



# Cycling handbook

Your guide to cycling in Oakville



OAKVILLE



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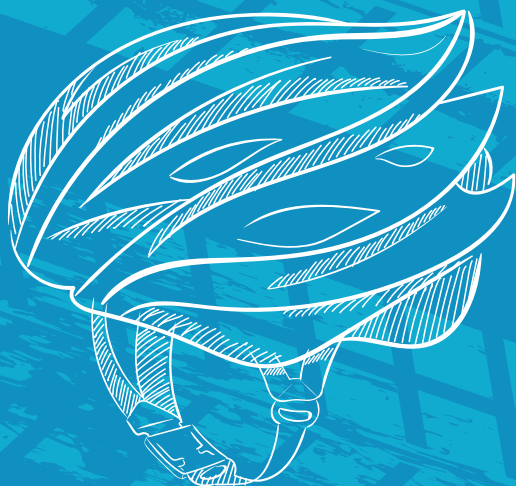
# A great place to cycle.

The Town of Oakville is a great place to cycle. Our community is proud to offer over 185 kilometres of on and off-road cycling paths and over 300 kilometres of trails.

Cycling is a great way to:

- Stay active while you have fun
- Reduce pollution and traffic congestion
- Prevent chronic disease





# Ensure a proper fit

Helmets | Bicycles | Bicycle anatomy

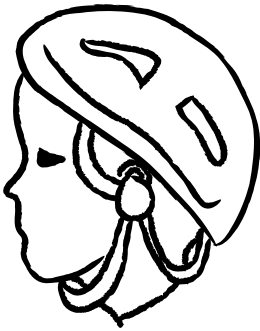


# Helmets

Helmets cushion your head and can prevent brain injury. It's strongly recommended that all cyclists wear an approved bicycle helmet, regardless of age. Ontario law mandates that anyone under the age of 18 must wear a helmet. Parents or guardians should not knowingly permit cyclists under 16 years old to ride without a helmet.

Use the "2-4-1 Helmet Salute" to make sure your helmet fits correctly:

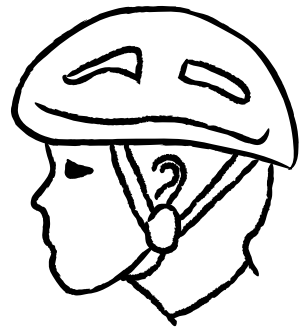
- **Two** fingers above your eyebrows to the bottom of the helmet.
- **Four** fingers to make a "V" shape around the bottom of your ears. Keep the straps straight.
- **One** finger under the strap beneath your chin.



**INCORRECT**



**INCORRECT**



**CORRECT**

# Bicycles

There are many types of bicycles to choose from including mountain, road racing, touring, or cruiser bikes. Take the following into consideration when selecting the right bike for you:

## Frame size

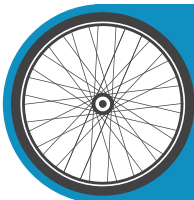
You should be able to straddle your bike with your feet flat on the ground and clear the top tube by two to five centimetres.

## Seat height

Sit on the seat with the ball of your foot over the pedal spindle. There should be a slight knee bend when the pedal is in the bottom position.

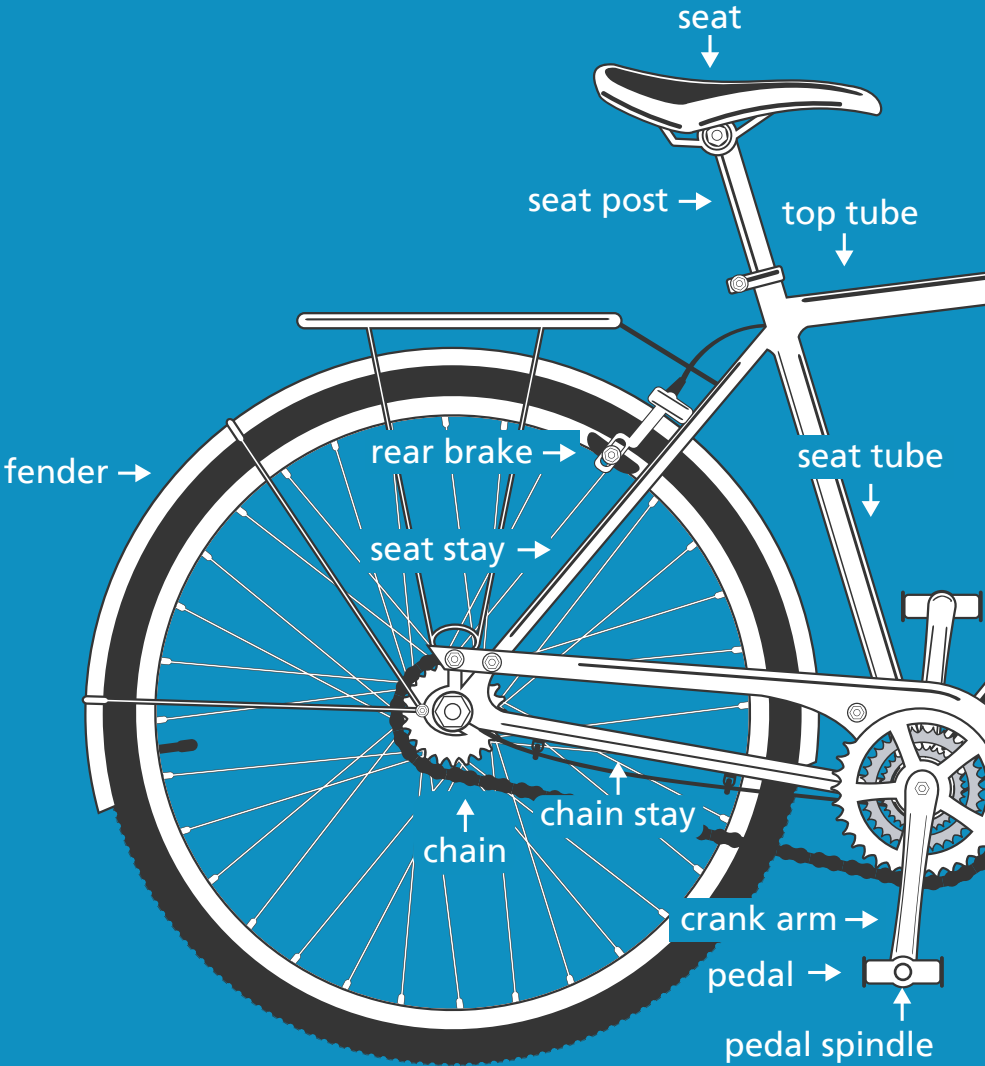
## Handlebars

For touring or commuting riders, the handlebars should be even with or slightly lower than the seat. Recreational riders may want to sit more upright, therefore the handlebars should be higher than the seat.

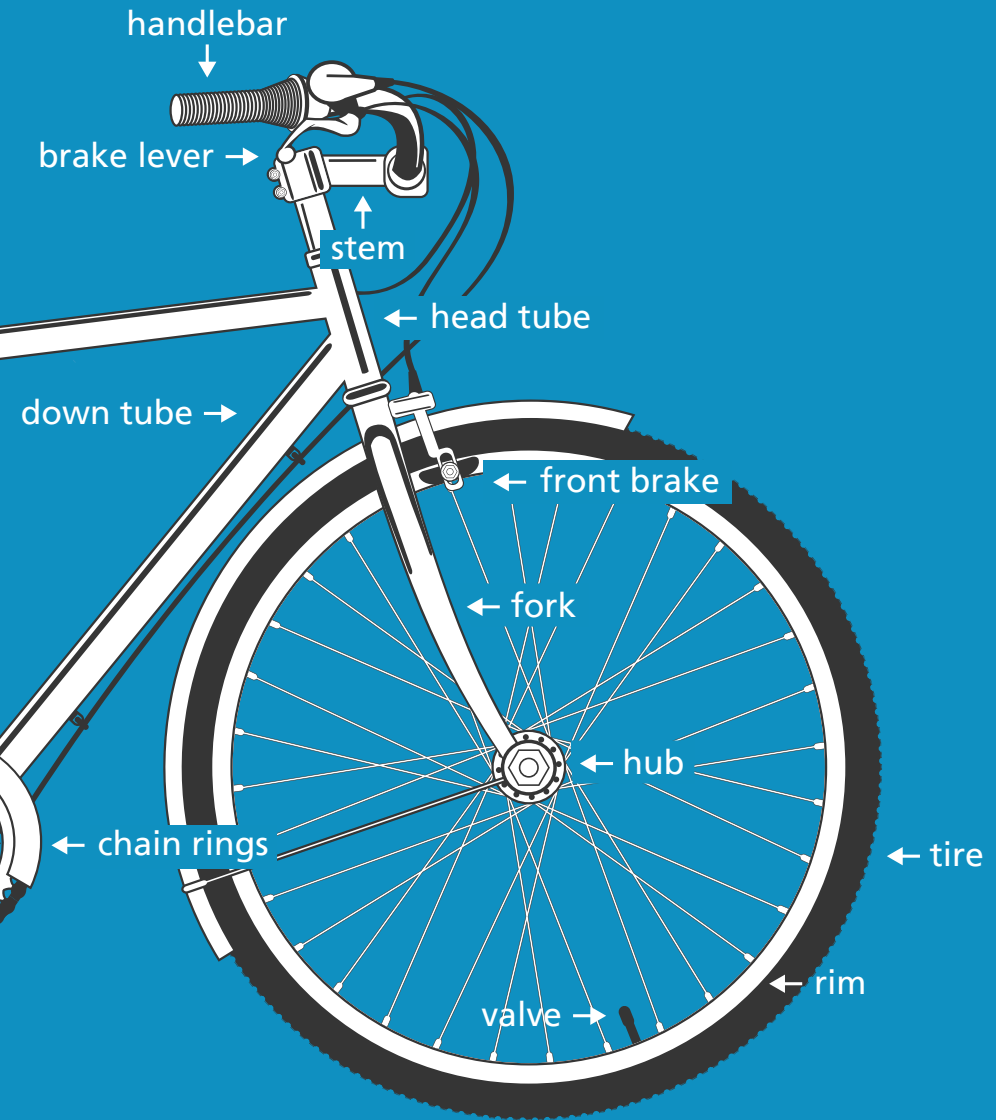


*If you have pain in the front of your knees after the first few rides, your seat is probably too low. If you feel pain in the back of the knee, your seat is probably too high.*

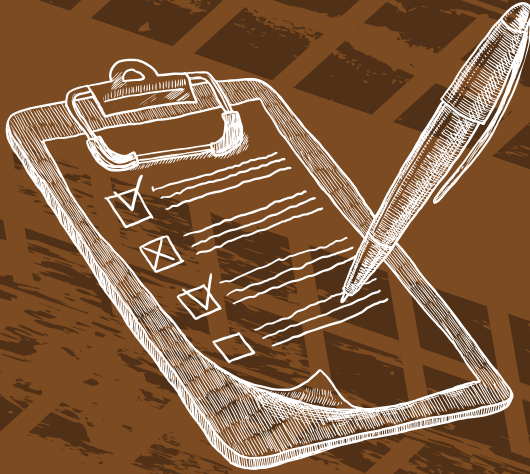
# Bicycle anatomy











# Safety, preparedness and security

ABC Quick Check | Safety | Be prepared | Security



# ABC Quick Check

The ABC Quick Check is an easy way to remember what parts of your bike you need to check before you go for a ride. An ABC Check can be done in less than one minute.

## **A is for air**

Check everything to do with your tires and wheels making sure that tires are properly inflated, wheels are not wobbling, and tread or sidewall of the tire are not worn.

## **B is for brakes and bars**

Check everything to do with the brakes. Brake levers should be two fingers width away from the handlebars when pulled; brake pads touch only the rim of the wheel; brake pads grab the rim effectively. To check this stand beside your bike and apply only the front brake and push forward on the handlebars. The front wheel should lock up and the back wheel should leave the ground. Then apply the back brake only and walk forward, the back wheel should lock and skid along the ground. Also ensure that the cables are not worn or frayed and that the handlebars are tight.

## **C is for chain and crank**

Check everything to do with the drive train. Ensure the chain is on and lubricated. The pedals should spin freely and the gear derailleurs are in the correct position.

## **Quick is for quick release**

Check that the nuts or levers that clamp the wheel axles to the forks are tight and the levers are flush with the forks to protect them.

## **Check is for final check**

Lift the bike several inches off the ground and drop it. Listen for loose parts. Tighten as necessary.

# Safety

## **See**

Be aware of your surroundings and anticipate what will happen. Be extra cautious at intersections.

## **Be Seen**

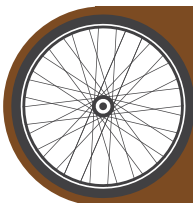
Wear light, bright and/or reflective clothing and ensure your bike has proper lights and reflectors.

## **Be Predictable**

Ride according to the law. Ride in a straight line and communicate your intentions before changing positions or direction.

## **Small Children**

It's the law in Ontario that small children must ride in an approved child's bicycle seat or bike trailer and wear an approved bike helmet.



*If you get thirsty when riding, don't tilt your head back to drink. Tilt the bottle and squeeze the drink into your mouth. You'll have more control and be more aware.*

# Be prepared



When out riding it's recommended that you carry a basic bicycle repair kit including a tire pump, glue patches, light weight wrenches, hex key, spare bicycle inner tubes and plastic tire levers.

## Handling Skills

### Straight Line Riding

Straight line riding is most predictable and allows you to ride through narrow spaces. Practice riding down a painted line in a parking lot staying as close to the line as possible.

### Shoulder Checking

Shoulder checking involves looking over your shoulder to see what the traffic behind you is doing. Always do a shoulder check before turning in traffic. Practice riding in a straight line and checking over both shoulders.

### Signaling

It is important to let others know your intentions by signaling. Signaling requires lots of practice as you need to be able to ride with one hand in a straight line while signaling. Always shoulder check before and after signaling. Place both hands on your handlebars when you are actually turning.

### Stopping

Use both brakes to come to a stop more quickly, but be careful you don't stop too quickly as this will cause you to go over the handlebars. Leave more space for stopping when riding in wet weather.

## Hand Signals



Left turn

Right turn and alternate

Stop

## Security

- Always lock your bike when leaving it unattended.
- Use a U-lock or heavy duty chain.
- Lock the wheels and the frame to an immovable object like a bike rack or light post.
- Take anything not securely fastened with you.







# Where can I ride?

Off-road infrastructure | On-road infrastructure



# Off-road infrastructure

## **Multi-use trails (within boulevards)**

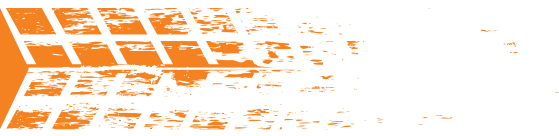
A two-way path physically separated from the travelled portion of a roadway by barrier curb and/or open space. Multi-use trails are shared by cyclists, pedestrians, in-line skaters, etc. All motorized vehicles (autos, scooters, e-bikes) are prohibited.



## **Major trails (within parks/valleys)**

A two-way path shared mainly by cyclists and pedestrians. All motorized vehicles (autos, scooters, e-bikes) are prohibited.





## **Sidewalks**

A two-way path exclusively for the use of pedestrians. Cycling on town sidewalks is prohibited, except for children under the age of 11, with wheel diameters that do not exceed 51 centimetres or 20 inches. A parent, guardian or other adult may ride a bicycle on the sidewalk while accompanying the child. Cycling on sidewalks in downtown Oakville, Kerr or Bronte business districts or on harbours, wharfs and piers is prohibited by all users.

## **Tips for cyclists riding on Oakville's trails**

- Stay on marked trails.
- Respect all trail users.
- Obey the rules of the trails.
- Yield to pedestrians at all times.
- Keep to the right except when passing.
- Pass on the left only when the lane is clear and leave about two bike lengths before moving back to the right.
- Use a bell, horn or your voice to indicate your intention to pass. Never pass without warning.
- Travel in single file.
- If you need to stop, pull off the trail to leave the trail clear for other users.
- Reduce your speed on the trails, especially when coming around sharp corners and bends.
- Be on the lookout for loose or slippery surfaces or downed trees.

# On-road infrastructure



## Cycle Lane

Roads with on-road cycle lanes designate a portion of the existing roadway for use by cyclists only. E-bikes are permitted to use these lanes.



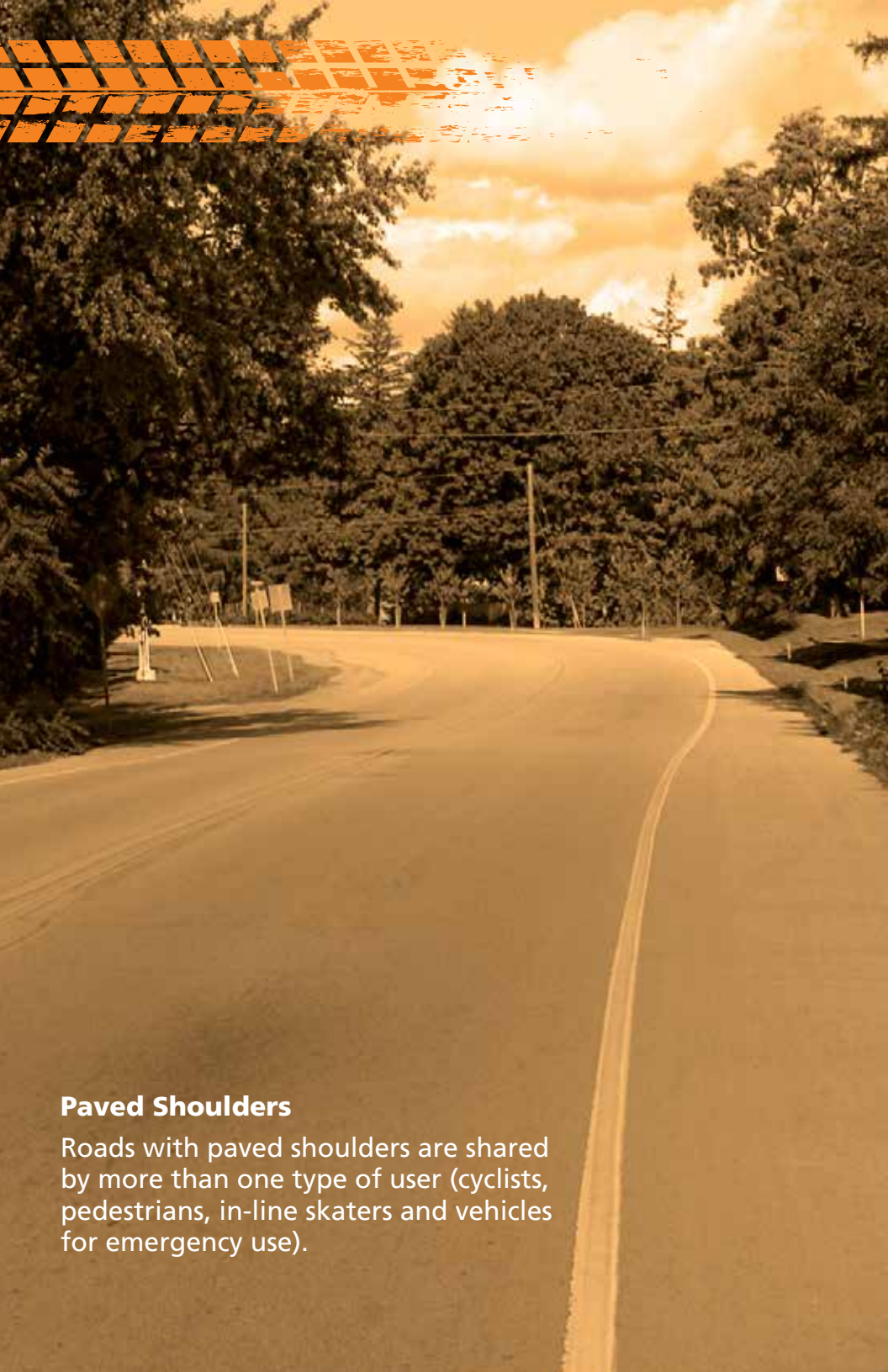
## Sharrows

Roads with sharrows are roadways with a specific bicycle symbol. This symbol indicates where cyclists should generally position themselves while sharing the roadway with motorized vehicles.



## Signed Bicycle Route

Helps direct cyclists to the primary network. These roads typically have lower traffic volumes, are used by both motor vehicles and cyclists, and may contain sharrows.



## **Paved Shoulders**

Roads with paved shoulders are shared by more than one type of user (cyclists, pedestrians, in-line skaters and vehicles for emergency use).





# Cycling laws and rules

Cycling laws | Rules of the road | Additional signs, traffic signals and pavement markings



# Cycling laws

Bicycles are considered vehicles and must adhere to the Ontario Traffic Laws which include:

- Stopping at a red light or stop sign.
- Riding in the designated direction on one-way streets.
- Signaling a turn.
- Wearing a helmet if under the age of 18.
- A bicycle must have a white front light and a red rear light or reflector if you ride between half an hour before sunset and half an hour after sunrise.
- The Highway Traffic Act requires a bicycle to have white reflective tape on the front forks and red reflective tape on the rear forks.
- A bicycle must have a bell or a horn in good working order.
- A bicycle must have at least one brake system on the rear wheel. When you apply the brakes, you should be able to skid on dry, level pavement.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks. Get off your bike and walk it across when crossing within a crosswalk, at a mid-block trail location or pedestrian crossover location.

Cyclists must stop and identify themselves if stopped by police for breaking traffic laws. The police officer will ask you for your correct name and street address.



# Rules of the road

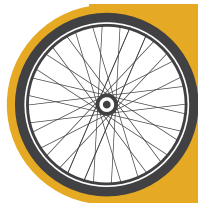
Every cyclist, when approaching a pedestrian on a sidewalk, trail or in a park, must give adequate warning of their approach and take every necessary precaution to avoid a collision. Pedestrians have the right-of-way.

Cyclists are required to have proper equipment as per the Ontario regulations when using any parks and trails within the Town of Oakville. All motorized vehicles including e-bikes are prohibited in all areas other than the designated roadway space.

All cyclists should ride single file except when passing another cyclist.

Cyclists are not permitted to indulge in trick riding or other behaviour that prevents the full use of both hands to control the bike when travelling on a roadway or multi-use trail.

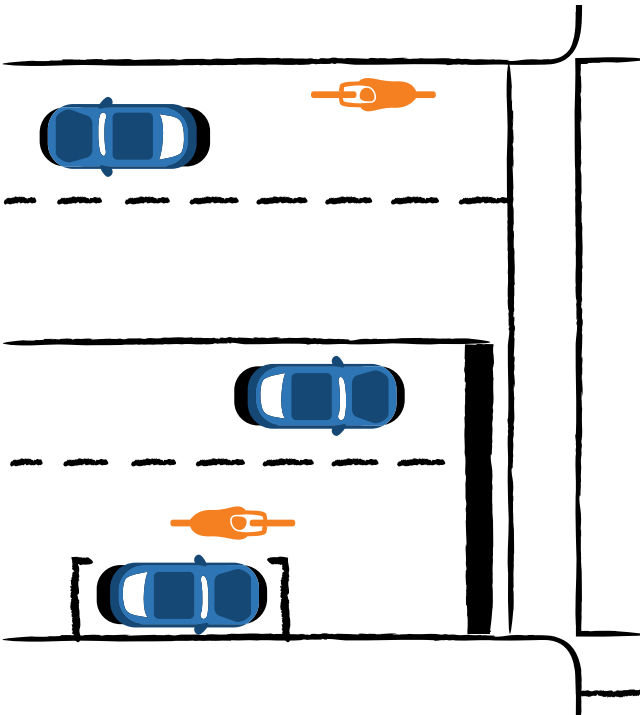
Cyclists are also reminded that parking a bicycle on any roadway, shoulder, cycle lane or multi-use trail is not allowed.



*Look both ways and cross railroad tracks near the side of the road. It's usually smoother there than in the centre.*

## Riding in Traffic

The Ontario Highway Traffic Act (HTA) defines the bicycle as a vehicle that belongs on the road. As a result cyclists must follow the same rules of the road as motorists. Under the HTA, any vehicle or cyclist moving slower than the normal traffic speed should drive/ride in the right-hand lane, or as close as practicable to the right edge of the road except when preparing to turn left or when passing. Cyclists must ride far enough out from the curb to maintain a straight line, clear of sewer grates, debris, potholes, and parked car doors. The general rule is to ride one metre from the curb or obstruction in a straight line, however you may occupy any part of a lane when your safety warrants it.



## Parked Cars

Ride in a straight line one metre away from parked cars and be on the lookout for drivers opening their car doors. If there are multiple parked cars, stay in the same line to avoid swerving.

## CORRECT

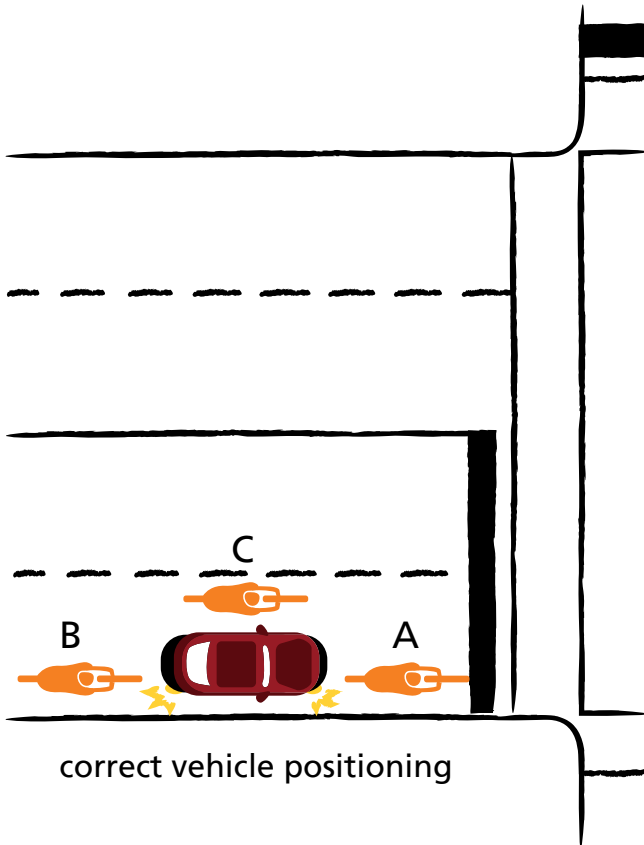


## INCORRECT



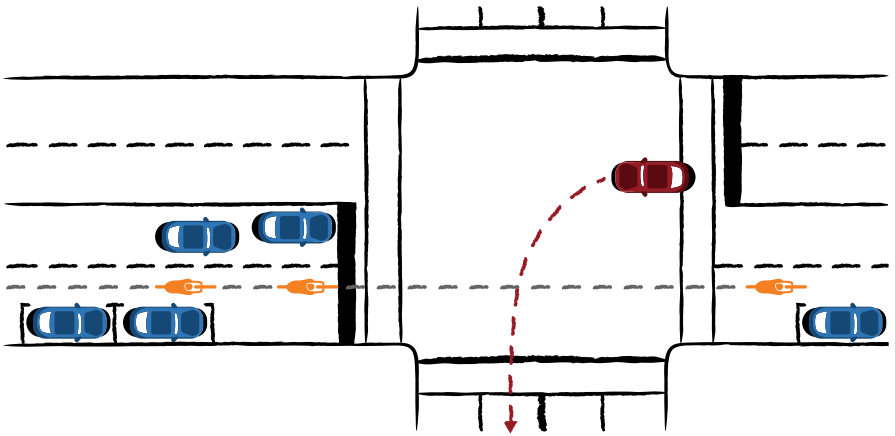
## Right Turning Vehicle

Because motorists don't always check for cyclists when making a right-hand turn, it's important for the cyclist to leave extra room between themselves and vehicles. When a motorist is making a right-hand turn, cyclists can stay behind the car and one metre from the curb or pass the turning vehicle on the left. Never pass a tight turning vehicle on the right.



## Travelling through Intersections

When travelling through intersections, always make eye contact with drivers. Continue to ride without stopping through the intersection, but be prepared to stop or make a quick turn if needed or if traffic signals change.



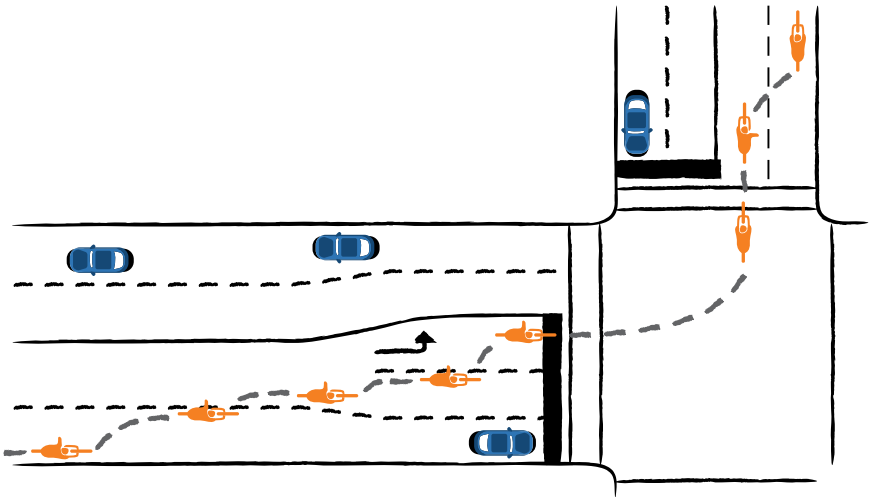
## Making a Right Turn

Use the lane furthest to the right when making a right turn. When approaching the intersection, do a shoulder check, signal, scan, and turn when path is clear.

## Making a Left Turn

Two ways to make a left turn:

1. Vehicle Turn – Always turn left from the centre or the left side of the lane. Shoulder check, signal, shoulder check again, then move to the centre or left side of the lane, proceed when clear, shoulder check, signal, shoulder check again and return to right side of road.
2. Pedestrian Turn – Get off your bike and walk it across a crosswalk before the intersection.



# Additional signs, traffic signals and pavement markings



## **Shared pathway**

Yield to people walking when you're on an off-road pathway shared by pedestrians and cyclists.



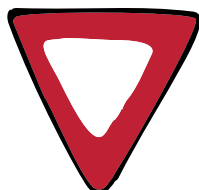
## **No cycling**

No cycling allowed on this road.



## **Stop**

Come to a complete stop and wait until the intersection is clear before proceeding.



## **Yield**

Yield to traffic in the intersection. Stop if necessary and proceed only when the road is clear.



SHARE  
THE  
ROAD

### **Share the Road**

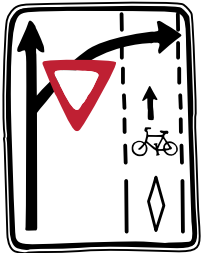
Reminds motorists to share the road.



SINGLE  
FILE

### **Single File**

Location where motorists are discouraged from passing cyclists where lane widths are narrow.



### **Turning Vehicles Yield to Cyclists**

May be used at conflict zones where motorists turn across a bicycle lane and are required to yield to the cyclist.



CROSSING

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing Ahead Sign**

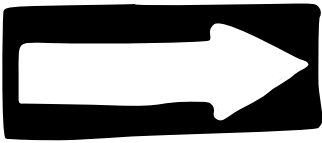
A warning to motorists and cyclists that an off-road trail crossing is ahead.





### Dismount and Walk Sign

A warning to cyclists to dismount and walk their bicycle into an upcoming area.



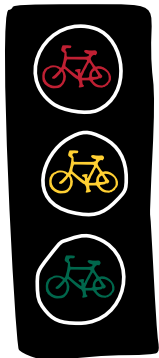
### One Way Road

Ride in the designated direction on one-way streets.



### Crossrides

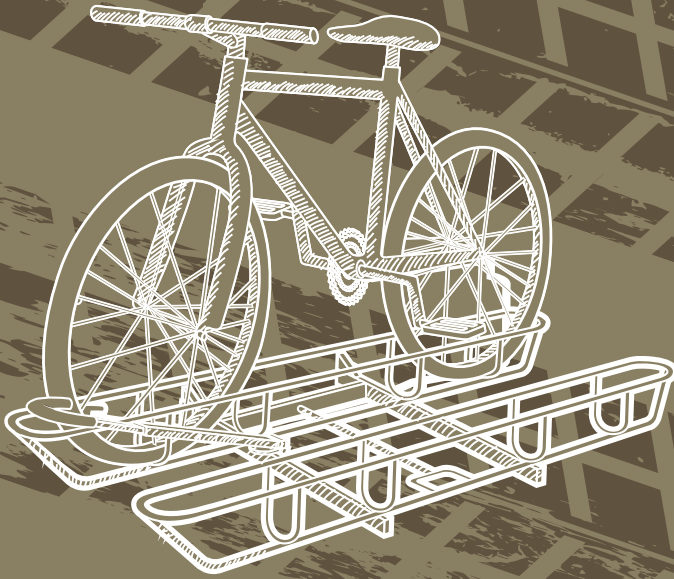
At crosswalks, cyclists are required to dismount and cross as a pedestrian by walking their bicycle. At a crossride, a cyclist can ride their bicycle along the crossing without dismounting.



### Bicycle Signals

A specific traffic signal used to control the movements of cyclists at intersections or mid-block crossings.



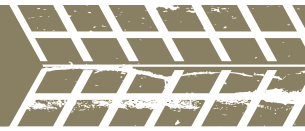


# Bikes and public transit

Loading and unloading a bicycle on Oakville Transit



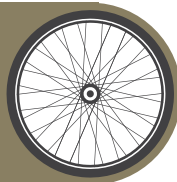
# Oakville Transit

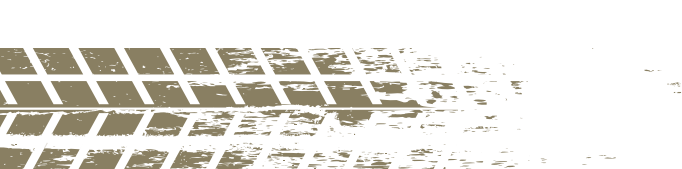


Before you board, please remember:

- Customers are responsible for loading, securing and unloading their bicycles. All customers use the bike racks at their own risk and Oakville Transit assumes no liability for lost or damaged bicycles.
- For your safety, make sure the bus has come to a complete stop before stepping in front of the bus. Load and unload your bicycle from the curb side of the bus.
- Bike racks are available on a first-come, first-served basis. In the event that a bike rack is full or inoperable a bicycle may be transported onboard the bus at the driver's discretion. The comfort or safety of other customers must not be compromised and the bicycle cannot block the aisle.
- Only two-wheeled conventional bicycles, with wheels at least 41 cm (16 inches) in diameter are allowed on bike racks. If your bicycle does not fit on the rack, you must find alternative ways to travel.
- A driver may refuse access to a cyclist due to unsafe conditions or if the bicycle has any items on it that could block the driver's vision.
- Bicycles are not to be locked or chained to the bike rack or bus.

*A combination of cycling and transit is a great option for longer commutes.*





## **Loading a bicycle**

Using the bikes rack is very easy. Just follow these steps:

1. While you are waiting for your bus, remove or secure any loose items on your bicycle such as a water bottle or bike lock.
2. Squeeze the handle at the top of the bike rack to release the latch then fold down the bike rack.
3. Lift your bicycle onto the bike rack, fitting the tires into the wheel slots. Each slot is labelled for front and rear wheels.
4. Pull the support arm out and up over the top of your front tire to secure your bicycle in place.
5. Board the bus. Keep sight of your bicycle during your trip.

## **Unloading a bicycle**

1. Tell the driver you will be unloading your bicycle, then exit from the front door.
2. Pull the support arm out and down over the tire to release it.
3. Lift your bicycle out of the bike rack.
4. Squeeze handle to release the latch and fold up the bike rack to the locked position if no one else is using it.
5. Carry your bicycle off the roadway to the sidewalk. Signal to the driver that you are clear of the bus.

# For more information

Learn to ride a bicycle or become a more confident cyclist. The Town of Oakville offers a variety of programs for children 8+ and adults. Visit [oakville.ca](http://oakville.ca) for details.

## Special thanks

Excerpted from the CAN-BIKE 2 Student Handbook, Ontario Cycling Association/ Canadian Cycling Association and the Canadian Automobile Association.

Thanks to a grant from the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, the Make Your Move—Let's Get Physically Literate program will help develop physical literacy through education, training, tools and physical activity programs including cycling education. The views of this handbook do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.





An aerial photograph of a green landscape, possibly a park or sports field, with a white grid pattern overlaid on it. The grid consists of intersecting lines forming a series of squares and rectangles, creating a perspective effect as if looking down from an angle. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

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