

International Bicycle Fund

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A non-governmental, nonprofit organization promoting bicycle transport, economic development and international understanding worldwide.

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Lesson #3

TRAFFIC FLOW AND MIX

Objective:

To teach basic knowledge of traffic flow and mix, and rules of the road.

Specific Objectives:

- To teach basic knowledge of traffic flow
- To teach basic knowledge of rules of the road
- To teach basic knowledge of the bicyclist place and role in traffic
- To stress the importance stopping at intersections and driveways.

Introduction:

Students often have a surprisingly large amount of knowledge about traffic flow and rule of the road. In general, they know that roads are organized and vehicles go in prescribed patterns, but they may miss on the details and the importance of applying it to they own behavior. Successfully conveying these ideas is challenging. Without boring the students you have to make them recognize the importance of the rules and reinforce any ideas that they are not invinsibele in traffic.

Activities:

1. Pre-test on cycling knowledge.
2. Discuss the importance of equipment maintenance:

How serious is equipment failure on a bicycle? What can happen if--Brakes fail? Handlebars are loose? A wheel is wobbly? A tire is cut or bruised? The pedals feel floppy? A bicycle is too tall to completely control?

Many things will be identified as contributing to loose of control if not maintained. Try to distinguish and compare these to one another so that the discussion does not become dry and monotonous. Stress the positive point, "Keeping your bike repaired will not only make it last longer, but it will also help you enjoy the experience. Use the checklist to learn about your bicycle and to keep it in top shape and safe."

3. Discuss the importance of wearing a helmet while bicycling and its role in reducing injuries.
4. Anarchy to Order Game. Direct this game so that it stress the need for rules of the road, the importance of following the rule of the road and introduce rules about staying to the right.
5. Discuss rules of the road.
 - a. Traffic laws apply to bicycles
 - b. Obey traffic signs
 - c. Stop before entering traffic
 - d. Use hand signals before initiating a turn
 - e. Ride with the correct lane position
 - f. Yield to pedestrians
 - g. Use lights at times of poor visibility
 - h. Ride single file in traffic
 - i. Parents are responsible

6. Driveway Rideout Drill: Select a few students to imitate inanimate objects common to driveway environments; i.e. bushes, parked cars, etc. A second group of students will mimic traffic. Place a cone twenty-five feet down the street in each direction from the driveway and have the traffic circle around these. Establish a stopline where the "driveway" meets the street and place the inanimate group along what would be the curb line of the street. Once the child has turned into the street, have them practice looking backwards over their left and right shoulder before moving left or right. Review the scanning technique and have each rider perform legal entering and exiting techniques from the roadway. Discuss why they need to look over their shoulder for cars before they change lane position.

7. "A Bicycle Is Like....": A review of material.

"A Bicycle Is Like....a walker": When the bicyclist is on the sidewalk he goes slow and stops and looks bothways at intersections.

"A Bicycle Is Like....a roller skater": When you are on roller skates it is harder to maneuver and stop. At the roller rink everybody goes in the same directions so that there are no collisions.

"A Bicycle Is Like....a car": On the road you have to follow all of the same laws that other vehicles do.

"A Bicycle Is Like....an airplane": Just like an airplane pilot you need to check your equipment very carefully before you start. Equipment failure can cause accidents. Also you need to take special care in turning or you may fall.

8. Homework: Survey the traffic signs and possible hazards on a route frequently traveled. The student should walk a route that he frequently travels and list all of the traffic signs and possible hazards he would encounter if he rode his bike there.

WASHINGTON STATE BICYCLE LAWS

State laws are recorded in the RCW (Revised Code of Washington), available at any library. These eight books look like an encyclopedia and include everything from the Constitution to designation of the state flower. There is an index to help you find the topic you are looking for.

The rules of the road specifically for bicycling are in chapter 46, section 61 (46.61.750-.780). These rules apply any time a bicycle uses a road or a path.

46.61.750 It is a traffic infraction to fail to obey RCW 46.61.750 through 46.61.780.

46.61.755 Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles. Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this chapter.

46.61.758 Hand Signals. Point in the direction you intend to turn, downward for stop. Hand signals shall be given before initiating a turn.

46.61.760 Riding on Bicycles. A person riding a bike shall be upon or astride a permanently attached seat. No bicycle shall carry more persons than the number for which it is designed.

46.61.765 Clinging to vehicles. Whether on a bicycle, skates or sled, its forbidden.

46.61.770 Riding on Roadways and Paths. (1) Every person operation a bicycle upon a roadway at a rate of speed less than the normal flow of traffic at the particular time and place shall ride as near to the right side of the right through lane as is safe except as may be appropriate while preparing to make or while making turning movements, or while overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle proceeding in the same direction. A person operating a bicycle upon a roadway other than a limited-access highway, which roadway or highway carries traffic in one direction only and has two or more marked traffic lanes, may ride as near to the left side of the left through lane as is safe. A person operating a bicycle upon a roadway may use the shoulder of the roadway or any specially designated bicycle lane if such exists.

(2) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles.

46.61.775 Carrying Articles. You must keep one hand on the handlebars.

46.61.780 Lamps and Other Equipment on Bicycles. White light in front and red light or reflector in the rear. At least one working brake.

RCW 46.90.500 - .565 also address bicycles.

46.90.545 (2) Requires bicyclists to walk a bicycle through an intersection if it is not ridden through as a vehicle. No riding in the crosswalks.

46.90.555 Riding on Sidewalks. (1) No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk in a business district.

(2) A person may ride a bicycle on any other sidewalk unless restricted or prohibited by traffic control devices.

(3) Whenever a person is riding upon a sidewalk, such person shall yield the right or way to any pedestrian.

In addition to the rules of the road there are a few other areas in the RCW of special concern to bicyclists. RCW 47.30.005 - .060 sets guidelines and standards for recreational trails, including minimal amounts of money that is to be spent on these facilities by local and state governments.