



Rules for Motorists

Driving on the roads requires care and courtesy whether you are driving a car or a bicycle. As motorists, we must respect the rights of other road users including bicyclists. Bicyclists fare best when they act and are treated as drivers of vehicles. Do your part by being a safe and courteous driver. Below are a few driving rules for your review. Much of this information can be found in the new *Maine Motorist Handbook*. In addition a new bicycle safety question is on the Driver's Exam. Thanks for your help!

The Maine Department of Transportation reports there are nearly 900,000 bicycles in Maine, and most bicycling is done on roads.

Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers of motor vehicles. Efforts are being taken to educate all bicyclists that they too must obey the rules of the road. As a motorist you should drive carefully around a bicyclist because the slightest mistake by you or the bicyclist can result in death.

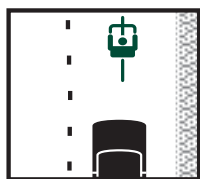


The biggest differences between bicyclists and motorists as road users is that bicycles are less visible, quieter, and don't have a crumple zone around them. *Always be aware of bicyclists* that may be on the road. Here are some guidelines from the Maine Department of Transportation to help you share the road with bicyclists.



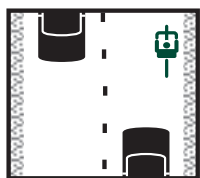
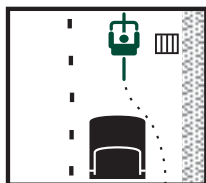
Reduce your speed when passing bicyclists, especially if the roadway is narrow.

Don't blast your horn when approaching bicyclists--you could startle them and cause an accident.



When a road is too narrow for cars and bikes to ride safely side by side, bicycles should "take the travel lane," which means riding in or near the center of the lane.

Recognize situations and obstacles which may be hazardous to cyclists, such as potholes, debris, and drain grates. Give bicyclists adequate space to maneuver.

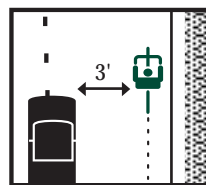


Do NOT pass bicyclists if oncoming traffic is near. Wait as you would with any slow-moving vehicle. Your patience will only take a few seconds and can help prevent a serious crash or worse.



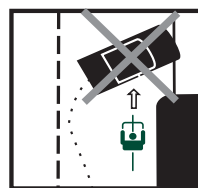
In bad weather, give bicyclists extra trailing and passing room, just as you would other motorists.

When uncertain in any situation, **SLOW DOWN** until it's safe to pass.



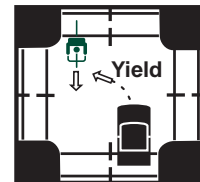
Give at least three feet of passing space between the right side of your vehicle and a bicyclist just as you would with a slow-moving vehicle.

After passing a bicyclist on your right, check over your shoulder to make sure you have allowed enough room before moving over. Experienced bicyclists often ride 25-30 mph and may be closer than you think.



Do not pass bicyclists if you will be making a right turn immediately afterward. Always assume bicyclists are traveling through unless they signal otherwise.

When turning left at an intersection, yield to oncoming bicyclists just as you would yield to oncoming motorists.



Before opening your car door, look for bicyclists who may be approaching.

Children on bicycles are often unpredictable--expect the unexpected.



When we all drive safely and are considerate of others, it is easy to Share the Road!