BEFORE SETTING OUT

A WELL-MAINTAINED BICYCLE ... is key

A  Check tire pressure
B  Check that the chain does not slip
C  Check the brakes
D  Check lights and reflectors:

1  Rear red reflector
2  Reflector on rear wheel spokes
3  Front white reflector
4  Amber pedal reflectors
5  Reflector on front wheel spokes
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.

To adjust the seat correctly, the rider’s leg should be completely extended with the heel on the pedal. Thus, when the foot is in pedalling position, the leg will have to bend slightly.

Bike frames that are too large create a loss of balance and can cause accidents, especially with children.
WEARING A HELMET,  
MY ONLY PROTECTION

DID YOU KNOW?
Head injuries are the cause of death in approximately 60% of fatal biking accidents. If you fall, this is the part of your body most likely to sustain serious injury. If you are wearing a helmet when you have an accident, 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.
Bicycles that are well maintained and that have all of the required equipment help ensure the safety of cyclists and other road users. You may also want to consider adding some optional (but recommended) equipment, including the following:

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, thereby preventing collisions.

2. **A rearview mirror**
   Cyclists who can see what is approaching from behind won’t be taken by surprise when a car passes them. A rearview 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 encourage motorists to pass at a safe distance. A vertical flag affixed to the rear of your bicycle or trailer will also make you more visible.
4 A basket or rack

Whether it’s a basket on the front or a rack on the back, any accessory that helps cyclists carry their belongings safely can turn a bicycle into a real sport utility vehicle.

Reflective accessories for bicycles and cyclists (tires, strips, pant clips, etc.)
DID YOU KNOW

that almost a third of fatal accidents involving cyclists occur after dusk, between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.? 

That’s why cyclists who ride in the evening or at night must make sure their bicycles have a white headlight and a red tail-light, in addition to reflectors.

Dealers are required to equip any bicycle they rent or sell with eight mandatory reflectors.

Brighter is better! Wearing bright colours and reflective clothing enables motorists to see cyclists from further away. Cyclists can now get tires, panniers, pant clips, or shoes 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 MOTORISTS, have to follow the rules

QUÉBEC’S *HIGHWAY SAFETY CODE* REQUIRES CYCLISTS TO:

Ride on the far right-hand side of the road

Signal their intentions

...over a reasonable distance so motorists can see them.
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

...the road is not a place for acrobatics!

Ride with the flow of traffic

...unless signs or signals authorize cyclists to ride against traffic.
IMPORTANT! The Code prohibits:

- riding on limited access highways or access ramps
- riding against the flow of traffic*
- riding on the sidewalk
- riding with earphones or headsets
- carrying a passenger, unless the bicycle is equipped with a fixed seat for this purpose
- riding between two lanes of moving vehicles
- drinking alcohol while riding a bicycle
- riding a bicycle with a faulty brake system

*unless signs or signals authorize cyclists to ride against traffic
WATCH OUT FOR

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

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

- the doors of a stationary vehicle
- spaces between parked vehicles (ride in a straight line so motorists can see you)
Cyclists in Québec are allowed to ride on any type of road, except limited access highways. For cyclists’ safety, four different types of bicycle lanes have been designated for their use:

**Paved shoulders**

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

**Bicycle lanes**

Road signs, traffic signals and road markings indicate that these lanes are reserved exclusively for cyclists.
Designated roadways

These are roadways that cyclists are encouraged to use via road signs and bicycle outlines on the pavement; however, they do not have reserved lanes.

Bicycle paths

Bicycle paths are lanes designed for cyclists and are generally located away from automobile traffic or separated from traffic by a physical barrier.
Like any road user, cyclists have to obey road signs and traffic signals. In addition, special signs and signals have been developed for bicycle lanes. The following are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates the need for children under 12 to be accompanied by an adult on a road where the speed limit is 50 km/h or over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates the need to get off a bicycle for safety reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates a mandatory cyclist and pedestrian route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates that you are cycling on the Route verte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates that the period during which the bicycle lane is not maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates that there is a parking lot near a bicycle lane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates a bicycle crossing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Icon" /></td>
<td>Indicates a bicycle lane on the shoulder.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indicates that cyclists can ride against the flow of traffic on a one-way street

Indicates the presence of a business or service (in this case, a bike mechanic’s shop)

Indicates that parking a bicycle at this location is prohibited

Indicates a temporary detour due to work on the bicycle lane

These traffic signals for cyclists are placed alongside bicycle lanes

These symbols painted on the roadway indicate that a lane is reserved for cyclists

Indicates that cyclists must respect a pedestrian light

IMPORTANT: Where this sign is not posted, cyclists must obey traffic lights for vehicles and cannot use a pedestrian signal unless they get off their bicycle.
POWER-ASSISTED BICYCLES ARE NOW ALLOWED!

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

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

Riders age 18 or over do not require a licence. Equipment on a power-assisted bicycle must comply with *Highway Safety Code* requirements, in particular those regarding reflectors.
Non-motorized scooters

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

Finally, 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFENCE</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travelling on a roadway on skates, skis, a skateboard or toy vehicle</td>
<td>$30 to $60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling on a roadway on a scooter without a rear-wheel braking system</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling on a scooter at night without being visible to other road users</td>
<td>$25 to $50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling on a public road with a motorized scooter</td>
<td>$100 to $200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POWER-ASSISTED BICYCLES ARE NOW ALLOWED!
Bicycles are very popular, but there are also 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

**PROHIBITED** on the roadway:
- motorized scooters
- in-line skates
- skis
- skateboards
- and toy vehicles

Contact your municipality to find out where you can safely use these types of equipment.
To ride a bike, first you have to 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.
- 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.
- Tell them they must use pedestrian crossings and walk their bikes when they want to cross intersections or turn left.

For more details about what to teach your children, go to our Web site at saaq.gouv.qc.ca and look through the “Road Safety” section.

**Important:** Under the *Highway Safety Code*, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult on a road where the speed limit is over 50 km/h, unless they are on a bicycle path.
CYCLISTS, LIKE MOTORISTS,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFENCE</th>
<th>PENALTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riding between two rows of moving vehicles</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding on a sidewalk</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding against the flow of traffic (unless signs or signals indicate otherwise)</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding on the roadway other than on the far right</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding with earphones or a headset</td>
<td>$30 to $60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking alcohol while riding</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning right at a red light where signs prohibit it</td>
<td>$15 to $30 + 3 demerit points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to stop at a red light or stop sign</td>
<td>$15 to $30 + 3 demerit points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
must obey the

*Highway Safety Code*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFENCE</th>
<th>PENALTY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failing to yield the right of way at an intersection to users who have priority</td>
<td>$15 to $30 + 3 demerit points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to obey a road sign or traffic light</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to ride in single file</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to signal one’s intentions (stopping and turning)</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to hold onto the handlebars</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding two on a bicycle without a fixed seat for that purpose</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding between two rows of moving vehicles</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding on a sidewalk</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding against the flow of traffic (unless signs or signals indicate otherwise)</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding on the roadway other than on the far right</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riding with earphones or a headset</td>
<td>$30 to $60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking alcohol while riding</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning right at a red light where signs prohibit it</td>
<td>$15 to $30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing to stop at a red light or stop sign</td>
<td>$15 to $30 + 3 demerit points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For more information, go to www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca and view the “Road Safety” section.

For questions regarding road signs and traffic signals, as well as cycling facilities, go to www.mtq.gouv.qc.ca.

A new tool for planning safe and bicycle-friendly routes:

quebec511.gouv.qc.ca

Québec

With the cooperation of:
– Société de l’assurance automobile du Québec
– Ministère des Transports du Québec