

# Tips for Riding a Bicycle to School

Riding a bicycle is a healthy, fun, and a great way to learn to be independent.  
But a bicycle is not a toy, it's a vehicle!  
Follow these great tips to make sure your trip is fun AND safe!

## Always Wear a Helmet!

A helmet protects your brain in case you fall over or crash. Wearing your helmet correctly will make sure it stays on to protect your head from injury. Make sure it is level and snug. You should be able to see the helmet brim.



## Be Visible!

Wear bright colors or reflectors so drivers can see you from far away. Roll up your pant leg and tie your shoes so they don't get caught in the chain. Wear a helmet for every ride, even short ones! Avoid riding at night. If you ride when it is dark, make sure to use lights on the front and back of your bicycle.

## Be Predictable!

It is important to follow all the rules of the road. Practice riding to school with an adult to learn hand signals, safety tips, landmarks and potential dangers. Control your bicycle by keeping at least one hand on the handlebars at all times. Carry books in a backpack or carrier to help you balance. Be sure to get permission from a parent before riding to school alone.

## Be Alert!

- Ride on the right side of the road going with the flow of traffic.
- Ride in a straight line when riding with other bikers, not side by side.
- When turning, look back for cars and use your hand signal.
- Yield to traffic when appropriate. If you see people walking across the street, stop and wait for them to cross.
- Always stop at the end of your driveway and look left, right, and then left again before bicycling into the road.
- Watch for cars backing out of driveways and for cross traffic at intersections.
- Use your eyes AND ears. Don't wear earphones or listen to music while you are riding so you can hear traffic.
- Watch for and avoid dangers that can cause crashes, such as potholes, loose gravel or dogs.



## Have Fun!

Bicycling is a fun way to get out and about with your friends and family, take advantage of every opportunity you get to bicycle and you'll be happy and healthy for life!

## ABC Quick Check for Your Bicycle:

Adjust your bicycle to fit. Make sure your bike is working before every ride by using the ABC Quick Check:

- **Air:** Squeeze your tires to make sure they are firm and full of air.
- **Brakes:** Hold down your brakes and try to move your bicycle back and forth, if it doesn't move your brakes are working!
- **Chain:** Make sure your chain is black or silver and quiet when you ride, if it is orange or squeaky it is rusty and needs some oil!

Try it out on a short ride before riding too far, listen for strange noises and make sure it handles well before taking it for the long haul. If your bike doesn't pass the ABC Quick Check ask an adult to help you fix your bike before you take it out on a ride!