



*Walk Bike Bus*

— SPOKANE, WASH. —

# *A Guide to Your Ride*



Tips, techniques, and street smarts  
for a safe, rewarding bike ride



*"Whenever I see an adult on a bicycle, I have hope for the human race."*

*-H. G. Wells*

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*“I thought of that while riding my bicycle.”*

*Albert Einstein on the theory of relativity*

## *Bicycling Benefits*



Welcome to the joys of cycling! From feeling free, saving time, saving money, improving your health, and helping your community, riding your bike offers many fulfilling benefits!

### **IMPROVING HEALTH**

Did you know an inactive lifestyle threatens your health and is a greater personal hazard than driving in traffic? The surgeon general suggests 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, five days a week. This movement leads to significant health benefits. You don't have to ride like an Olympian to see and feel the positive effects of biking on your health. Regular activity keeps you physically and mentally healthy.

### **HAVING FUN**

Regular cyclists will tell you that they arrive at their destination feeling happy even if the weather is dismal. Scientists are getting closer to explaining this phenomenon, citing endorphins and increased oxygen flow to the brain. But the best proof of the joy of biking is your friendly neighborhood 8-year-old kid. Just watch a child's face light up when he or she gets on a bike.

### **SAVING TIME**

According to a national Household Travel Survey done by the League of American Bicyclists and America Bikes, the majority of trips people take around town is 2 miles. At an easy pace you can arrive in about 10 minutes with no parking hassles. A benefit of biking longer trips, such as commuting to work, is gaining back exercise or work out time. Commuting to work? Double the benefit, because not only are you awake and energized, you've already completed your daily workout!



## SAVING MONEY

Ever drive to the supermarket then have to stop by the gas station on the way home? When you bike you can skip the second stop—you've already purchased your bike's fuel! The more trips you take by bike, the less money you need to budget for oil changes, tune-ups, tires, parking, etc. You can even save money on auto insurance if you drive fewer miles per year. Some households ditch the second car for bikes.

## HELPING COMMUNITY

Think locally and globally. The more you bike, the more you reduce air and water pollution. You create safer streets for kids, decrease noise and road deterioration. You contribute to friendly, enjoyable neighborhoods and communities!



### *Did You Know?*

The most efficient animal on earth, in terms of weight transported over distance for energy expended, is a human on a bicycle.

# Selecting and Adjusting Your Bike



Making sure your bike fits is crucial to enjoyable bicycling. Most bike shops help you adjust your bike so it's set up for maximum comfort. Keep in mind:

## BIKE TYPE

Mountain bikes, hybrids, comfort bikes with upright handlebars, and wider tires are well-suited for shorter trips on city streets. Road bikes with drop handlebars and skinny tires might be a better choice for longer-distance rides. Interested in something different? Check out recumbent bikes, folding bikes, tandems and fixed-gear bikes. Curious about the possibilities? Visit a local bike shop to find a ride that's right for you.

## BIKE SIZE

Most bike shops will help you find a bike that fits best. If your bike's frame is too tall, too short or too long, it can be very hard to adjust the other components to make you comfortable. Here are some general guidelines:



- ◆ For on-road riding, 1 to 2 inches is recommended between the top bar of a standard triangle bike frame and your inseam.
- ◆ For off-road riding, 3 to 4 inches is recommended between the top bar of the bike frame and your inseam.

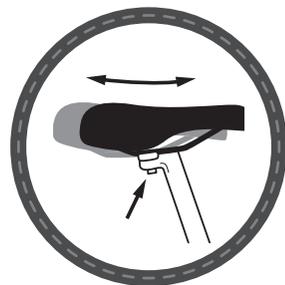
## SEAT TYPES

A seat is a seat, right? Actually, there are a variety of seats for nearly every type of rider. Find gender-specific seats made for comfort and speed. Ask your friendly local bike shop for help in selecting the best seat for your needs.

## ADJUSTING YOUR SEAT

The key adjustments to a seat are:

- ◆ Back/front: a general rule is 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the nose of the seat to a vertical line through the bottom bracket.
- ◆ Angle: start out level then find what's comfortable.
- ◆ Height: with your pedal at the bottom of the pedal stroke (6 o'clock position) and your heel on the pedal, your leg should be completely straight so that your leg will be slightly bent when riding normally.



### *Did You Know?*

Car tires have tread to avoid hydroplaning in wet conditions, but bicycle tires are thin enough that hydroplaning is not a problem. In fact, bicycle tires for use on roads do not need any sort of tread features.

Unfortunately, many people assume that a smooth tire will be slippery, “But don’t slick tires get slippery on wet roads, or metal features like utility covers and railroad tracks?” The answer is, yes, they do; but so do tires with tread. All tires are slippery in these conditions. Tires with tread do not guarantee perfect rides.

*Keep your bike in good repair. Check brakes and tires often.*

## Equipment Check

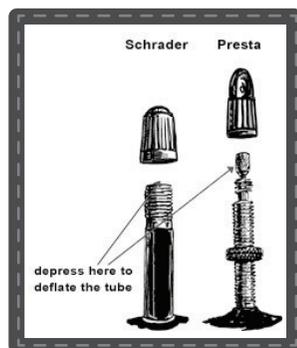


### EVERY TIME YOU RIDE - THINK ABC QUICK CHECK

A safe bike is essential. Use this simple list to check your bike often and help ensure a safe and trouble-free ride. If your bike doesn't pass one of the simple checks below, take it to a bike shop for further inspection and repair.

#### Air in Tires (A)

Inflating your tires helps avoid flats and makes your ride easier. The easiest way to check tire pressure is to use a pump with a gauge. If you look closely, the recommended range for tire pressure is written on the side of your tire in pounds per square inch (PSI). If you don't have a gauge that measures PSI, pump up your tires so that it is difficult to push your fingers into the tire. Most tire pumps adapt to either the Schrader or Presta tire valve.

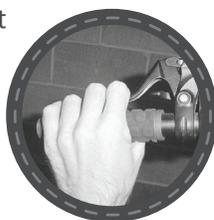


#### Brakes (B)

When you squeeze your brake levers, the levers should stop about a thumb's width from the handlebars. If they don't, tighten the brake cable. Your brakes may have a cable-adjusting barrel that allows you to do this easily. Keeping your wheel rims free of dirt and grease will improve brake performance considerably. Use an old rag to periodically wipe the grime off the rims. If your brakes squeal or vibrate when you stop, you may need to take your bike to a local shop for adjustments.

*Bad*

*Good*

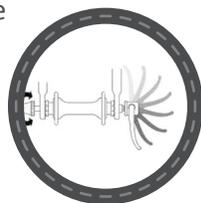


## Chain (C)

Lean your bike against a wall or, better yet, have someone hold it for you with the chain side facing you. Crouch beside the bike and slowly rotate the pedals backward, checking to make sure the chain turns smoothly. Wipe the grit off your chain with a rag by holding the rag loosely around the chain in one spot and rotating the pedals backward. Next, sparingly apply bike chain oil by holding the bottle of chain lube in one spot and slowly rotating the pedals backward. Wipe off the excess with a rag.

## Quick Release

Many bikes have quick release levers on the wheels and seats. Make sure that the levers are locked (snug and curved in toward the bike). Inspect the quick releases visually every time you ride. If you have questions about how to lock a quick release lever, stop by your friendly local bike shop.



### *A Simple Way to Remember*

#### ABC Quick Check

**Air** – Is tire inflation ok? Firm, not too squishy?

**Brakes** – Working well? Stopping you quickly?

**Chain and Cranks** – Pedaling smoothly? No squeaking?

**Quick Releases** – Closed and tight?

**Check** – Take your bike for a short ride. Anything loose or rattling? Is everything working?

## ANNUALLY OR MORE OFTEN

### Tire Wear and Tear

It is common for tires to become worn after about 1,000 miles of riding (*Forbes* 2011). Tires can also get hard and brittle with age. Check the sides of your tires, known as the sidewalls, for significant cracks that may mean you need new tires. Frequent flat tires may mean the tread is thin, and the tire needs replacing.

## Brake Pads

Brake pads, the hard rubber pads that rub the wheel rim when you brake, wear down and eventually wear out. Many have a “wear line” showing you when they need replacement. Ask your friendly local bike shop—brake pad replacement is relatively inexpensive, and good brakes for your bike are essential for riding safely.

## Wheels

A wheel should not wobble while rotating. A wobbly, “untrue” wheel can rub against the brake pads and cause your brakes to underperform. To check, turn your bike upside down and spin the wheels while looking and listening closely to the brake pads. Listen carefully as your wheel turns. Listen for a “rubbing” sound. Visually, the gap between the rim and brake pad should stay relatively constant.

## Cables

Brake cables and shifter cables can, and will, stretch over time. Check and lube for a safe and pleasurable ride.



### *Did You Know?*

Maintaining a bike annually costs 20 times less than maintaining and driving a car.

# Basic Safe Riding Skills



Knowing your responsibilities and rights as a cyclist is important for staying safe and feeling confident on your bike. In general, the same traffic rules and regulations for vehicle drivers apply to bicyclists. Read on for a brief summary of the most important Washington laws and traffic considerations pertaining to bicyclists.

## RIDING ON THE ROAD

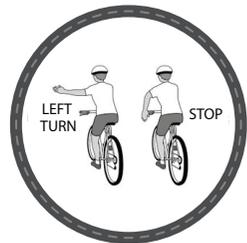
When riding on a roadway, a cyclist has all the rights and responsibilities of a vehicle driver (RCW 46.61.755). Cyclists who violate traffic laws may be ticketed (RCW 46.61.750).

- ◆ Obey all regulatory signs and traffic lights.

## SIGNALING

Hand signals indicating a turn or a stop are important to communicate your intentions to motorists, other cyclists and pedestrians, except when both hands are necessary to control or operate the bicycle. Signal well in advance of turning or stopping. Hold your arm in the signal position for 2-4 seconds to be sure others see it. When approaching your turn or stop, use both hands for braking and your own general safety.

- ◆ Be predictable! Use hand signals to tell motorists your intentions.



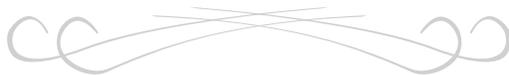
## SCANNING

Before you move into traffic, look or scan for motorists, other cyclists or pedestrians. Refer to the Advanced Riding Skills section for tips on shoulder checking and looking behind you. After scanning, signal where you're going.



*Let me tell you what I think of bicycling. I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel...the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood.*

*~ Susan B. Anthony, American civil rights leader and feminist. 1896*



## USING BIKE LANES

Bike lanes enable bicyclists to travel at their preferred speed and are designed to facilitate predictable behavior and movements between bicyclists and motorists. Cyclists may choose to ride in a bike lane or on a path, shoulder or travel lane.

Buses and cars load and unload in bike lanes but are not allowed to use bike lanes

### *Biking Basics*

Ride predictably in traffic

Obey traffic controls (stop signs, signals, etc.)

Maintain control of your bicycle

Be visible and aware

## WHERE TO RIDE?

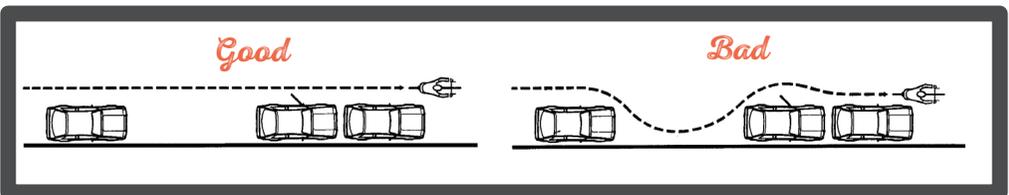
Never ride against traffic. Ride with traffic to avoid collisions. When a bicycle and car are moving toward each other, there's less time to take corrective action.

If you're riding a bicycle on a road at less than the normal speed of traffic, you're required to ride as near to the right side as is safe except when:

- ◆ Overtaking or passing another bicycle
- ◆ Preparing to make a left turn
- ◆ Avoiding hazardous conditions
- ◆ The lane is not wide enough to allow safe passing by a motor vehicle

If there's parking on the road, ride in a straight line to the right of the traffic (on two-way streets) and about a car-door width away from parked cars. Maintain a straight line of travel and avoid weaving in and out of the parking lane. You're more predictable to other road users.

Riding Side by Side - Cyclists may ride side by side, but not more than two abreast (RCW 46.61.770) as long as they don't impede traffic.



In all previously-mentioned cases, a bicyclist can, if overtaken by a motor vehicle, "take the lane" to avoid being squeezed against the curb or parked cars.



## CAR DOORS

If it interferes with the movement of traffic, it's illegal for a motorist to open a car door or leave a door open longer than necessary to load or unload passengers. When riding next to parked cars, particularly in heavily-used parking areas, be alert to car doors in front of you. Look for heads in cars and watch for movement. Scan ahead to see if driver or passengers are in the car on the street side. Give yourself a buffer by riding just outside of the “door zone.”

## SIDEWALK RIDING

Cyclists must yield to all pedestrians on sidewalks and in marked or unmarked crosswalks. Give a warning (use a bell or your voice) before overtaking pedestrians from behind. If you bike in the city of Spokane, be aware that riding on the sidewalks in the designated retail zone of downtown Spokane is prohibited. Instead, walk your bike on the sidewalk and enjoy some window-shopping! For boundaries, go to: [my.spokanecity.org/smc/?Section=16A.04.010](https://my.spokanecity.org/smc/?Section=16A.04.010)

## MULTI-USE PATHS

Spokane's beautiful, non-motorized paths, such as the Centennial Trail, are very popular, and as a result, busy. It's your responsibility to yield to pedestrians, use hand signals and obey speed limits. Slow down and enjoy the scenery and people.

## WASHINGTON STATE BICYCLE LAWS

- ◆ Bicycle Helmets - Currently, there is no state law requiring helmet use. However, in the city of Spokane, it is the law to wear a helmet when doing any wheeled sport (including bicycling) (Section 10.17.030). In unincorporated Spokane County children between ages 3 and 16 are required by law to wear helmets when riding anything with wheels—bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc.

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- ◆ Roads Closed to Bicycles - Some designated sections of the state's limited access highway system may be closed to bicycles for safety reasons. For more information on roads closed to bicyclists, visit the Spokane Regional Transportation Council's Regional Bicycle Map at: [strtc.maps.arcgis.com](http://strtc.maps.arcgis.com)

In Spokane County, roads closed to cyclists are:

- Interstate-90 from Geiger interchange to Pines interchange
  - Highway 195 from I-90 to Inland Empire Way
  - Division Street - from North Foothills to Newport Highway
- ◆ Children Bicycling - Parents or guardians may not knowingly permit bicycle traffic violations by their ward (RCW 46.61.700). See Family Biking Guide for more information.
  - ◆ Riding Side-by-Side - Cyclists may ride side-by-side, but not more than two abreast (RCW 46.61.770).
  - ◆ Riding at Night - For night bicycle riding, a white front light (not a reflector) visible for 500 feet and a red rear reflector are required. A red rear light may be used in addition to the required reflector (RCW 46.61.780).
  - ◆ Shoulder vs. Bike Lane - Cyclists may choose to ride on the path, bike lane, shoulder or travel lane as suits their safety needs (RCW 46.61.770).

See the Advanced Riding Skills section of this booklet (page 27) to learn more about riding safety.

See the Community Resources section of this booklet on where to find more detailed information on bike safety and the law.

## *Bike Gear*



You have your bike, you know how to ride it, and you're ready to go. Check out this overview of popular bike accessories before you head out the door. Small investments make a big difference for a comfortable, convenient ride.

### **LOCKS**

One of the most basic pieces of gear for your bike is a good lock. There are a variety of different locks including chain, cable and "u" locks. Generally u-locks are safer for locking your bike. Your local bike shop will be glad to help you select a lock that meets your needs and safety concerns.



### **LIGHTS**

Make sure you are seen! Use lights and reflectors at night and when visibility is poor. It's the law, and it's smart. Unless you only ride on the brightest and sunniest of days, you need lights. See previous section for night riding laws.



### *Did You Know?*

Bicycles currently displace over 238 million gallons of gasoline per year by replacing car trips with bicycle trips.

## MANAGING MOISTURE

Even if you don't usually ride in the rain, fenders (aka mudguards) improve riding on wet streets. Fenders cover the wheels and keep water and grit away from your feet, legs and back. Your local bike shop can set you up.

## CARRYING CARGO

With a properly equipped bike, you can carry a lot. Here's how-to carry your cargo:

◆ **Small Cargo:** A basic backpack is convenient for small loads and shorter trips. Larger backpacks sometimes make riding hot and awkward. A "messenger bag" has a single strap that rests on your opposite shoulder and is secured by a hip strap.



◆ **Medium Cargo:** A rack for the rear of your bike is extremely useful. You'll need one to use panniers, buckets and some baskets. Panniers are bags that attach to a rear bike rack. They're usually waterproof, removable and transport more weight comfortably. Baskets and buckets are generally less expensive and they attach to the front or rear of your bike. Some are collapsible. Others are easily removed. Plastic "bike buckets" are inexpensive and functional.



◆ **Large Cargo:** Trailers attach to the rear of your bike and are the best for carrying large loads, be it children, pets, groceries or whatever else you can think of. If you are budget conscious check out *craigslist* or other classified ads for inexpensive used trailers. All manner of cargo bikes are available locally that enable you to carry large loads with relative ease.

## CARRYING CHILDREN

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children under 1 year of age should not ride in a trailer or bike seat. Babies do not have sufficient neck strength to support the weight of a helmet or control head movements during a sudden stop.

### What to look for in a trailer (Cascade Bicycle Club):

- ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) safety standards sticker
- A full metal roll-cage with sturdy seat and harness/seatbelt
- 20" wheels with inflatable tires and metal rims--easier on uneven surfaces
- A rotating hitch that allows the trailer to remain upright even if the bicycle falls or is laid on its side
- A safety flag

### What to look for in a bike-mounted seat:

- ASTM safety standards sticker
- A back that comes up around the child's head and supports the neck
- Sides that wrap around the child
- Straps that connect around shoulders, waist, and buckle between legs
- Straps for the feet in foot rests (feet don't get caught in the wheel or brakes)

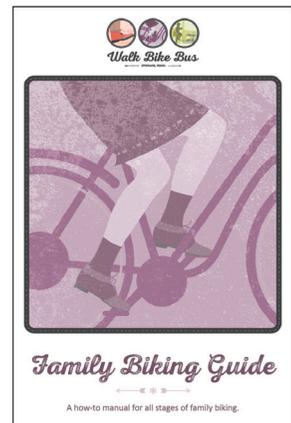


## Trailers vs. child seats:

- Trailers hold more weight than a child seat.
- Trailers hold up to two children and can hold toys and snacks.
- In trailers, the child does not need to be lifted to the height of the adult bike.
- Some trailers double as strollers.
- Trailers have flexible hitches and remain upright even if the adult bike falls.
- Child seats usually cost less.
- Child seats are more compact.
- Child seats allow the child to interact with his or her surroundings.
- Child seats are easy to mount on front/back of the bike.
- Child seats can carry up to 45 pounds.
- Bike-mounted child seats have the potential to destabilize the bike if the child moves abruptly or if the parent is not accustomed to the added weight.



For more information about biking safely with your family, please refer to the Walk Bike Bus Spokane Family Cycling Guide.



# Dressing to Ride



Some clothing accessories are great to have on hand every time you ride, while others are made for specific conditions or types of rides. These include long rides, riding at night, riding in the rain and in the cold. Choosing the right accessories will take a bit of experimentation on your part, but here's an overview to get you started.

## HELMETS

Helmets save lives. Wear one.

- ◆ Always wear a helmet and never ride with headphones. Helmets dramatically reduce the risk of head injury in a bicycle crash.



When to replace a helmet: After any crash involving the helmet, replace the helmet if it's over five years old or has any visible damage (SNELL Memorial Foundation). Cracks in the styrofoam or missing styrofoam show the helmet should be replaced.

## LEG BANDS

Leg bands are cheap and keep your pant leg free of chain grease and will prevent loose pants from getting ripped by your chain ring and chain. Reflective leg bands add to your visibility. Can't find leg bands? Rubber bands work, too!

## GLOVES

Wearing bike gloves serves two purposes: gloves with palm pads protect your hands from the elements and prevent aches and pains in your hands and wrists. Consider wearing full-fingered gloves in cold weather, half-fingered gloves in warm weather.

## LAYERING

This is key to staying comfortable when riding in wet and/or cold conditions. Multiple layers are a low-cost alternative to performance clothing. Easily add or remove layers to improve comfort on the go. Try a breathable base layer, a warm layer, and an outer layer that keeps out the wind and rain.

- ◆ Dress for the weather. Dress in layers so you can adjust to the temperature, and always wear bright clothing.

## REFLECTIVE AND VISIBLE CLOTHING

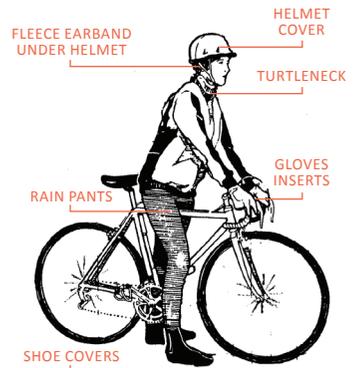
The right clothing provides better visibility any time of the day, especially during dark or low-light conditions. Buy clothing with reflective panels and/or piping, or add reflective tape. NOTE: Reflective clothing doesn't substitute for bike lights.

## RAIN GEAR

Water-resistant and waterproof cycling clothing makes year-round riding a breeze. A rain jacket with a longer back flap is a good start. You can also wear rain pants, waterproof gloves, helmet covers and shoe covers. Choosing rain gear that's highly visible and has reflective panels or piping increases safety.

## SHOES AND PEDALS

Generally, any closed-toed shoe will do. Choose casual, comfortable shoes with good traction soles. Add toe clips (cages attached to the pedals your foot slips into) for efficient pedaling. Clipless pedals require special cleated shoes.



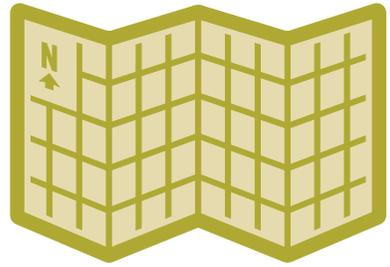
# Route Planning



While some trips by bike are as simple as hopping on and going, trips that are longer and less familiar require some planning.

## CHOOSING YOUR ROUTE

Choose a safe route to make your ride more pleasant. The route you normally drive may not be the best route for a bike. When planning your route, locate your starting point and your destination on the Walk Bike Bus – Spokane Multimodal Map or the Spokane County Bicycle Map to determine the best bike routes that connect the two. If possible, test your new route when you're not in a hurry to get to your destination at a certain time.



## BIKE PARKING

The number of bike racks in Spokane is increasing. Convenient locations to park your bike include businesses like Safeway. Consider road signs, fencing and other fixed objects when bike parking is not available, or ask to bring your bike into your destination. Be sure not to block any pedestrian or vehicle right-of-ways with your locked bike. Find bike parking on the Walk Bike Bus Multimodal Map or search "Spokane Bike Parking" on Google Maps.



*It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. Thus you remember them as they actually are, while in a motor car only a high hill impresses you, and you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle.*

*~ Ernest Hemingway*

## LOCK IT RIGHT



Using a u-lock protects your bike. At a minimum, put your lock through your frame and the front wheel. This is especially important if you have a quick release wheel because if you only lock the wheel, the rest of your bicycle can detach and get stolen. Options for locking the frame and both wheels include: 1) removing the front wheel so it can be locked with the rest of the bike and 2) use a u-lock for the front wheel and frame, and run a cable lock through the u-Lock and rear wheel. Practice and find what works best for you and your bike.

**LOCK UP TIP:** *Locking both the frame and the front wheel makes breaking your u-lock tougher for thieves, and it keeps your bike from falling over if bumped.*

## THEFT PREVENTION

First, remove items from your bike that can get quickly and easily stolen like quick-release seats, bags and lights. Next, make sure you tighten as much lock slack out as possible. Tighten the lock to prevent your bike from tipping and to discourage thieves.

## WHERE'S YOUR BIKE?

City of Spokane offers an online bike registration tool that helps police return lost or stolen bicycles to their owners at:

[my.spokanecity.org/account/registrations/bicycle/](https://my.spokanecity.org/account/registrations/bicycle/)

Part of this registration includes providing your bike's serial number. The serial number is usually located underneath the bottom bracket (that's where the pedals and crank connect to the frame). If you can't find it, your friendly local bike shop can help you locate it. Record the serial number and put it in a place where you can find it. Take pictures of the bike in case it gets stolen.

Should your bike turn up missing, don't give up hope. All is not lost! Stolen bikes are sometimes reclaimed, but to up your chances of finding your bike, do two things:

- ◆ Report the theft to the police as soon as possible.
- ◆ Give police the bicycle's serial number and description/pictures.



### *3 Things You Can Do If You Get A Flat:*

1. Call a friend or family member for a lift.
2. Put your bike on the bus.
3. Fix it on the spot if you have the necessary tools and know-how.

# Bikes on Buses



All Spokane Transit Authority (STA) buses can carry your bike. It's easy – just pay the normal fare and bring your bike along! The racks hold two bicycles (single seated, two-wheeled, non-motorized). Each bike is secured independently. Whether you're going to work, school or play, you and your bike can ride the bus.

Note: Permits and training are no longer required to load your bike on STA buses.

## LOADING

Every STA bus is equipped with a bike rack on the front bumper. You're responsible for loading, securing and removing your bicycle from the bike rack. To view and print a copy of instructions go here:

[spokanetransit.com/files/content/bikes-on-buses-instructions.pdf](http://spokanetransit.com/files/content/bikes-on-buses-instructions.pdf)



## RULES

Ask for help if you need it, but to keep you safe, follow these rules:

- ◆ Never step into traffic while loading or unloading a bike.
- ◆ Never cross the street in front of the bus: Passing traffic can't see you. Don't assume traffic is looking for you.
- ◆ Always walk your bike in stations, transit centers and pedestrian corridors.

## BIKE LOCKERS

STA offers inexpensive bicycle lockers. To rent a locker, please call **(509) 456-7277** for information. Lockers are available at:

- ◆ (Downtown) Jefferson Park and Ride | 410 S Jefferson St. 99204
- ◆ (North) Five Mile Park and Ride | 1762 W 5 Mile Road, 99205
- ◆ (Valley) Mirabeau Point Park and Ride | 13209 E Indiana Ave, 99216
- ◆ (Valley) Pence-Cole Valley Transit Center | 4th Ave. and University Road
- ◆ (South Hill) South Hill Park and Ride 31st | Avenue and Southeast Blvd
- ◆ Liberty Lake Park and Ride | Mission Ave. behind Albertson's
- ◆ (North) Hastings Park and Ride | 200-254 E Hastings Road, 99218



# Advanced Riding Skills



Most people learn bike techniques over time. Don't be shy about finding a vacant parking lot or playground to practice your moves. To take your skills to the next level, consider joining a Traffic Skills 101 course taught by League of American Bicyclist League Certified Instructors offered in your area.

## QUICK STOP BRAKING

Get to know your brakes. Rear-wheel brakes (usually the right-hand lever) differ from front-wheel brakes. The front brake has more stopping power than the rear but also requires more skill to avoid stopping too abruptly. Spend some time practicing in a vacant parking lot. For emergency braking (1) shift your weight toward the rear of the saddle and get your torso as low as possible while (2) applying even pressure to both brakes.

## SHOULDER CHECKING OR LOOKING BEHIND

Cyclists need to check traffic behind them when changing lanes or merging just as drivers do when using a rear-view mirror. Practice the "shoulder check" in a vacant parking lot until you can do it without swerving. If your ability to turn your neck is limited, try pivoting at the waist and hips a bit—the knee on the side you're turning can point out. Also, mirrors (either helmet-mount or handlebar-mount) help, but they're not a substitute for shoulder checking.

## SHIFTING GEARS

For consistency and ease, use your gears to regulate how fast you turn the pedals (aka "cadence"). Shift to an easier gear when coming to a stop so when you start again you'll be in the appropriate gear. When pedaling uphill, shift to an easier gear before the pedaling is too difficult. A cadence of about 60 to 80 pedal revolutions per minute is a good target for most cyclists on short rides.

## PEDAL POSITION

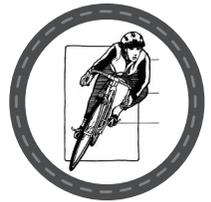
Making a straight and quick takeoff can be easy every time. Here's how:

- ◆ Stand over the frame in front of the saddle. Hold the brake levers so the bike won't roll.
- ◆ Lift your right foot (if you're "left-footed," start with your left foot instead) and put it on the pedal. Turn the crank backwards until the pedal is in the 2 o'clock position—forward and high.
- ◆ Let go of the brakes and push down on the pedal. The first pedal stroke starts the bike moving and lifts you up to the saddle.
- ◆ When the opposite pedal comes to the top position put your foot on it for the second pedal stroke. You're rolling!



## CORNERING

Slow down before you turn. Applying the brakes during a turn can cause you to skid. For more stability while turning, keep the inside pedal up.



## ROAD HAZARDS

Railroad tracks, wet leaves, metal utility covers, thermoplastic road markings and gravel are just a few things that can pose problems for cyclists. When riding over any of these surfaces, especially when wet, avoid braking and turning. For any rough surface, shift some of the weight off of your seat and onto your hands (handlebars) and feet (pedals).

Steer your bike perpendicular to the tracks, ideally at a 90-degree angle. If tracks are at an angle to the road, move into the car travel lane to get into the correct position to cross. Check the traffic behind you before you make this move. Tracks are slippery, especially when wet, so maintain your course and speed and avoid braking or turning as you cross. If this isn't possible, it's okay to walk your bike across.

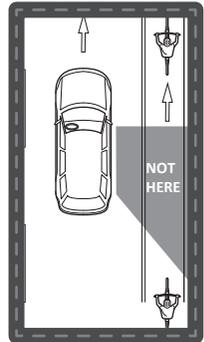
*“Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of riding a bike.”*

*- John F. Kennedy 35th President of the United States*

## AVOIDING THE BLIND SPOT

When overtaking a slower motorist while in a bike lane use extreme caution – stay out of the driver’s “blind spot,” especially when a driver turns in your path at intersections and driveways.

- ◆ Stay ahead of the vehicle so the driver sees you, or
- ◆ Stay back so if the vehicle suddenly turns right or stops you can stop your bike safely.



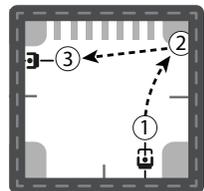
## RIDING IN THE LEFT LANE

A person operating a bicycle on a one-way roadway or highway with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as near to the left side, of the left through lane, as is safe. This does not apply to limited-access highways.

## BOX LEFT TURNS

Merging across traffic on a busy street to make that left turn can be a very difficult maneuver even for an experienced cyclist. Cross like a pedestrian. Here’s how to make that turn without the stress:

1. Ride through the intersection on the right side of the road.
2. Stop near the curb. Turn the bike to head in the correct direction.
3. Proceed with caution, obey traffic controls, and merge back in to traffic when it’s safe.



# Community Resources



## ORGANIZATIONS

- ◆ Spokane Bicycle Club - [spokanebicycleclub.org](http://spokanebicycleclub.org)
- ◆ Washington Bikes - [wabikes.org](http://wabikes.org)
- ◆ League of American Bicyclists - [bikeleague.org](http://bikeleague.org)

## CYCLING PAGES ON FACEBOOK

- ◆ GASUP - Get Around Spokane Using Pedals
- ◆ Biking Betties of the Inland Northwest
- ◆ Spokane Women Bike Commuters
- ◆ Walk Bike Bus Spokane
- ◆ Stickman Knows

## BICYCLE CLASSES

- ◆ Traffic Skills 101 classes taught by League of American Bicyclists League Certified Instructors are offered to Walk Bike Bus participants during the summer



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT**



*Walk Bike Bus*

»—— SPOKANE, WASH. ——>

*Email:* **INFO@WALKBIKEBUS.ORG**

*Web:* **WALKBIKEBUS.ORG**

Walk Bike Bus Spokane is a program of:



Walk Bike Bus Spokane is led in partnership with the Spokane County Commute Trip Reduction program, City of Spokane, Spokane Transit Authority, Spokane Bicycle Club and The Lands Council.

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Endorsed by:



StickmanKnows.org

*Guide adapted from City of Portland, Ore., SmartTrips*

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is provided without any warranties or guarantees. Spokane Regional Health District, nor its partners, are not responsible for any injuries or difficulties you may encounter as a result of using this information. Always consult a physician before starting any new exercise program.

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