

3.4 Clothing

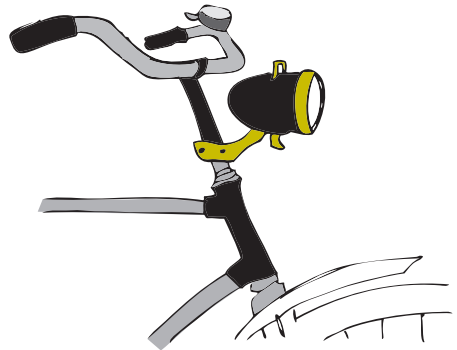
Wear bright and/or fluorescent colours to ensure you are seen, especially when cycling during times of darkness and/or times of low visibility. While not essential for cycling, items such as Lycra knicks and gloves can increase your riding comfort.

Do not wear bell-bottom pants or baggy pants as these may get entangled with the bicycle gear.¹ Wear proper footwear like shoes or closed/strapped sandals and avoid open flip-flops or slippers that provide little or no grip at all, and which have the tendency to fall off while cycling.



3.5 Lights

During times of darkness and/or times of low visibility, it is mandatory that you must have a lamp showing white light to the front and another lamp or red reflector showing a red light or a red reflector towards the rear, both of which must be visible from a reasonable distance. No bicycle in Singapore is permitted to show a red light to the front, and any light other than a red light to the rear.²



¹Source: Singapore Police Force - Feedback on Cycling on Footways as of 15th April 2009

²Source: Road Traffic Act (CHAPTER 276, SECTION 140) as of 15th April 2009

4. BASIC SAFETY TIPS

Whichever type of bike chosen, the frame size must be right for you to ensure you can get on and off your bike safely. When you straddle a racing, touring or hybrid bike, the clearance distance between your crotch and the top tube of the main bicycle frame should be at least 3cm. For a mountain bike, this distance should be about 8cm.

4.1 Seat Height

Your knees should be slightly bent (no more than 30 degree angle) when you're in the proper pedaling position - with the balls of your feet on the pedal. If your hips/pelvis sways from side-to-side the seat is too high.

4.2 Seat Position

Adjust the seat so that your feet are placed naturally above the pedals. Some riders prefer their seats tilted slightly forward or backward. However, if the seat is tilted too much upward it can lead to pressure points. Injuries can occur when your seat is tilted too far downwards, causing you to slide downwards while cycling and applying extra pressure on your arms, hands and knees.

4.3 Handlebar Angle

Handlebars that are too close/far may result in you experiencing neck, shoulder, back and hand pains. Riding with the wrong handlebar angle can also lead to numbness in the palms of your hands.

4.4 Handlebar Height

Set the height of your handlebars higher than the seat if you prefer a more upright riding position. Setting them at the same height as the seat will give a slightly forward riding position and some people prefer this. One of the reasons for the handlebar being too low is when you buy a bicycle frame that is too small for you. Handlebars can be bought in different widths and are sized according to the type of bike. For racing or touring bikes, they should be about the same width as your shoulders. For mountain bikes, they need to be a little wider.



5. CYCLING SAFELY AT NIGHT

Riding at night can be as enjoyable as riding during the daylight - it just takes a little more awareness. Stay alert, recognize the dangers and dress accordingly. Remember that rider visibility is vital at all times, not just at night.

If you ride at night you must, by law, use lights - a continuous white light at the front and a red light at the rear. Types and prices of lights vary enormously - don't make your decision on price alone. For the front, look for a bright quartz halogen light that produces an unbroken white beam.

For the rear, flashing red Light-emitting diode (LED) types are acceptable, but beware of the cheaper variety as their performance can be questionable. Ensure that both the front and rear lights are visible from a reasonable distance.



No bicycle in Singapore is permitted to show a red light to the front, and any light other than a red light to the rear.

A tip for cycling at night in traffic is to aim the front light at the eye level of car drivers to maximise your chance of being seen. If you are not in traffic, aim the light beam lower to illuminate the ground ahead of your bike.

5.1 Being Alert

The number one rule is to cycle defensively. Watch out for joggers, walkers, other cyclists and cars - and make sure they know you're there.

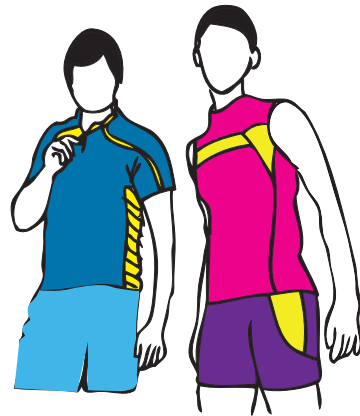
At night, cars approaching with their headlights on high beam can dazzle a rider, so be prepared. Watch your shadow if you are approached by a car from behind. If your shadow does not start to move to the left as the car approaches, move your bike to the left.



5.2 High Visibility Clothing

Just as bright fluoro clothes are best for daylight riding, white clothes are necessary for rider visibility at night. Best of all are garments with reflective panels. Bike shops sell jackets, shirts and lightweight vests that slip over your ordinary cycling clothing.

Highly recommended also, are reflective anklets, cloth or plastic reflective tape and stickers. These are cheap, weigh virtually nothing, are available in red or white for the rear or front of the bike respectively, and can be attached anywhere on the bike, helmet or rider.



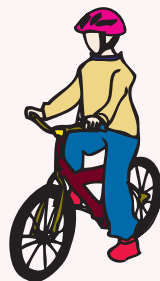
6. ROAD SAFETY & CHALLENGES ON THE ROADS

6.1 Handy List of Road Safety Tips

Regardless of whether you're new to cycling, or if you've been cycling for years, road safety is crucial to ensuring your safety, and others. This handy reference list presents you with the essential tips to ensuring a safe and enjoyable ride for you.

Starting off

1. Look behind you and to both sides before moving off.

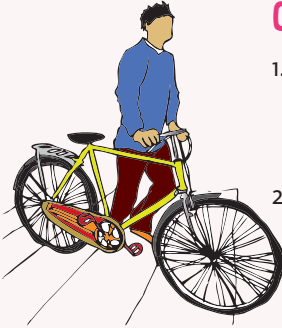


Controlling road position

1. Keep left unless turning right and ride in a straight line with the traffic flow.
2. Ride at least one metre away from parked cars. Someone could open their door unexpectedly!
3. Keep a safe distance away from the kerb.
4. Don't follow cars or other vehicles too closely.
5. Always check for traffic behind you. It helps to listen for approaching cars too.
6. Keep control of your bike. Ride safely to control your speed and braking.
7. Don't swerve or make sudden turns as drivers may not be able to react fast enough to avoid colliding with you.
8. Watch out for potential hazards - potholes, gravel and drainage holes.
9. Look out for vehicles coming in and out of driveways. Be particularly alert near driveways, gateways and intersections.

Braking smoothly

1. Use your front and back brakes.
2. Stop in a straight line with complete control over your bike.



Crossing and signaling

1. Remember simple road rules such as stop at the kerb, look right, look left, then right again, listen for cars approaching and think before crossing.
2. Give hand signals clearly and in good time.

Turning left

1. Always check behind you and coming from the right.
2. Signal clearly if you intend to stop and give way or turn into the new road.
3. Turn at a speed that allows you to keep full control over the bike.

Turning right

1. Check behind you before signalling and only move to the right when the road is clear.
2. Move as close as possible to the left of the centre of the road.
3. Signal to stop if the intersection isn't clear or signal to turn if the intersection is clear.
4. Keep both hands on the handle bars while you are turning.
5. Move through the intersection and ride to the left of the centre of the new road.

Keeping control on hills

1. When riding uphill, keep a straight line without wobbling or swerving.
2. When riding downhill, keep a constant road position.
3. Always keep your bike under control with front and back brakes.
4. Make sure you have both hands on the handlebars except when signalling.

For your own safety, it is important to first be aware of the hazards when cycling so you may exercise the necessary precautions. You must always be mindful of your surroundings and to dismount your bicycle if it is too dangerous.

6.2 Surface Hazards

You must watch out for:

Irregular surfaces like holes, raised and depressed surfaces

You may either ride over these obstacles slowly or carefully cycle around to avoid them. Also keep a look out for roadside hazards near the kerb like litter, drains and drainage gratings.

Slippery and/or loose surfaces like sand, gravel and puddles

Ride over them slowly and corner slowly without tilting the bicycle too much. Where possible, avoid cycling over oil patches, which can be identified by rainbow coloured sheen on the patch surface. If there's a need to ride over them, take the straightest path, keep the bicycle as vertical as possible and be prepared to put one foot down to keep balance. Also, avoid applying the brakes suddenly when riding over these slippery and loose surfaces, otherwise, be prepared for an attempt to maintain balance should the bicycle skid.

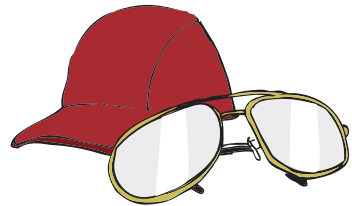
Sharp objects

Avoid cycling over sharp objects such as glass, nails and sharp metal pieces. Should your tire go flat, do not continue pedaling and carefully reduce your speed to a stop. Dismount your bicycle and walk with it.

6.3 Hot Weather

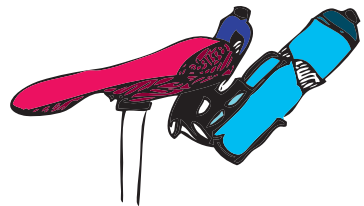
Singapore is generally a hot and humid country with the exception of occasional rainfalls. It is important to check the weather before embarking on a cycling trip so you may prepare yourself accordingly.

- ▶ When the sun is bright and glaring, wear additional protective clothing like caps and sunglasses to help make it easier to keep your eyes on the road and around you.
- ▶ Plan your route so that it includes paths with lots of shade.



Constantly hydrate yourself by keeping water easily accessible to you without having to open your backpack.

- ▶ Water bottle cages are designed so you can reach for your bottle with ease, and there are many push-pull cap bottles available to enable you to drink water with one hand (i.e. there is no need to unscrew the bottle).

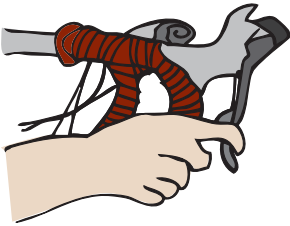


6.4 Wet Weather

Rain makes the roads slippery, so you should exercise more caution on wet roads:

Visibility

It is harder to see in wet weather. Wear bright clothing, and if necessary use your lights so other motorists are aware of your presence. Avoid cycling in the rain where possible.



Braking

This also enables the brakes to dry off and increases their effectiveness. Where possible, try braking your bicycle on wet roads in a quiet street with no traffic to familiarize yourself with the feel.

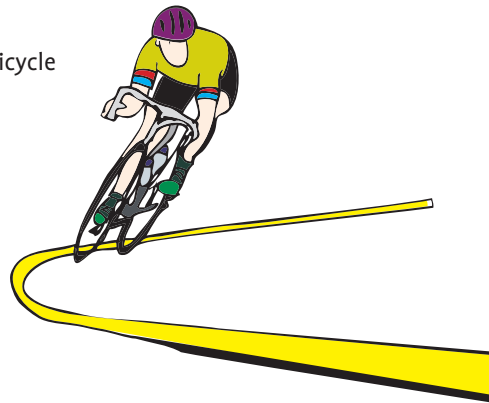
Cycle slowly on wet roads and allow for a longer braking distance so you may apply your brakes gently.

Cornering

Turn around corners slowly while keeping your bicycle as upright as possible.

Puddles

Avoid wet puddles whenever possible. They not only provide less traction, there may also be potholes, sharp objects and other obstacles hidden under them.



6.5 Slopes and Hills

It is good to get a bicycle that provides for gear changing if you always have to cycle up and down slopes. It is also important to practice and familiarize yourself with gear changing. Here are some tips to help you select the right gear:

- ▶ Always pedal forward and pedal with less force when changing gears.
- ▶ Change into a low, easy gear before stopping. This will make it easier for you to start off again.
- ▶ When cycling on a level terrain, choose a gear that you're comfortable with, which is a balance between a gear where you have to spin the pedals too quickly (low gear) and one where it is too difficult pedal. Low, easy gears will cause you to bounce on your seat from pedaling too quickly. High, hard gears that require you to push hard may cause knee problems.
- ▶ Change to low and easy gears when going uphill. Change gears a little distance before reaching the hill to preserve your momentum.



7. SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Learning to ride a bike is a rewarding experience for all children. It gives a great sense of achievement, helps develop balance and coordination and encourages social contact.

7.1 What to Buy

The best bike for your child is one that is easy to handle and has a frame suitable for your child's body shape.



When buying a bike for a child, it is important to consider:

- ▶ **Handlebars**
(BMX or flat style is better)
- ▶ **Wheels** (size and type)
- ▶ **Brakes**
- ▶ **Bottom bracket**