

Iowa rules of the road for bicyclists

KNOW AND OBEY IOWA'S TRAFFIC LAWS A person riding a bicycle on the street or highway has all the rights, and is required to know and obey all traffic laws and rules of the road, applicable to the driver of a motor vehicle.

RIDE ON THE RIGHT AND WITH TRAFFIC Bicyclists must ride with the flow of traffic on the right side of the roadway, except: when overtaking and passing another vehicle; when preparing for a left turn; when avoiding parked vehicles, drain grates, or debris; or when avoiding any other road conditions that may affect the operation of bicycles. Bicyclists may also ride on the shoulder or a designated bike lane. Bicyclists operating on a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic shall ride as close to the right curb or edge of the roadway as is safe and practical.

USE HAND AND ARM SIGNALS Bicyclists must signal their intentions to turn or stop. The proper signals are made with the left arm. To make a left-turn signal, extend hand and arm horizontally; to make a right-turn signal, extend hand and arm upward; and to stop or decrease speed, extend hand and arm downward. The keys to safe bicycling include being predictable, visible and communicating your intentions to motorists.

USE A LIGHT AT NIGHT A bicycle operated between sunset and sunrise must be equipped with a white light on the front, and red light or reflector on the rear, both visible for a distance of at least 300 feet.

FOLLOW LANE MARKINGS Street and roadway lanes are sometimes marked to direct traffic to make certain movements - right turn, straight through or left turn. Bicyclists must follow these lane markings and select the appropriate lane for their intended direction of travel.

RIDE ONLY WHERE PERMITTED Bicyclists are allowed on almost all Iowa roads with the exception of interstates, certain other controlled-access highways with posted minimum speed limits, and streets where bicyclists are prohibited by local ordinance.

LIMIT RIDERS TO THOSE YOUR BICYCLE IS EQUIPPED TO CARRY Bicyclists must not carry more people on their bicycle than it is designed and equipped to carry, except for adult bicyclists carrying a child securely attached to the bicycle in a seat or trailer designed to carry children.

PASS ON THE LEFT Bicyclists may overtake and pass another vehicle when it is safe to do so. Bicyclists should always pass on the left. To pass a motor vehicle, the bicyclist must first move to the left lane. After overtaking the motor vehicle, the bicyclist must return to the right lane once reaching a safe and clear distance in front of the vehicle.

REPORT CRASHES Bicyclists must stop and exchange information when they have been involved in a crash.

NEVER RIDE AGAINST TRAFFIC Motorists and other cyclists aren't looking for a bicyclist on the wrong side of the roadway. Riding on the wrong side increases the likelihood and severity of head-on collisions.

BICYCLES AND TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS Bicyclists who violate traffic laws are subject to the same fines as motor vehicle drivers.

BE PREPARED TO STOP FOR SCHOOL BUSES Bicyclists who come upon a school bus with flashing signal lights and a "STOP" swing-arm out must give the stop hand signal and come to a complete stop; they may then proceed when the "STOP" swing-arm retracts and flashing signals stop.