

BE BIKE SMART



When the cooler weather arrives in the Coachella Valley, bike riders start hitting the streets! The City of La Quinta wants you to enjoy the ride and the beautiful scenery, while still being safe.

As you head out on your journey, please travel with care and be aware of your surroundings, especially the vehicles around you. This brochure provides some bicycling safety information that will help keep you safe in your travels.

ARE BICYCLES CONSIDERED LEGAL VEHICLES?

Bicycles are legally considered "vehicles" on La Quinta's roadways. That means bicyclists must obey the rules of the road like drivers of any other vehicle and must be treated as equal users by all other vehicles. The best way to avoid collisions is to be prepared and be aware of other vehicles around you.

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS FOR BICYCLISTS?

Pay attention to the following safety tips that you can follow to improve your safety when riding on the City's streets and in other areas of the Coachella Valley:



Always Wear a Helmet – A helmet will protect your head from serious injury.

Obey All Traffic Signs & Signals – Bicycles are legally considered "vehicles" and must follow the rules of the road.

Never Ride Against Traffic – Motorists aren't looking for bicyclists riding on the wrong side of the road. State law requires that bicyclists drive "with" traffic.



No Headphones – Never wear headphones so you can be fully aware of your surroundings.

Don't Pass on the Right – Motorists may not see a bicycle passing on the right.

Scan the Road – Watch the road behind you. Learn to look back over your shoulder without losing your balance. Use rear-view mirrors if at all possible.

Use Hand Signals – Hand signals tell motorists and pedestrians what you intend to do.



Adjust Your Bicycle to Fit – Stand over your bicycle. There should be 1 to 2 inches between you and the top tube (bar) if using a road bike and 3 to 4 inches if using a mountain bicycle.

Adjust the Seat – Make sure the seat is level front to back. The seat height should be adjusted to allow a slight bend at the knee when the leg is fully extended.

Adjust Handle Bar Height – Make sure the handlebar height is at the same level as the seat.

Ride in the Middle of the Lane in Slower Traffic – Get in the middle of the lane at busy intersections and when you're moving at the same speed as traffic.



Watch for Parked Cars – Ride far enough out from the curb to avoid the unexpected from parked cars (like doors opening or cars pulling out).

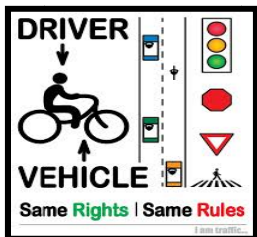
Choose the Best Way to Turn Left – Two options: signal to move into the left-turn lane and then turn left (like an auto) OR ride straight to the far side crosswalk (like a pedestrian).

Avoid Riding at Night – It is far more dangerous to ride at night than during the day because you are harder for others to see. If you have to ride at night, wear something that makes you more easily seen by others.

Use Reflectors – Make sure you have reflectors on the front and rear of your

bicycle (white lights on the front and red rear reflectors are required by law in many states). In addition, have reflectors on your tires so others can see you.

Use Lights at Night – The law requires a white headlight (visible from at least 500 feet ahead) and a rear reflector or taillight (visible up to 300 feet from behind).



Follow Lane Markings – Don't turn left from the right lane. Don't go straight in a lane marked "Right Turn Only."

Keep Both Hands Ready to Brake – You may not stop in time if you brake one handed. Allow extra distance for stopping in the rain since brakes are less efficient when wet.

Ride Bright – Wear bright colored clothing to make yourself as visible as possible to others on the road.



Make Eye Contact with Drivers – Assume that other drivers don't see you until you are sure they do. Eye contact is important with any driver which might pose a threat to your safety.

Look Out for Road Hazards – Watch out for parallel-slat sewer grates, gravel, ice, sand or debris. Cross railroad tracks at right angles.

Keep Your Bike in Good Repair – Adjust your bike to fit you and keep it working properly. Regular maintenance

is simple and you can learn to do it yourself.

RIDING ON THE SIDEWALK VERSUS THE STREET

The safest place for bicycle riding is on the street, where bicycles are expected to follow the same rules of the road as motorists and ride in the same direction.

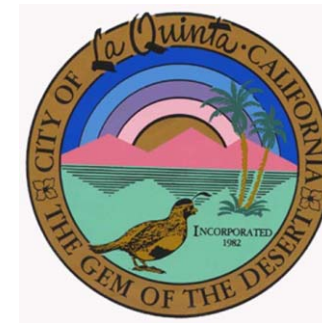
Children less than 10 years old, however, are not mature enough to make the decisions necessary to safely ride in the street. Children less than 10 years old are better off riding on the sidewalk. For anyone riding on a sidewalk:

- Check the law in your State or jurisdiction to make sure sidewalk riding is allowed.
- Watch for vehicles coming out of or turning into driveways.
- Stop at corners of sidewalks and streets to look for cars and to make sure the drivers see you before crossing.
- Enter a street at a corner and not between parked cars. Alert pedestrians that you are near by saying, "Excuse me" or "Passing on your left" or use a bell or horn.

REQUESTS AND INQUIRIES

If you have questions, requests or suggestions concerning traffic, please call the Public Works Department at **(760) 777-7075**.

BICYCLING SAFETY TIPS



City of La Quinta

Public Works Department
78-495 Calle Tampico
La Quinta, CA 92253