



LET'S RIDE!

Tips for staying safe on the road and making the most of your bike.

Podal Ready
cycle skills for everyone

 **Greater Wellington**
Te Pane Matua Taiao

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Set yourself up for riding

Make sure you and your bike are safe and legal.

Helmets, brakes and lights



Wear a bike helmet that fits properly. The helmet and straps should feel snug. Helmets protect you once – replace yours when it gets old or damaged.



You need good brakes on the front and back wheels so you can stop quickly if you need to.



Use front and back lights if you ride between sunset and sunrise, or if visibility is bad. Don't dazzle – point your front light down a bit. Bikes must have reflectors too.

Do the right thing

Ride responsibly – follow the rules and be kind. Remember that other people make mistakes. For example, obey the Give Way rules, stop at red lights, and pass other people carefully and without startling them.

Bike checklist

Use this bike checklist before a ride

Air – keep tyres pumped to the right pressure – usually written on the side of the tyre. Use a bike pump, not a service station/car pump. Check the tread isn't worn out. Check the wheel spins freely without wobbling, and there are no broken spokes.

Brakes – wheel the bike forwards and check each brake by pulling on the levers one at a time. The brake pads should fully touch the rims or disc when on.



Chain – check the chain has clean oil on it and can move freely. The chain should look black or silver, not rusty. A little oil should come off if you touch it. If dirty oil has built up, clean that off first before adding more oil.

Direction – with the front wheel “parked” between your legs, try to turn the handlebars firmly. The wheel should turn with the handlebars, and the handlebars shouldn't feel loose or wobbly.

Drop the bike gently from about 10cm and listen and feel for any unusual rattles. Tighten any bolts that have come loose.



Image: Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

Plan a ride

Where and when you ride can make a big difference to your ride. Plan new journeys before you ride – eg, with maps or a phone app. You might spot great places to stop off, favourite roads or paths to include, or hills or busy roads to avoid.

Try city routes at a quiet time first. Advice or company from someone who already rides can also help you get started.

You don't need special clothes for a local bike ride – you can dress for your destination. Sports gear can be good for hot days or longer rides. Wear something light, bright or reflective if you ride at night. Avoid long, loose clothing. If you carry lots of stuff, a rack and pannier bag might be a good idea.

Skills

Stopping in a hurry

For a quick stop in an emergency, use both brakes. Brace your arms and move your weight back – this helps you avoid pitching forwards. Watch your balance so you don't fall. Brake in a straight line if you can.

Signalling a turn

Think ahead – check and signal before you make the turn, so you have both hands on the bars for turning. Only take your hand off the bars if you can stay in control.

Look, signal, look again and move if it's clear.

When you signal, put your arm out straight for 3 seconds.

Making the most of your gears

Try out your gears to see which ones work best for you uphill, downhill and on the flat. You want to be able to turn the pedals easily, but not so fast that you can't pedal smoothly.

Getting used to an e-bike

E-bikes unlock more journeys for more people. You'll sweat less and get the e-bike grin. A few things are a bit different to riding an ordinary bike.

- Be ready for the acceleration when you set off. Whee!
- Most e-bikes have great brakes, but leave more room to stop if you're going faster.
- E-bikes are heavier. Practise a stable stop with one or both feet down.
- You'll go faster than others, especially uphill. Watch out for hazards and pass other people carefully when it's safe.



Image: Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

Riding in traffic

Look for hazards and be ready to stop.

See, be seen and communicate.

Be aware of others and whether they can see you, eg, past parked cars.

Let people know what you are going to do, eg, by signalling. Make eye contact if you can.

Ride left when safe, but stay away from hazards, like car doors that could open.

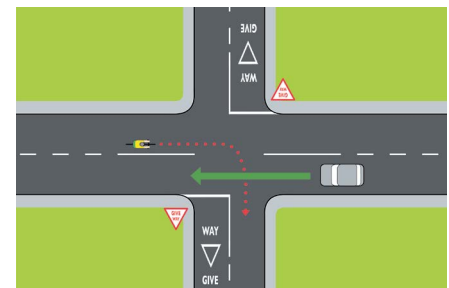
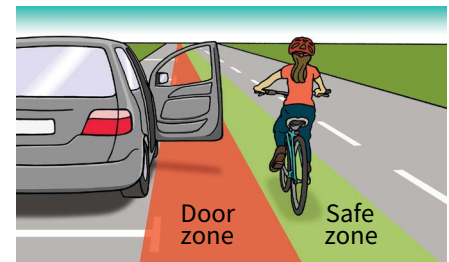
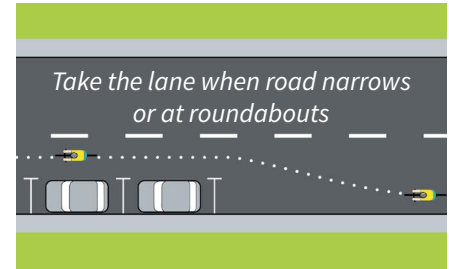
Move further out (take the lane) if you need to, but be kind and let following traffic pass when safe.

Do the right thing at intersections

Follow the Give Way rules at intersections, including roundabouts.

Stop fully at stop signs and red traffic lights.

The [Road Code](#) describes the Give Way rules in full detail.





Road signs and markings

You can ride in bus lanes, but not in bus-only lanes.



Sharrow markings (a bike with a double arrow) are a reminder that people on bikes can take the lane.



Advanced stop boxes (green, with bike symbols) give you space to wait at the front of a queue – if you can get there safely.



Cycle lanes are marked or signposted. An Except Cycles sign shows you can ride somewhere other vehicles can't go – eg, past a No Entry sign.



Shared paths are marked or signposted. Give way to people walking.

Some have dedicated areas for walking and biking.



You can ride in a shared zone.

Give way to people walking and be aware of other vehicles.





Riding with others

Think about the riders around you, and other road users around the group. Leave plenty of braking space in front of you. New riders or children might need extra help. It's a good idea to have an adult ride behind for encouragement and guidance.

Don't ride with more than two riders side-by-side. If you pass parked or moving vehicles, move into single file. Riding single file can also be a good idea on corners, hills and roads with heavy traffic or poor visibility.

Footpaths and shared paths

When you ride on a path that's marked for sharing:

- Give way to people moving more slowly, eg, on foot
- Ride slower than you ride on the road
- Pass people carefully, staying 1m away, or further if possible
- Avoid startling anyone – call out politely or ring a bell before you get close
- Try to ride on the left and pass on your right

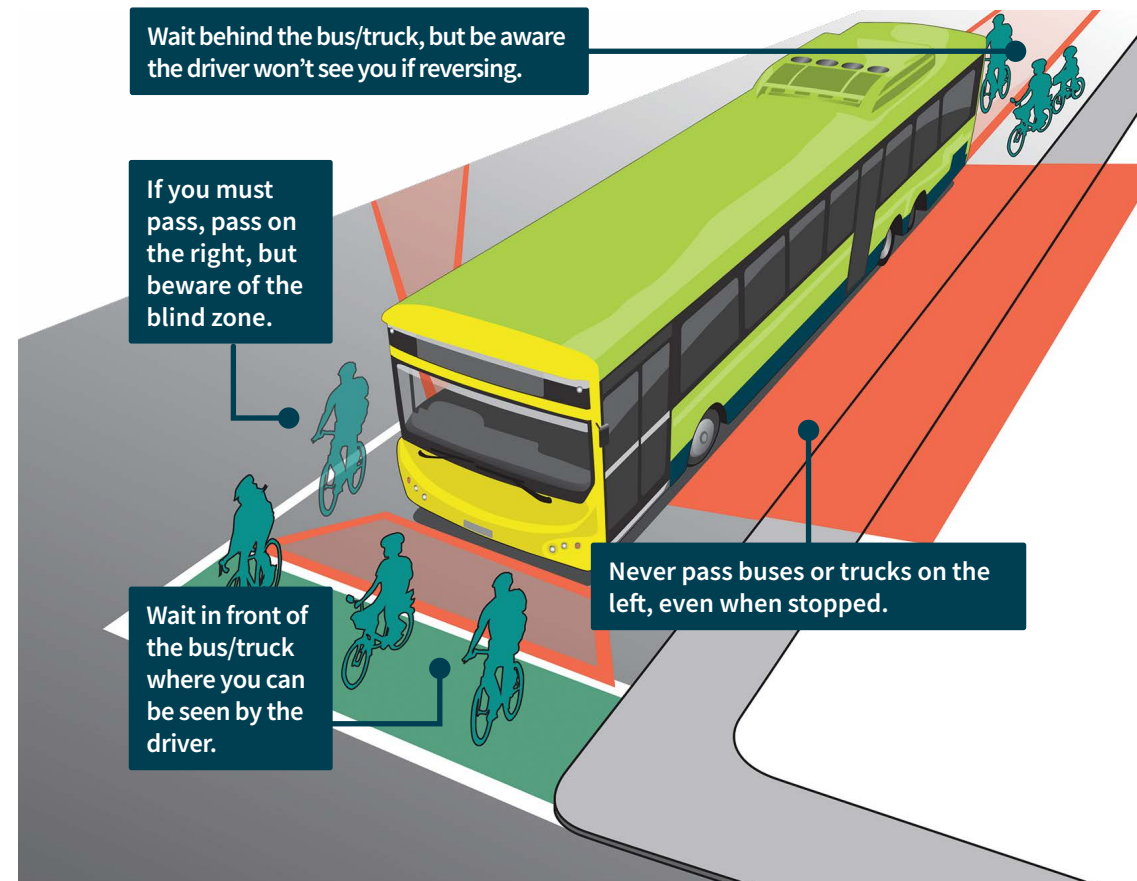
Watch out for heavy vehicles

Trucks and buses have blind spots where the driver can't see you, and they may need to swing wide or cut the corner when turning.



- Ride to be seen and be predictable don't swerve in and out of gaps.
- Stay back if a truck or bus is turning, or may be about to turn.
- Stop where the driver can see you.
- In a queue, wait behind trucks and buses – it's safer than trying to pass.
- If in doubt, stay back and stay safe.
- Choose safe routes.

Visit www.sharetheroad.org.nz for more info.



Ending your journey (security tips)

Always lock your bike! Even a few minutes while you pop into the dairy is enough time for a bike thief.

Use a good lock, and use it right

Buy a good D-lock or chain. Thin cable locks are easy to cut. Ask your local bike shop for advice and expect to spend at least \$60. If you have a high-end bike or an e-bike, buy a great lock, or two.

Lock your bike through the frame, not just a wheel or around the forks. If you have a quick-release seat or wheels, lock those too. Take accessories with you.



Pick a good place

Find something solid to lock your bike to. A bike rack is best. Some signposts aren't fixed in place.

Locking your bike in a busy place may mean a thief has less time to attack your lock without being noticed.

At school or work, watch out for places a thief could get to – don't trust that a private garage is secure.

Be kind, and don't block a path or doorway.

Lock your bike at home too. Don't leave your bike in a shared area or an open yard, garage or carport.

Write down your details

Write down the serial number of your bike. Turn your bike over to find it, stamped on the frame between the pedals. Take photos to help you describe your bike if it's stolen.

You can register your bike on the NZ Police SNAP system at snap.org.nz. If your bike is stolen, call 105 or report it at 105.police.govt.nz for the best chance of getting it back.



Image: Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency

Useful links

Cycle skills

Getting ready to ride? Want to make the journey to work more comfortable? Brush up on your cycle skills at a free Cycling in the City training session. Pedal Ready also provides training at schools and workplaces, private individual or group lessons, and training about e-bikes.

pedalready.org.nz or follow on facebook.com/bikegreaterwelly

BikeReady is New Zealand's national cycling education system.

bikeready.govt.nz

Information

The official New Zealand code for cyclists is a user-friendly guide to New Zealand's traffic law and safe cycling practices.

nzta.govt.nz/resources/cyclists-road-code

BikeThere is a Wellington City Council website that aims to support people who want to ride their bike in Wellington.

bikethere.org.nz

Metlink has information about how to make the most of bikes and public transport.

metlink.org.nz/getting-around/using-a-bicycle-on-public-transport

Advice

Cycle Wellington advocates for better biking in Wellington and organises a Facebook community where you can ask questions about cycling.

cycwell.wordpress.com or join the group on facebook.com/groups/cyclewellington

Consumer NZ has published guides to help you choose the right lights, lock, and e-bike.

consumer.org.nz/services/bike-lights/guide

consumer.org.nz/articles/bike-locks

consumer.org.nz/services/electric-bikes/guide



A cycle skills training course is a great way to gain confidence and skills to help you stay safe on the roads.

Go to the Pedal Ready website at pedalready.org.nz to find out more.

Pedal Ready
cycle skills for everyone

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