

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety

Bicycle Safety

The bicycle has been legally considered a vehicle in North Carolina since 1937. Bicyclists have full rights and responsibilities on the roadway and are subject to the regulations governing the operation of a motor vehicle, where applicable. The bicyclist has a right to ride on any state maintained road, except roads of the Interstate Highway system and other fully-controlled access highways.

While a bicyclist should ride as far to the right as practicable, a bicyclist may ride well out into the traffic lane if he or she can maintain the same speed as other vehicles on the roadway or if the right-hand edge of the roadway is in poor condition or is littered with debris. A bicyclist is not required to ride on the shoulder, since the shoulder is not legally defined as part of the roadway. A bicyclist may choose to make a left turn from the appropriate lane, like a vehicle, or may dismount and walk the bicycle across the intersection, like a pedestrian.

State traffic laws require the rider of a bicycle to:

- Ride on the right, in the same direction as other moving traffic;
- Obey all traffic signs and signals, including stop and yield signs and one-way directional signs;
- Use signals to communicate intended movements;
- Yield to pedestrians and emergency vehicles;
- Equip the bicycle with a front lamp visible from 300 feet and a rear reflector or lamp, which is visible from a distance of 200 feet at night;

Bicyclists should ride predictably and courteously to keep traffic moving safely and to avoid accidents.

Pedestrian Safety

- Pick places where there are sidewalks or paths separated from traffic. If there are no sidewalks or paths, walk as far from the vehicles as possible on the side of the street facing traffic.
- Limit the number of street crossings and avoid crossing busy or high-speed streets.
- Look for traffic at every driveway and intersection. Be aware of drivers in parked cars that may be getting ready to move.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.

- Always try to cross the street at an intersection or crosswalk.
- Cross the street safely:
- Stop at the curb or edge of the street;
- Look left, right, left and behind you and in front of you for traffic;
- Wait until no traffic is coming and begin crossing;
- Keep looking for traffic until you have finished crossing; and
- Walk, don't run, across the street.
- Make eye contact with drivers of vehicles to be sure they see you.
- Wear bright-colored clothes and carry a flashlight or wear reflective gear if it is dark or hard to see.