

# Living Safely

with disabilities and special health needs

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## Bicycle Safety Checklist

Before going for a ride on a bicycle, it is important to make sure the bicycle is working. Go through this checklist before each bicycle ride.

- Test the brakes to make sure they are working properly.
- Make sure the reflectors on the bicycle are secure.
- Test to make sure that the gears shift smoothly.
- Be sure that the tires are fully inflated and are secure.

Always wear a bicycle helmet to prevent head injuries. Be sure that your helmet is the correct size for your head and fits securely. Visit this website to learn how to fit a bicycle helmet properly.

[https://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/bicycles/pdf/8019\\_Fitting-A-Helmet.pdf](https://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/bicycles/pdf/8019_Fitting-A-Helmet.pdf)

When going for a bicycle ride, avoid wearing loose clothing that might get caught in the bicycle chains or wheel spokes. Some things to avoid wearing on bicycle rides are flip flops, long shirts, skirts, or dresses.

Here is a list of tips to help make your bicycle ride as safe as possible.

- No matter where you ride a bicycle, always stay alert and look for vehicles, pedestrians, road damage, and objects that may be around you.
- Don't ride when you are tired. Avoid using a cell phone or other activities that will distract you when riding your bicycle.
- Always follow traffic rules and obey road signs and traffic signals. Make sure you stop at all stop signs and at red traffic lights.
- Always ride your bicycle on the right side of the road. This means that you ride your bicycle in the same direction of cars and trucks. Never drive on the left side of the road with vehicles driving toward you.
- When riding early in the morning, evening, or when it is dark, wear bright or white colored clothing. Avoid wearing dark clothes because drivers of vehicles around you may not be able to see you. To be safest when riding a bicycle, wear items that are reflective or glow-in-the-dark so drivers can see you better.

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## Bicycle Safety Checklist – Continued from previous page.

- Your bicycle should have reflectors, too. Most states require bicycles to have a front light and a rear reflector. A headlight on a bicycle can help others see you when riding your bike in areas that are dark or not well lit. Without a headlight, drivers are unable to see your bicycle at night.
- If you need to cross a street with a bicycle cross at street corners with crosswalks or traffic lights. If you can't see clearly on both sides of the street, it is not a safe place to cross. Avoid crossing from in between vehicles, trees, and other things that would prevent a driver from seeing you.
- Stop at the curb before crossing. Before crossing,
  - Look to your left, then to your right, then to your left again.
  - Look for any person who is walking nearby. Be sure they are safe and not walking in your path.
  - Look for cars, trucks, motorcycles, buses, and other bicycles. Be sure the drivers are paying attention and are going to stop before you cross the street. It is helpful to make eye contact with the driver. Be sure vehicles around you have stopped completely.
  - Always stay aware when crossing a street. Once you have started crossing the street, remain focused until you reach the other side.

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We value the expertise of our partners in safety who have demonstrated their commitment to inclusive healthy communities. Portions of this resource have been adapted from Safe Kids Worldwide ([www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Association ([www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)).

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