

# Safety Tips



It starts with Scouts.

June 2015

## Ride with Cycling Safety

Now that spring is here, Scouts (and Scouters) have as much reason as ever to get on their bikes. It's a convenient way to get to school or work, and it's a great way to get to a Scout meeting. Some Sections will even take advantage of the fine weather to head out on a ride!

For all these reasons, it's a good time to review some guidelines for safe cycling.

- **Always wear a helmet!** This should seem obvious by now, but many (over) confident cyclists still opt to leave their helmets at home. Nobody plans to fall off their bike or get hit by a car, but it happens. No matter how good a cyclist you are, you can't control if somebody else is going to run into you or cut you off. Be prepared, and protect your head. It's the only one you've got!
- **Be prepared with bike lights.** There may be plenty of daylight when you head out to a meeting, but it will be darker by the time you're headed home. While you might be able to see just fine under the streetlights, it's difficult for a driver in a car to see you. Bring a white light for the front of your bike, and a flashing red light for the back.



- **Plan your route before you head out.** Many cyclists can be a bit uncomfortable riding in any traffic. It's a good idea to make good use of bike paths and quiet side streets. If you're riding with a friend or in a group, ride single file.
- **Respect the rules of the road.** When you're on your bike, you're expected to behave like you're operating a motor vehicle. Leave sidewalks to pedestrians. Bike on the right side of the road, and leave plenty of room for cars to get past you. Use your hand signals to communicate with drivers if you're about to turn or stop.



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- **Wear bright colours.** It's important for cyclists to keep in mind that it can be hard for drivers to see them at any time of day. A bright helmet, jersey, or jacket can make a big difference with regard to how visible you are to drivers. Lots of bike clothing has reflective elements to catch headlights. You can even add your own reflective tape, or wear reflective bands on your arms and legs.

Riding your bike is a great way to get around. It's good for you and good for the planet, and it's a lot of fun. Fortunately, it's also not too complicated to ensure that it's a pretty safe activity.

