LIVES
at work, home and play

Bike Safety Tips from St. John Ambulance

According to the law in Alberta, Bicycles ridden on the road are considered vehicles and are subject to the same rules and regulations. Because of the size disadvantage to a cyclist, there are numerous “Rules of the Road” to help protect them, including:

- Ride with the flow of traffic, never against it
- Obey all traffic signs, markers and signals
- Keep as far right as possible except to pass or avoid obstacles
- Ride in a straight line, don't weave or be unpredictable, especially on streets
- Ride in single file
- Keep both hands ready to break
- Never pass on the right
- Make eye contact with drivers
- Never ride in cross-walks, dismount and walk across or ride outside of the crosswalk
- Do not use a set of full earphones when riding
- Use caution and warn others of your approach (bell or voice)
- Scan the road behind you before signaling or turning
- Reflectors are mandatory, as are lights after dark

Fit Your Bike

One of the most critical aspects of your comfort on a bicycle is to select one that is the correct size. To do so, stand over the bike (straddle the bike) with your feet flat on the ground. Lift the bike seat and handle bars up as much as you can. There should be between 5 and 15 cm clearance between the tires and the ground. Alternatively, this measurement can be taken from the top of the top tube to the groin.

Adjusting the seat to the correct height is critical for the comfort of the rider. With help (or leaning up against a wall), sit on the bike in a normal riding position and turn the pedals until the cranks are vertical. You should just be able to fully straighten (lock) the extended leg's knee in this position without coming off the seat (the heel will be low compared to the pedal). Repeat for the other leg as most people have one that is shorter than the other and the proper adjustment is for the shorter leg. Adjust the seat height as required.

Wear the Gear

Riders under the age of 18 are required by law to wear a helmet and as adult riders we should set the example. Ensuring your helmet is correctly fit will save your life in the event of a collision. Follow these procedures to fit your helmet correctly:

1. Place the helmet on your head, with the helmet level front to back.
2. The helmet should be approximately 1-2 fingers above your eyebrows.
3. Make sure the helmet fits snugly, it should not move when you shake your head or bend over.
4. Adjust the side straps to form a 'V' just below and in front of the earlobe.
5. Do up the chin strap.
6. Adjust the chin strap so that there is only room for one finger. Moving the jaw as if yawning should bring the strap quite tight.
7. Make sure that the helmet can only be removed by undoing the chin strap.



Know the Signals

The signaling of your intentions as a driver of a vehicle is required by the Alberta Traffic Safety Act. To signal your intentions follow these three simple diagrams:



For more information on park and pathway bylaws, pathway and bikeway maps and bicycle safety tips, visit the City of Calgary website at www.calgary.ca.