

A large graphic of a road winding through a landscape, with a green vertical bar on the left side containing text. The road is depicted as a thick black line with a dashed white center, curving from the top left towards the bottom right. The green bar on the left is a solid color and contains the text 'part 6' and 'Ride Safe'.

part 6

Ride Safe

6.1 Cyclists

People have a right to ride a bicycle on the road. They share the same rights and responsibilities as drivers and motorcyclists.

Bicycles are smaller than other vehicles, and people on bicycles can be difficult to see, especially at night, dusk or dawn.

Remember bicycle riders share the road with you. Always take care and allow them plenty of room when overtaking. A minimum of one metre overtaking clearance is recommended at speeds between 50 and 70 km/h, and a minimum of two metres clearance at speeds over 70 km/h.

Young riders are particularly unpredictable and you should take extra care when you are sharing the road with a child on a bicycle.

People riding bicycles are vulnerable users of our road system and warrant special consideration. Cyclists can reach speeds of over 55 km/h, so take care not to underestimate the speed of cyclists, especially when they are approaching an intersection or when you are turning across their path. ***Under-estimating a cyclist's speed is one of the most common causes of crashes between motor vehicles and people on bicycles.***

When you are about to leave your vehicle, check behind you for bicycles. If you cause a crash by opening your door in front of them you can cause severe injuries and legally you may be to blame.

If you are intending to turn left at the next intersection and a person riding a bicycle is riding in front of you, slow down and allow the person to either turn left or go through the intersection ahead of you. Do not cut across in front of a person riding a bicycle.

When driving at night, remember that your lights on high beam can dazzle people cycling and walking. Dip your lights when approaching or overtaking a cyclist at night.

Do not sound your horn at someone cycling except where necessary for safety reasons. Generally it startles the rider and may cause the rider to swerve and possibly cause a collision. If a bicycle rider decides to ride on the road when there is a shared path available, give the rider enough clearance.

6.1.1 Cyclists and the law

When riding a bicycle, you are required to abide by all the rules and regulations that govern the drivers of other vehicles. These include traffic control lights, 'STOP' and 'GIVE WAY' signs, signals, and keeping to the left etc.

The rules and regulations that apply to cyclists only include:

- riders and any passenger in a child-carry seat or trailer must wear an approved helmet correctly fastened at all times;
- do not ride a bicycle on any portion of a freeway or on a highway that has signs banning cycling (for example, sections of the Roe and Tonkin Highways);
- do not ride on footpaths unless you are under 12 years of age;
- when riding on a shared path, keep to the left and do not ride abreast of another bicycle unless overtaking;
- when riding on a shared path, give way to pedestrians;
- another vehicle or bicycle must not tow your bicycle;
- when riding a bicycle, you must ride astride a permanent and regular seat attached to the bicycle, and you must have at least one hand on the handlebars; and
- do not carry, at any one time, more people than the number for which the bicycle is designed and equipped.

If a traffic control signal does not change after your bicycle has waited for several minutes, use the pedestrian crossing button to register your presence. This will usually cause the signals to change.

When riding at night, your bicycle must have:

- a white front light (visible up to 200 metres ahead);
- an unobstructed red light at the rear (visible up to 200 metres to the rear); and
- a red reflector that is clearly visible for at least 50 metres from the rear of a bicycle when lit up by a following vehicle's headlights.

Your bicycle must not have:

- a red light shining to the front; or
- any light except red shining to the rear.



6.1.2 Safety hints for cyclists

Wear a helmet

It is compulsory to wear a helmet.

Many serious road injuries and deaths suffered by cyclists are due to head injuries. A correctly fitted, approved helmet will reduce your chances of death or serious injury, should you be involved in a crash.

Child-carrying seat

Any child-carrying seat on a bicycle must be securely attached to the frame, without sharp edges. It must have guards to prevent fingers and toes being trapped in moving parts. When a child is being carried in a child-carrying seat, the rider must be at least 16 years of age.

For your own enjoyment and safety, also follow these hints:

- make sure your bicycle is correctly equipped;
- a shared path is a path that is designated by signs for use by both cyclists and pedestrians. While cyclists are not legally required to use them, they are sometimes safer to use than roads. Cyclists must keep left and give way to pedestrians on shared paths;
- when riding at night, wear light coloured clothing. During daylight hours, vivid coloured clothing and/or helmet can help to attract motorists' attention;
- ride your bicycle in a predictable manner. Never change direction without first looking behind and to each side. Use hand signals to let other road users know of your intention to change direction; and
- avoid cycling on roads that carry large volumes of high-speed vehicles unless an appropriate cycle lane or sealed shoulder has been provided.

6.1.3 Equipment for your bicycle

Your bicycle **must** have the equipment shown in the diagram.

