

Basic skills

Produced by the Transport Department

It is always important to ride according to your own ability, no matter if you are a beginner or an experienced cyclist.

Beginners should practise in a flat, open space or at a cycle park to get themselves familiar with the basic skills.

Parents should arrange their children to practise at suitable locations based on their abilities.

Before riding, equip your children with proper protective equipment and helmets. Remind them of things to be aware of so that they can safely enjoy the fun of cycling.

Children under 11 years old must be accompanied by an adult while cycling.

You may move on to cycle tracks after mastering the basic skills. Be sure of your abilities before riding on the road.

Before setting off, always look both ahead and behind, in particular over your right shoulder for moving traffic. Only start to ride when it is safe. Stay cautious throughout the journey.

Give hand signals to indicate your intentions to other cyclists and drivers:

Extend your left arm to indicate that you will turn left.

Extend your right arm to indicate that you will turn right.

When slowing down, raise your hand to shoulder level with your palm facing down and wave up and down at least three times.

Signalling should be short. Return your hand to the handlebar right after signalling. Ride with at least one hand at all times.

Ride at speeds that you can control in order to keep balance.

Firmly grip the handlebars when applying the brakes and always allow enough braking distance.

Keep a lower speed while cycling in the rain or in slippery conditions and allow for extra time and distance to stop when applying the brakes.

If your bike is equipped with gears, it should be shifted to low gear when you start to ride or go up an incline.

Shift to a higher gear when accelerating.

The way to shift gears depends on the model of the bicycle.

There are some more things that you should note:

Sunglasses can protect your eyes from direct contact with sunlight and help prevent light blindness. They also protect eyes from wind and dust.

When cycling at night or in low visibility, you must wear clothing with reflective or fluorescent material and turn on the white front light and the red rear light. The red reflector is also essential.

Observing traffic rules, signs and road markings will help prevent accidents. For example,

The blue rectangular traffic sign, stating "Cyclists dismount. Use pedestrian crossing." in white letters indicates that cyclists should dismount and use the pedestrian crossing to cross the road.

The blue circular traffic sign with a line in the middle dividing pedestrian and bicycle graphics in white, means that pedestrians should use the footpath, while cyclists should use the cycle track.

The white rectangular traffic sign stating "Steep Road. Cyclists advised to walk" in black letters indicates that there is a steep road ahead and advises cyclists to dismount and walk.

The white traffic sign in square shape stating "Cyclist dismount." indicates that cyclists should dismount and walk.

When you reach the blue circular traffic sign which shows a graphic of a cyclist pushing a bicycle in white, it means you have to stop cycling from there.

For the same graphic of a cyclist pushing a bicycle mentioned just now, if it is on a blue traffic sign in square shape and with a red diagonal line across the graphic, that means you may resume cycling.

No matter if you are cycling on a cycle track or on the road, there are five things you should bear in mind:

1. Don't ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs
2. Don't use a mobile phone or headset while cycling
3. Don't carry passengers or bulky goods while cycling
4. Don't ride in a zigzag manner
5. Don't ride side by side with another cyclist

Planning for a group trip

It is important to plan ahead for a group cycling trip.

Plan the route based on the group's abilities, and choose cycle tracks where available.

Group leaders should be familiar with the selected route and its surrounding areas.

Check weather conditions and the latest cycling-related news before setting off. Take proper protective equipment and enough water.

If the destination is too far away, consider using a vehicle for transporting the bicycles instead of riding to the destination directly on the road.

For more safety tips and rules on cycling in Hong Kong, please visit the Transport Department Cycling Information Centre website: www.td.gov.hk/mini_site/cic.