



SAFE CYCLING GUIDE

10th edition



BEFORE HEADING OUT, A WELL-MAINTAINED BICYCLE is key

- A** Check the tire pressure to make sure it corresponds to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- B** Check the condition of the chain (chain too stretched out, worn teeth on a gear sprocket, maintenance necessary).
- C** Check the brakes (adjustment necessary, rusty or broken cables).
- D** Check the mandatory visibility equipment.

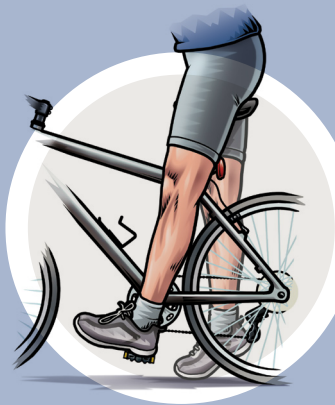


- 1 Front white reflector
- 2 Amber or white reflector attached to the spokes of the front wheel, a front tire with reflective sidewalls or reflective strips on each side of the rim, or an amber or white reflective strip on each side of the fork
- 3 Rear red reflector
- 4 Red or white reflector attached to the spokes of the rear wheel, a rear tire with reflective sidewalls or reflective strips on each side of the rim, or a red or white reflective strip on each seat stay
- 5 Amber or white reflectors on each pedal or a reflective band around each ankle or shoes with reflective strips

Adjust the frame to the rider's height

To check if the height is correct, the rider should stand astride the bicycle above the crossbar with both feet flat on the ground. There should be a clearance of at least 2 cm between the rider's crotch and the crossbar. The seat should be parallel to the ground.

The seat is properly adjusted when the rider is able to place their heel on the pedal with a fully extended leg. This ensures the leg bends slightly when the foot is in pedalling position.



Bike frames that are too large create a loss of balance and can cause injuries, especially to children.

WEARING A HELMET is your only PROTECTION

DID YOU KNOW?

In Québec in the 2010s, head injuries were a factor in approximately 60% of cyclist fatalities. If you fall, your head is the part of your body most likely to sustain serious injury. If you are wearing a helmet, the force of the impact is distributed over the surface of the helmet, rather than concentrated on the head. That's why it's important to have a good helmet.

The perfect fit

Try on the helmet to ensure that the weight, padding and adjustment straps are right. The front and back straps of a properly adjusted helmet come together under the ear and the chin strap is not too tight.

Check that the helmet fits snugly. It should remain in position and not slide forward over the forehead or down the back of the neck.

Choosing the right helmet

When buying a bicycle helmet, look for one that has any of the following certification stickers or labels on the inside or on the packaging: CSA, CPSC, ASTM, CEN and SNELL.

These certification stickers or labels are a guarantee of durability and proof that the helmet meets performance standards. A helmet that has deteriorated or sustained a shock should be replaced. Purchasing a used helmet is therefore not recommended. It is generally recommended that you replace your helmet after five years of use.



FOR GREATER SAFETY...

Bicycles that are well maintained and that have all the required equipment help ensure the safety of cyclists and other road users. Additional suggested accessories include:

1 A horn or bell

Since a bicycle doesn't make much noise, a simple bell allows cyclists to make their presence known to pedestrians and other cyclists. This helps to prevent collisions.

2 A rear-view mirror

Cyclists who can see what is approaching from behind won't be taken by surprise when a car passes them. A rear-view mirror also lets cyclists safely check traffic before passing.

3 A safety flag (pennant)

Putting a horizontal flag on your bicycle is sometimes all it takes to remind drivers that they are required to keep a distance of at least 1 m or 1.5 m, depending on the speed limit. A vertical flag affixed to the rear of your bicycle or trailer will also make you more visible.

4 A basket or rack

Baskets on the front or racks on the back are practical and help cyclists carry their belongings safely.

**Reflective accessories for cyclists
(helmet, armbands, clothing, etc.)**



COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Cyclists must equip their bicycles with a white headlight or light and a red taillight to ride after dark, in addition to reflectors. The headlight or lights may be flashing.

Dealers are required to equip any bicycle they rent or sell with the mandatory visibility accessories, except the reflectors required for the pedals if the bicycle is equipped with clipless pedals or delivered without pedals. In such cases, dealers are not required to provide the customer with reflective ankle bands or shoes with reflective strips. However, cyclists should be sure to wear such accessories.

Brightly coloured or, better yet, **reflective** clothing enables drivers to see cyclists from further away. Cyclists can now get panniers or pant clips with reflective strips, or else stick such strips directly on their clothing. And, of course, a reflective vest is still the best way to make you sure you will be seen!



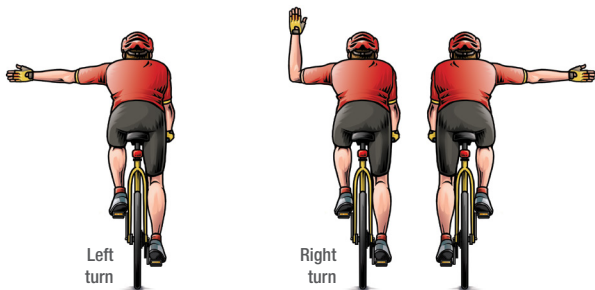
CYCLISTS, LIKE DRIVERS, must follow the rules

AS A CYCLIST, YOU MUST OBEY QUÉBEC'S *HIGHWAY SAFETY CODE*:

Ride as close as possible to the right side of the roadway, while taking into account the condition of the roadway and the risk of vehicle doors opening.

You can, however, leave the right side of the roadway if you are preparing to make a left turn. You can also ride on the shoulder.

Signal your intentions to turn left or right over a reasonable distance so other road users can see you, unless the manoeuvre puts them in danger.



Ride in single file when travelling in a group (no more than 15 riders per group is allowed).



Ride astride the bicycle and keep hold of the handlebars.

Ride with the flow of traffic unless signs or signals authorize cyclists to ride against traffic, or in case of necessity.

Give the right of way to pedestrians, and ride at a safe and reasonable speed when riding through a pedestrian crossing on a bicycle.



IMPORTANT!

Among other things, the *Code* prohibits cyclists from:

riding on limited-access highways or their access ramps

riding against the flow of traffic, unless authorized to do so by a road sign, pavement marking or traffic signal, or in case of necessity

riding on sidewalks, except in case of necessity or where directed or authorized to do so by a road sign, pavement marking or traffic signal, in which case they must ride at a safe and reasonable speed and give the right of way to pedestrians

riding with earphones or headphones that cover one or both ears

riding while using a portable electronic device—whether hand-held or not—unless it displays information that is relevant to riding a bicycle, in which case it must be mounted on a bracket that is attached to the bicycle

carrying a passenger, unless the bicycle is equipped with a fixed seat for this purpose

riding between two lanes of moving vehicles, unless the vehicles travelling in the lane to the right of the cyclist are in a lane reserved for right turns

consuming alcohol while riding a bicycle

riding a bicycle with a faulty brake system

WATCH OUT FOR:

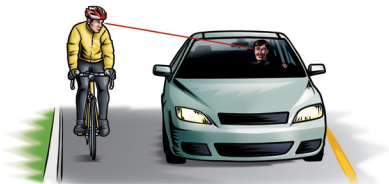
- vehicles coming out of private driveways
- buses (never try to pass them on the right)
- vehicles turning right at a red light



- the doors of a stationary vehicle
- outside mirrors of buses and trucks
- sewer grates
- spaces between parked vehicles (ride in a straight line so drivers can see you)



Before making your move, make eye contact with drivers to make sure they have seen you.



DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIKEWAYS

Cyclists in Québec are allowed to ride on any type of road, except limited-access highways. For cyclists' safety, four different types of bikeways have been designated for their use:



Paved shoulders

On paved shoulders, cyclists ride with the flow of traffic.



Bicycle lanes

Bicycle lanes are indicated by pavement markings. They are placed on the side of roads where the speed limit is usually 50 km/h or less.



Designated roadways

These are roadways that do not have reserved lanes for cyclists. The road signs and pavement markings indicate that the roadway is shared by both drivers and cyclists.



Bicycle paths and multi-use trails

Bicycle paths are generally located away from automobile traffic or separated from traffic by a physical barrier. They are reserved for cyclists. Multi-use trails are used by pedestrians, roller skaters and users of non-motorized or low-speed vehicles. When these paths or trails intersect with a roadway, cyclists must yield the right of way to any vehicles present before continuing.

ROAD SIGNS, PAVEMENT MARKINGS AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Like all other road users, cyclists must always obey road signs, pavement markings and traffic signals. Moreover, special road signs, pavement markings and traffic signals exist for cyclists and can be found most often on bikeways. Below are a few examples, along with an explanation.



Indicates a road on which bicycle traffic is facilitated. Cyclists can ride side by side across the entire width of the lane, unless they are riding against the flow of traffic on a one-way street. Bicycle boulevards must have a posted speed limit of 30 km/h.



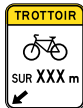
Indicates that it is mandatory for children under 12 to be accompanied by an adult on a road where the speed limit is over 50 km/h.



Indicates a mandatory cyclist and pedestrian route.



Indicates that it is mandatory for cyclists to get off their bicycles for safety reasons.



Indicates that cyclists may ride on the sidewalk.



Indicates the period during which the bikeway is not accessible to cyclists.



Indicates that there is a parking lot near a bikeway.



Indicates that cyclists can ride against the flow of traffic on a one-way street.



Indicates that parking a bicycle at this location is prohibited.



Indicates to cyclists when to cross. These traffic signals for cyclists are placed at the intersection of a bikeway and a public roadway.



Indicates that cyclists must obey a pedestrian light.

IMPORTANT: Where this sign is not posted, cyclists can cross obeying the pedestrian light or obeying traffic lights for road vehicles.



Indicates a bicycle crossing.



Indicates a paved shoulder intended for cyclists along a cycling route.



Indicates a temporary detour due to work on the bikeway.



Indicates the direction of traffic in a lane reserved for cyclists. These symbols are painted on the roadway.



Indicates that road vehicles must travel in one direction only, but that cyclists may ride in either direction.

POWER-ASSISTED BICYCLES

RIDERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14 AND 17 MUST HOLD AT LEAST A MOPED AND SCOOTER LICENCE.

Riders aged 18 or over do not require a licence.



Power-assisted bicycles:

- have handlebars and pedals
- are designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground
- can be propelled by muscle power applied to the pedals
- have an electric motor (but not a gasoline motor) of 500 W or less

Riders must:

- wear a bicycle helmet
- be at least 14 years of age

Equipment on a power-assisted bicycle must comply with *Highway Safety Code* requirements, in particular those regarding mandatory visibility accessories.

Non-motorized scooters

In order to meet requirements for riding on public roads after dark, non-motorized scooters that are rented or sold must have at least one white reflector in front and one red reflector at the back, or else white reflective material in front and red reflective material at the back. Riders of these scooters are exempt from this requirement if they wear reflective clothing or accessories so that they are visible to other road users.

Finally, these scooters must be equipped with a rear-wheel braking system. The brakes must be powerful enough to bring the vehicle to a quick stop when riding on a dry, paved, level road.

Fines

OFFENCE	AMOUNT
Travelling on a roadway on in-line skates, skis, a skateboard or toy vehicle	\$80 to \$100
Travelling on a roadway on a scooter without a rear-wheel braking system	\$80 to \$100
Travelling on a scooter after dark without being visible to other road users	\$80 to \$100

IN-LINE SKATES, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS... allowed or prohibited?

Bicycles are very popular, but there are other ways of getting around on wheels! However, not all wheel-mounted equipment can be used on roadways.

According to the *Highway Safety Code*:

ALLOWED on the roadway: non-motorized scooters and motorized personal mobility devices, such as electric scooters and gyroscopic vehicles.

PROHIBITED on the roadway: in-line skates, skis, skateboards and toy vehicles.

Contact your municipality to find out where you can safely use these types of equipment.



CHILDREN AND BICYCLE SAFETY

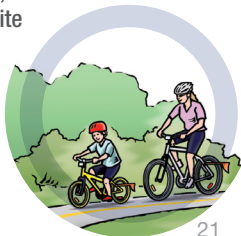
To ride a bike, you must first listen to and observe traffic. If your children want to ride their bikes unaccompanied, such as to go to school, be sure to travel the route with them several times in order to help them identify dangers and adopt the right behaviour.

Give your children support while they are learning:

- Go for bike rides with them and keep an eye on them.
- Have them practice stopping and turning and help them learn how to deal with unexpected situations.
- Make sure they understand the importance of performing a shoulder check every time they want to change directions.
- Show them how to cross or turn at intersections. You are their example; they observe everything you are doing. Make sure to obey traffic rules, road signs, pavement markings and traffic signals.

For more details about what to teach your children, visit the “Road Safety” section of the SAAQ’s website at saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/road-safety.

Important: Under the *Highway Safety Code*, children under 12 are prohibited from riding on any roads where the speed limit is over 50 km/h, unless they are accompanied by an adult.



CYCLISTS, LIKE DRIVERS, *must obey the Highway Safety Code*

<i>HIGHWAY SAFETY CODE OFFENCE</i>	<i>PENALTY</i>
Riding between two rows of moving vehicles	\$80 to \$100
Riding on a sidewalk (except in case of necessity or where directed or authorized to do so by a road sign, pavement marking or traffic signal)	\$80 to \$100
Riding against the flow of traffic (except in case of necessity or where authorized to do so by a road sign, pavement marking or traffic signal)	\$80 to \$100
Riding with earphones or headphones that cover one or both ears	\$80 to \$100
Riding while using a portable electronic device—whether hand-held or not—unless it displays information that is relevant to riding a bicycle, in which case it must be mounted on a bracket that is attached to the bicycle	\$80 to \$100
Drinking alcohol while riding	\$80 to \$100

HIGHWAY SAFETY CODE OFFENCE

PENALTY

Turning right at a red light where prohibited by a road sign	\$80 to \$100
Failing to stop at a red light or stop sign	\$80 to \$100
Failing to yield the right of way at an intersection to users who have priority	\$80 to \$100
Failing to obey a road sign, pavement marking or traffic signal	\$80 to \$100
Failing to ride in single file	\$80 to \$100
Failing to signal one's intentions (turning)	\$80 to \$100
Failing to hold onto the handlebars	\$80 to \$100
Transporting a passenger on a bicycle without a fixed seat for that purpose	\$80 to \$100



For more information, visit the “Road Safety” section of the SAAQ’s website at saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/road-safety.

For questions regarding cycling-related road signs, pavement markings and traffic signals, as well as cycling infrastructures, visit the website of the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable at transports.gouv.qc.ca.

A resource for planning safe and bicycle-friendly routes:

quebec511.gouv.qc.ca



A joint project involving:

- the Société de l’assurance automobile du Québec
- the Ministère des Transports et de la Mobilité durable