

Cyclist's Guide

NAME:

LEVEL 2



Cycling Scotland



Photo: Warren Media



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What is Bikeability Scotland?

Bikeability Scotland is cycle training designed to give you the skills and confidence you need to ride your bike more.

Level 1 teaches you basic skills such as balance, controlling your bike and making turns. It is done in a traffic-free area such as the playground.

Level 2 teaches you basic skills for riding on the road, including turning at junctions. Level 2 training takes place on quiet roads.

Level 3 looks at planning a journey and using more challenging routes. This training may take place in Primary 7 or later at secondary school.

There are lots of different types of cycling you can get involved in. Go to the back of this booklet for more information.

Do you know these signs?

Cyclists must follow the Highway Code and rules of the road. Here are some common signs you might see and what they mean.



Stop and give way



Give way to traffic on major road



No cycling



No entry for vehicular traffic



Cycle route ahead



School



Crossroads



Route to be used by pedal cycles only



One way traffic

Bike checks

It is important that your bike is safe. This means that all parts of your bike should work correctly. If your bike is unsafe it might lead to an accident. The next section describes how to check your bike. If you find anything wrong, get help from an adult to get it sorted.



How to check

It is best to follow a routine. Some people do an M check.

- **Start with the front wheel.**
- **Move up to the handlebars.**
- **Move down to the pedals and chainset.**
- **Move up to the saddle and seatpost.**
- **Move down to the rear wheel.**



Front wheel

Look at the tyre.

- Make sure the wheel isn't loose – the quick release axle, or nuts and bolts, should be tight.
- There shouldn't be any bald, worn or cracked patches. You should see the tread all the way around the tyre. (The tread is the grooves on the tyre. These grooves help the tyre grip the road.)
- Is the tyre pumped up properly? It should feel firm when you squeeze it.



- Make sure there's nothing stuck in the tyre, and there aren't any broken or damaged spokes.
- When you spin the wheel, the brakes shouldn't stick.
- The brakes shouldn't catch on the rim when you spin the wheel.



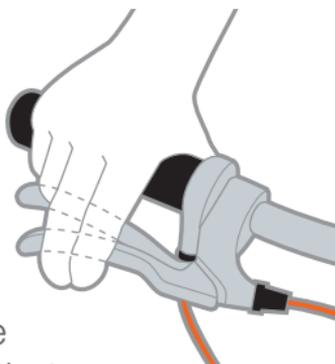
Handlebars

- Put the front wheel between your knees and clamp it tight, like in the picture.
- Try to turn the handlebars side to side – they should be nice and tight and not twist.
- Check that the stem has not been raised past the safety mark.
- Check that the handlebar end plugs are still there.



Brakes

- › Do the brakes stop the bike?
- › The cables shouldn't be frayed, rusty or broken.
- › Make sure that the brake blocks aren't worn, and that they're in line with the rims.

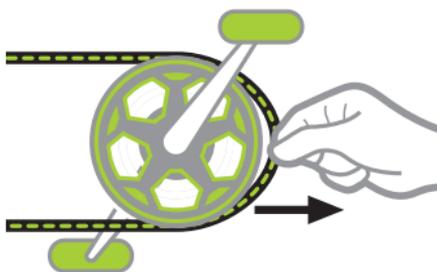


Pedals

- › Do the pedals spin freely and quietly?
- › Do they have a good grip for your shoes?

Chain

- › You should not be able to pull the chain away from the chainring.
- › Does the chain go round smoothly?
- › Make sure the chain isn't rusty – it should be oiled (but not too much!) to make it easier to pedal and change gear.



Saddle and seat post

- Check that the saddle is firmly fixed.
- Check that the seat post has not been raised above the safety mark. (Ideally you should have the saddle set so that you are able to reach the ground with the tiptoes of both feet.)



The back wheel

- Check this wheel in the same way that you checked the front one.
- Check that the gears work and that the back gear does not go into the wheel when you choose the easiest gear.

Reflectors

- You should have a white reflector at the front and a red reflector at the back.
- The reflectors should be clean and easy to see.

Lights

- If you are cycling in the dark you must have a white light at the front, a red light at the back, and a red rear reflector.
- Check that the lights are securely fitted and the batteries are charged.



Kitting yourself out

Once you've checked your bike, make sure that you are roadworthy too!

Helmet

A helmet will not prevent an accident. However, if it is fitted properly it may help to protect your head if you have an accident.

Choosing a helmet

- With a tape measure, measure around your head about 2.5cm above your eyebrows.
- Find a helmet that is the same size.
- Make sure that the helmet is snug but not too tight. Check that the helmet has a CE safety mark on it. Get advice from someone if you're not sure.

Wearing the helmet

- Make sure that you can see properly.
- The helmet should sit level and not tilt.

- Make sure the straps are not loose or covering the ears. The buckle should be under the chin. You should only be able to slide two fingers between the strap and your chin.
- Always follow the instructions supplied with the helmet and use the fitting pads when necessary.

Carrying things

Always carry things in a rucksack or in special 'panniers', or a saddlebag, attached to your bike. Never carry anything in your hands or have anything hanging from the handlebars.

Clothing

Your clothing should be bright. When cycling at night or in poor visibility, ideally your clothing should be reflective or have reflective strips on it.





I can...

	Tick
Explain what to wear when cycling	
Do an M check	
Get on and off my bike without help	
Start off and pedal without help	
Stop without help	
Ride along without help for a minute or more	
Make the bike go where I want it to go	
Use gears	
Stop quickly in control	
Manoeuvre safely to avoid objects	
Look all around, including behind, without losing control	
Control the bike with one hand	
Share space with pedestrians and other cyclists	

Road position

Where you are on the road is important for you to:

- see properly and be seen by others
- show other road users your intentions
- be able to respond to other road users.

A good position is where you are safe, visible, and respectful of other road users. Riding in the gutter and too close to the edge of the road can be dangerous because of drains, debris, tree branches and walls.

Where should I be?

The simple answer is that there is no simple answer! How far out in the road you should be depends on a number of things – how fast the traffic is, how wide the road is and the obstacles ahead.

During your Bikeability Scotland training you will learn about two positions, often called the ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ positions.

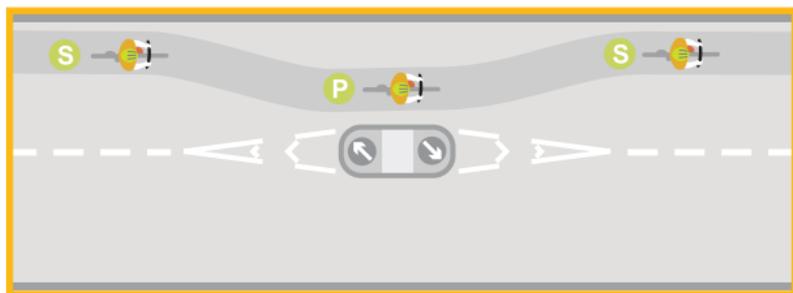
Primary position

In the primary position, you ride nearer the centre of the lane, roughly in line with where the driver would sit in a car.

The benefits of the primary position are that:

- you have more space to react
- other road users can see you more easily
- you can see better.

Generally, cyclists use the primary position when making manoeuvres, and also when encountering hazards such as parked cars, side roads and traffic-calming measures like road islands.



S = Secondary position **P** = Primary position

Secondary position

The secondary position means that you ride to the left of the lane, roughly in line with where the front passenger would sit in a car, but never closer than 50cm to the edge of the road. If you ride any closer, you will have less room to move and avoid hazards and you will be more difficult to see.

The benefits of the secondary position are that:

- it is easier for traffic to get past you
- you may feel more comfortable in fast-moving traffic.

Cyclists generally use the secondary position when they are going straight and there are no hazards ahead. Cyclists often prefer the secondary position when traffic is moving much faster than them.

A safe cycling strategy

Whichever position you are riding in, you should always think about the traffic around you. You should remember the following things:

- › Control
- › Observation
- › Position
- › Signal

A safe cyclist will be in control of their bike, look around often to see hazards and traffic, think about which position is safest, and signal to other road users when they are moving.



Other things you must be aware of:

- Look behind and listen carefully before changing position or making a manoeuvre.
- Look for hazards ahead, like pedestrians who might step out, traffic lights that might change, and traffic at junctions.
- Be prepared for other road users making abrupt changes.
- Remember that pedestrians, drivers and other cyclists often misjudge speed and may pull out too soon.
- Drivers sometimes don't look for cyclists, so be careful when passing cars in case they suddenly pull out or open the door.
- If you don't feel safe, stop safely at the side of the road and push your bike across the road or junction.
- If you wear glasses to see things at a distance, you must wear them for cycling.



It can be very useful to make eye contact with drivers behind you when you signal – this can make people act much more considerably.

Starting off

Before starting off:

- Find a safe place on the road to start from (somewhere that you can see clearly and other traffic can see you). Sit on the saddle, place your left foot on the ground and place your right foot on the right pedal in the 2 o'clock position.

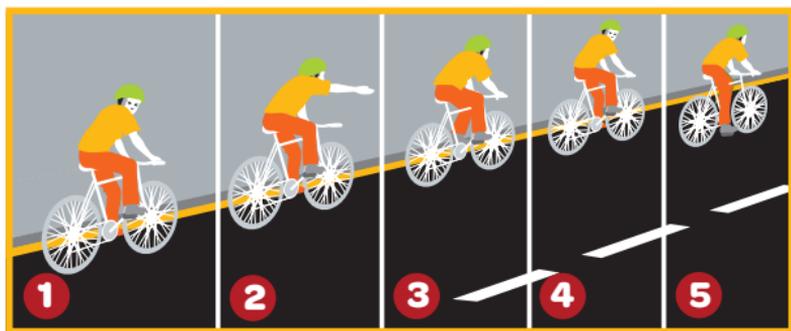
1 Look – Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder to see if it's safe.

2 Signal – When you set off again complete a lifesaver look over your right hand shoulder and check carefully all around. Continue cycling when it is safe to do so.



Signal for three seconds, counting 'one elephant, two elephant, three elephant'.





3 Handlebars – Return your right hand to the handlebars.

4 Lifesaver – Take a final look back over your right shoulder, just to make sure it's safe to go.

5 Manoeuvre – Once you're sure it's safe to go, look ahead and push on the right pedal to make a smooth and controlled start.

Stopping

- 1 Look** – Identify an appropriate place to stop. Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder to see if it's safe. Is there anything travelling close behind? If it's very close, let it pass.
- 2 Signal** – If it's safe to stop, the Highway Code states that you should signal with your right arm (arm stretched straight out from the shoulder with your palm facing down and your fingers together). Move your arm down and up three times.
- 3 Handlebars** – Return your right hand to the handlebars.
- 4 Lifesaver** – Take a final look back over the left shoulder, just to make sure it's safe.
- 5 Manoeuvre** – Once you're sure it's safe to stop, move gradually to where you're going to stop, and bring your bike to a stop smoothly and safely. Get off on the pavement or verge on the left-hand side.

Emergency stop

There may be times when you have no time to plan a stop, for example, when a pedestrian steps out in front of you or a car pulls out. In this case you will need to make an emergency stop. To perform an emergency stop, do the following.

- Squeeze both brakes firmly but smoothly. (If you apply the front brake too strongly, you could fly over the handlebars. If you pull on the brakes too quickly, you could skid.)
- As you apply the brakes, move your body back by straightening your arms. You should come to a complete stop.

When you set off again complete your lifesaver over the right-hand shoulder and check carefully all around. Continue cycling when it is safe to do so.



Road priorities

As you approach a junction, you must be looking ahead. Based on what you see, you must make a clear and safe decision about what you are going to do.

You must also be aware of what other road users **might** do, and be prepared to act accordingly. All road users must know who has priority at a junction. As a general rule, road users on the major road have priority over those on the minor road, so they make their manoeuvre first.

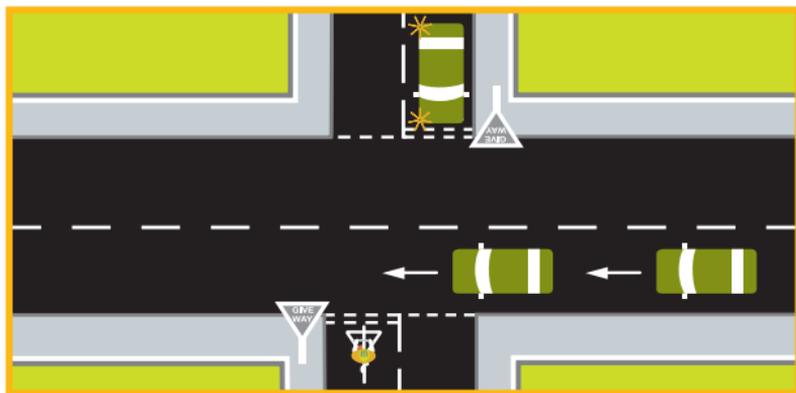
Cyclists must give way to pedestrians crossing the road they are turning into, and should look out for parked vehicles and other obstructions hidden around the corner.



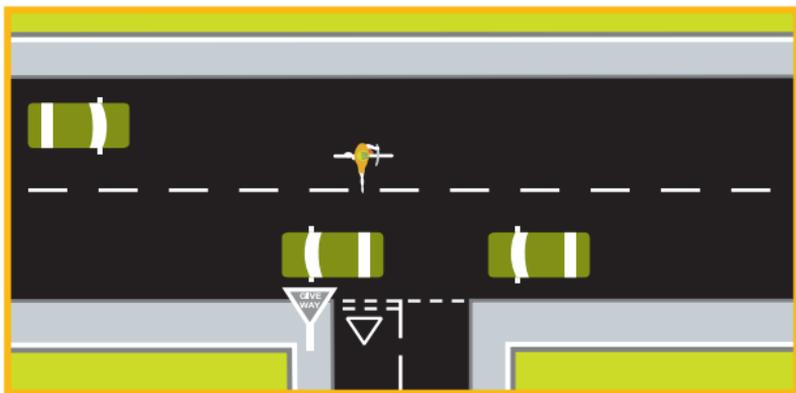
By looking ahead, watching for dangers and using your bell or shouting to other traffic and pedestrians when necessary you are more likely to avoid needing to make an emergency stop.



Here the cyclist is going straight ahead at the crossroads, from a minor road into another minor road opposite. The 'Give Way' sign and road markings indicate that road users on the major road have priority. Therefore the cyclist must wait until both lanes of the major road are completely clear, before crossing into the minor road ahead.

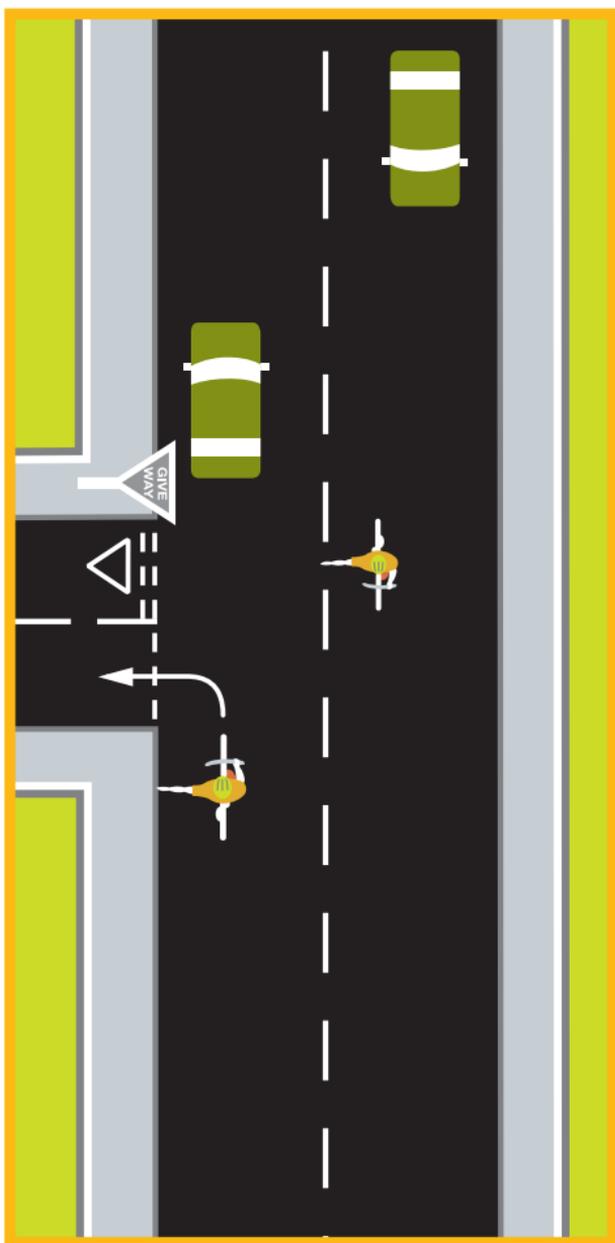


The cyclist is going straight ahead at the crossroads, and so again must wait until both lanes of the major road are completely clear. There is a car in the minor road ahead indicating that they're turning right into the major road, but the cyclist has priority. The car needs to cross into the cyclist's path in order to turn right – so because road users must always wait until their path is clear before turning, the car must wait for the cyclist to move first.



Here the cyclist is turning right into a minor road, and must wait until the right hand lane of the major road is clear. Because the cyclist is currently on the major road, they have priority over traffic on the minor road – so if any traffic wanted to turn right from the minor road into the major road, they would need to wait until the cyclist had completed their manoeuvre.





The cyclist at the bottom of the picture, who is turning left into the minor road, has priority because they are on the major road, and don't need to wait for any traffic to clear before turning. Therefore this cyclist can turn left as soon as they reach the junction.

The cyclist at the top of the picture, who is turning right into the minor road, must wait until the lane they are crossing is clear. Therefore they must wait for the other cyclist to complete their manoeuvre before turning right.



Left turns

Left turn – uncontrolled junction/ major to minor road

As you are cycling along:

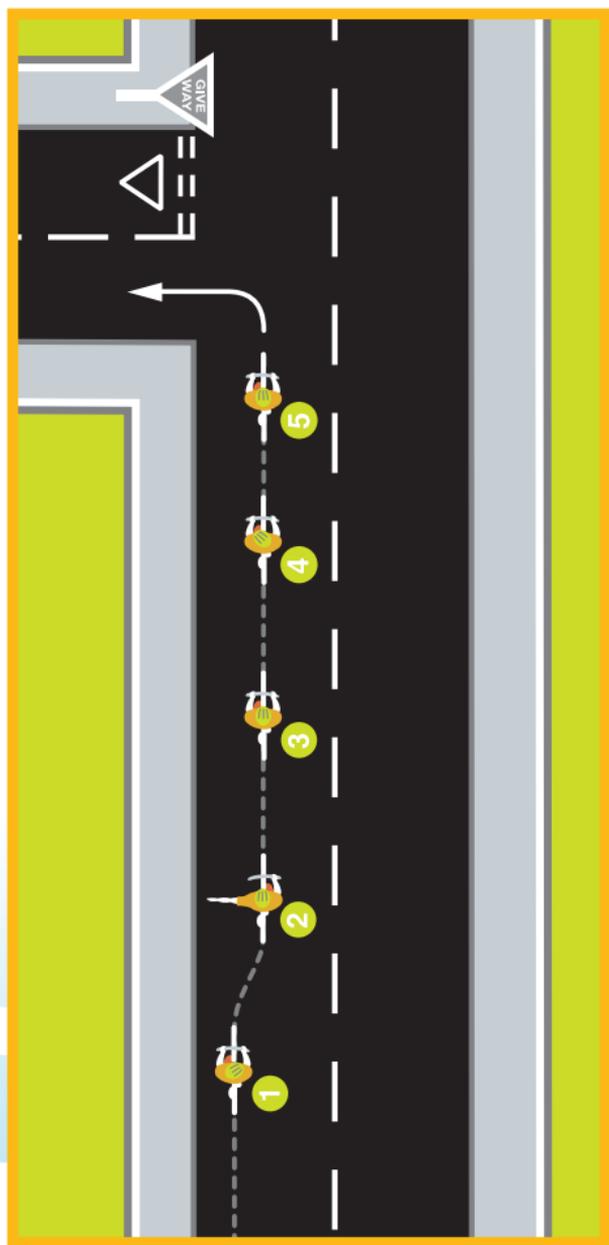
1 Look – Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder to see if it's safe.

2 Signal – If it's safe, give a clear signal with your left arm.

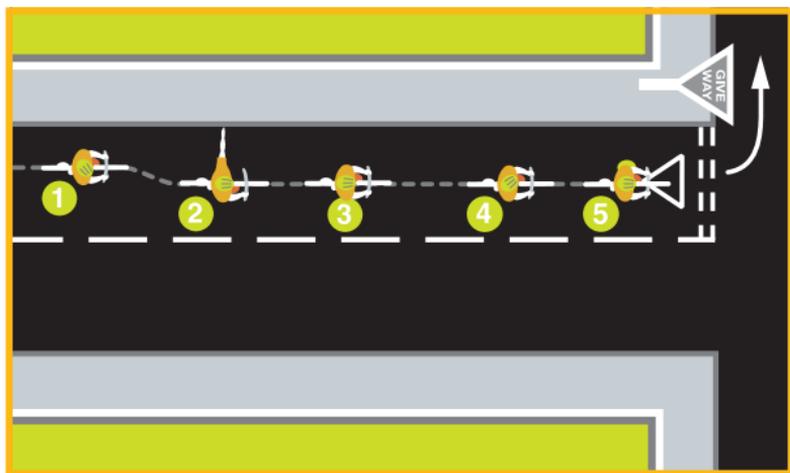
3 Handlebars – As you get close to the junction, put your left hand back on the handlebars and squeeze both brake levers gently.

4 Lifesaver – Take a final look back over your left shoulder, just to make sure it's safe.

5 Manoeuvre – If it's safe, turn left.



Left turn – controlled junction/ minor to major road



This may be a Give Way junction or a Stop junction (and traffic lights may be present).

1 Look – Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder to see if it's safe.

2 Signal – If it's safe, give a clear signal with your left arm.



3 Handlebars – As you get close to the junction, put your left hand back on the handlebars and squeeze both brake levers gently.

4 Lifesaver – Take a final look back over the left shoulder, just to make sure it's safe. As you approach the junction, look right, left and right again to see if the way ahead is clear. If the junction is not clear or the lights are red, bring your bike to a stop. Keep your left foot on the ground and the right pedal set at the 2 o'clock position.

5 Manoeuvre – Obey any traffic lights and road signs. If you have stopped, remember to look all around and signal clearly before you move off safely.



Passing parked cars or slower moving vehicles

Before passing a parked car, remember that:

- the vehicle might set off without warning
- a driver or passenger might suddenly open a door
- a pedestrian might step out unexpectedly.

1 Look – Check behind you, over your right shoulder and the road ahead. Look through the windows of vehicles to see whether there is anyone inside.

2 Signal – If it's safe, signal clearly with your right arm stretched out to the side. Move out gradually until you can see past the parked car. Keep watching for traffic all around you.

3 Handlebars and Lifesaver – As you get close to the parked car or obstacle, put your right hand back on the handlebars. Put your

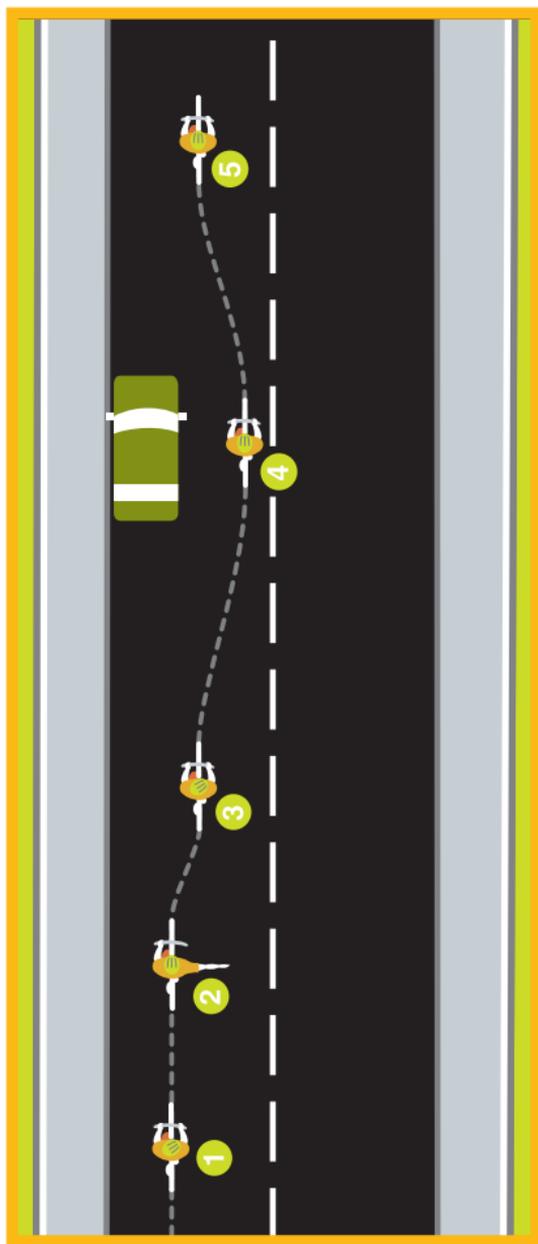
fingers over the brake levers and beware of car doors opening. Take a final look back over your right shoulder, just to make sure it's safe. You may have to stop if there is oncoming traffic – the oncoming vehicle has priority, not you. If you have to stop, make sure you are not too close to the parked car. It's better to stop slightly further back.

4 Manoeuvre – Move out gradually. Leave a safe gap between you and the vehicle, allowing for the door, and be prepared to change your position. If you have to make an emergency stop, remember to squeeze both brakes firmly but smoothly.

5 Return to the correct position in the road – After overtaking, perform a final check over your left hand shoulder to make sure it's safe before you return to the most suitable road position. Do not cut in sharply.

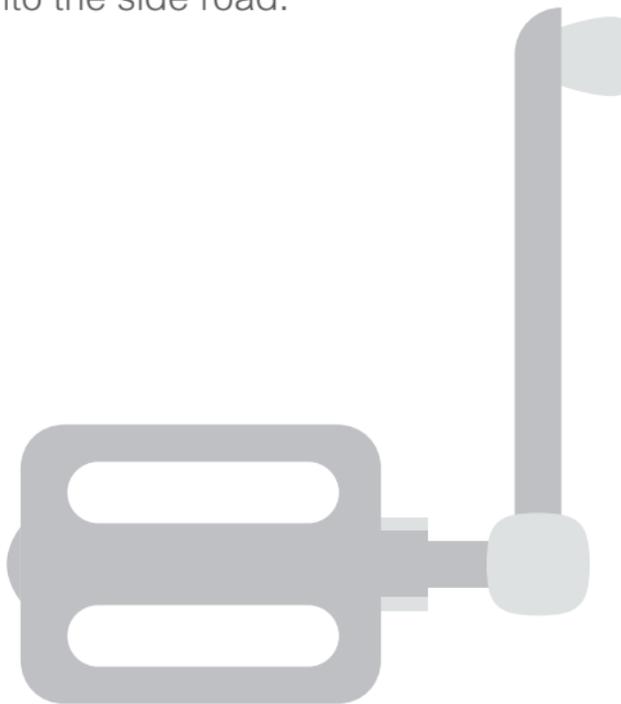


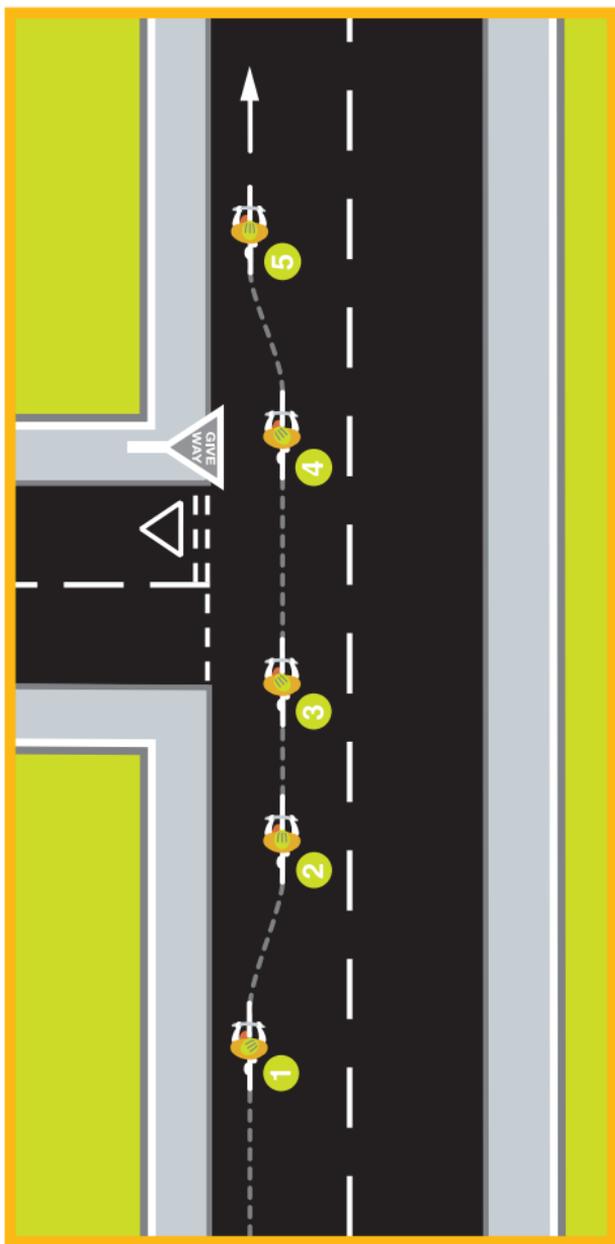
Look out for oncoming traffic before moving into the opposite lane.



Passing side roads

As you approach a side road, you must look into it for any vehicles that may be about to come out and pedestrians who may be about to cross the road. You must also be looking out for vehicles coming in the opposite direction which may come across your path and into the side road.





- 1 Look** – Behind you, down the side road and forwards.
- 2 Position** – You should be protecting yourself by riding in the primary position if it is safe to do so.
- 3 Pass** – Look into the side road as you pass it.
- 4 Lifesaver** – Maintain your position until you have passed the road and completed a lifesaver over your left shoulder.
- 5 Position** – If it's safe to do so, you can return to the secondary position.



Right turns

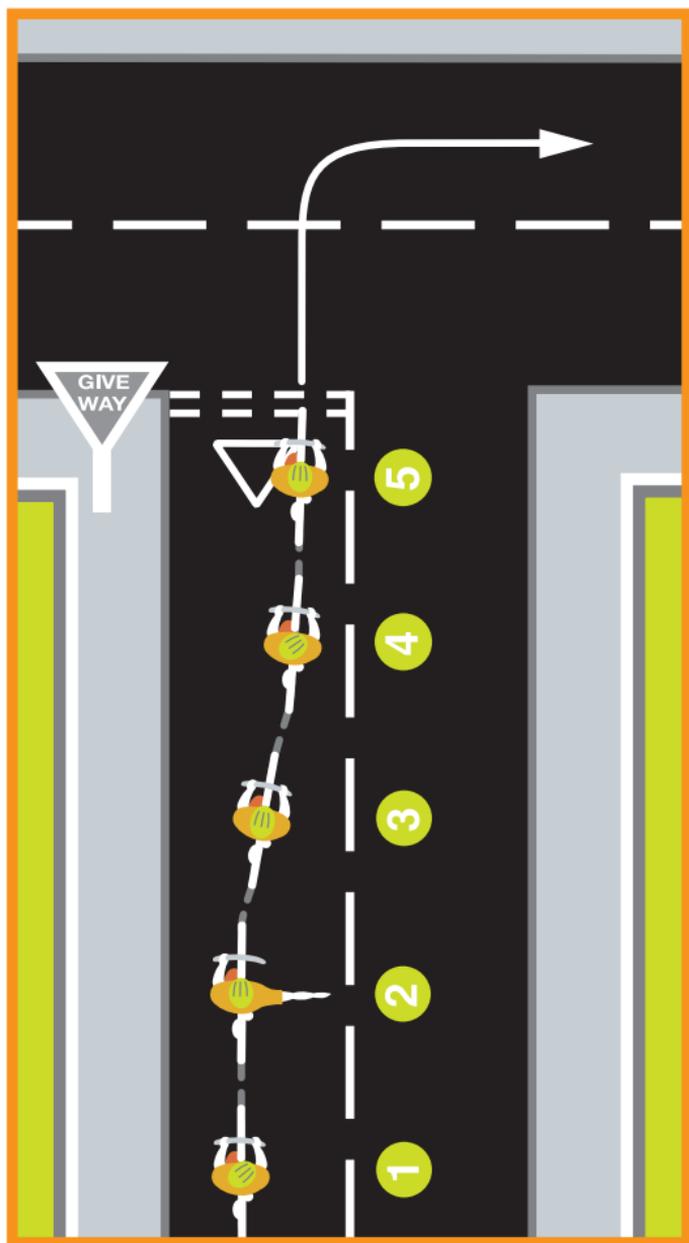
Right turn – controlled junction/minor to major road

Sometimes it can be difficult for cyclists to turn right, especially in heavy traffic. If you do not feel safe doing the manoeuvre, it may be better to get off your bike and cross the road with it.

1 Look – Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder to make sure it's safe.

2 Signal – When it's safe, give a clear signal with your right arm stretched out. Move gradually into the centre of the lane, still signalling. Keep watching for traffic all around you.

3 Handlebars – As you get close to the junction, put your right hand back on the handlebars and squeeze both brake levers gently.



4 Lifesaver – As you approach the junction begin looking right and left and prepare to stop at the junction if it's not clear. Take a final look back over your right shoulder, just to make sure it's safe. At a stop junction (as pictured) or where traffic lights are red, bring your bike to a stop. Keep your left foot on the ground and the right pedal set at the 2 o'clock position. At a Give Way junction, make sure the junction is clear before continuing.

5 Manoeuvre – Obey the traffic lights and road signs. If you have stopped, repeat the starting-off procedure again before you move off safely. When it is safe to go, move straight across to the left hand lane of the major road and remember not to cut the corner.

Right turn – uncontrolled junction/ major to minor road

1 Look – Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder, to see if it's safe.

2 Signal – If it's safe, give a clear signal with your right arm stretched out. Move gradually into the centre of the road, still signalling, but keeping left of the centre lane lines.

3 Handlebars – As you get close to the junction, put your right hand back on the handlebars and squeeze both brake levers gently. Look into the junction for vehicles which may pull out in front of you.



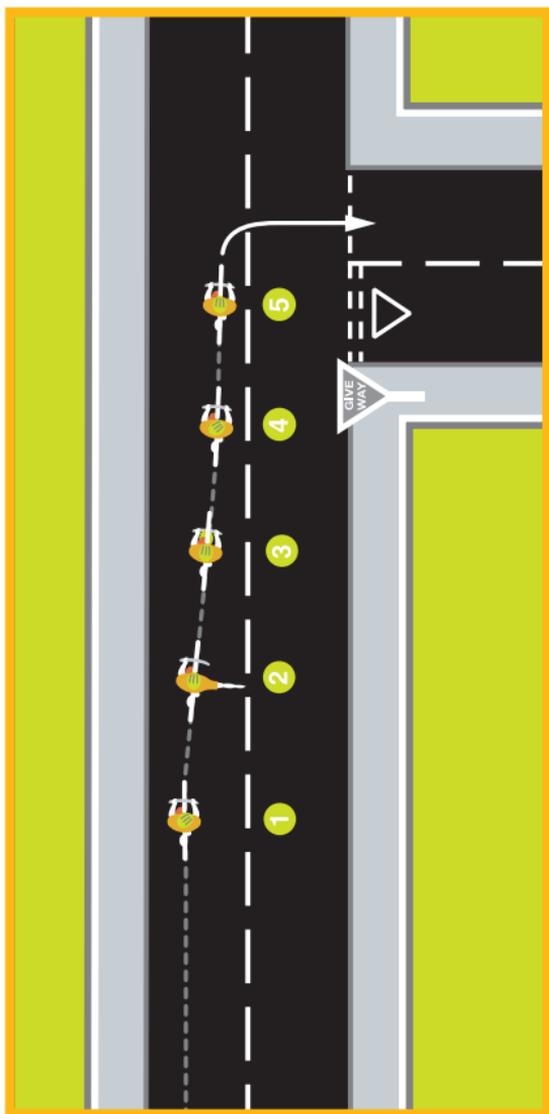
4 Lifesaver – Look straight ahead for traffic coming towards you. Traffic coming towards you has right of way and you must wait until the major road is clear and it is safe to turn. Check that your path into the junction is clear. Give a final look back over your right shoulder. If the major road is not clear, stop and repeat the starting-off procedure before moving off safely.

5 Manoeuvre – If it is safe to turn, cycle into the minor road without cutting the corner. Look out for other road users (drivers, pedestrians and cyclists).



When cycling in traffic, it can sometimes be difficult to turn right. If the road is very busy or drivers do not give way to you, it may be better to get off your bike at the kerb and cross with it at a suitable crossing point. Remember to keep looking as you cross the road.

Right turn – uncontrolled junction/ major to minor road



Make a U-turn

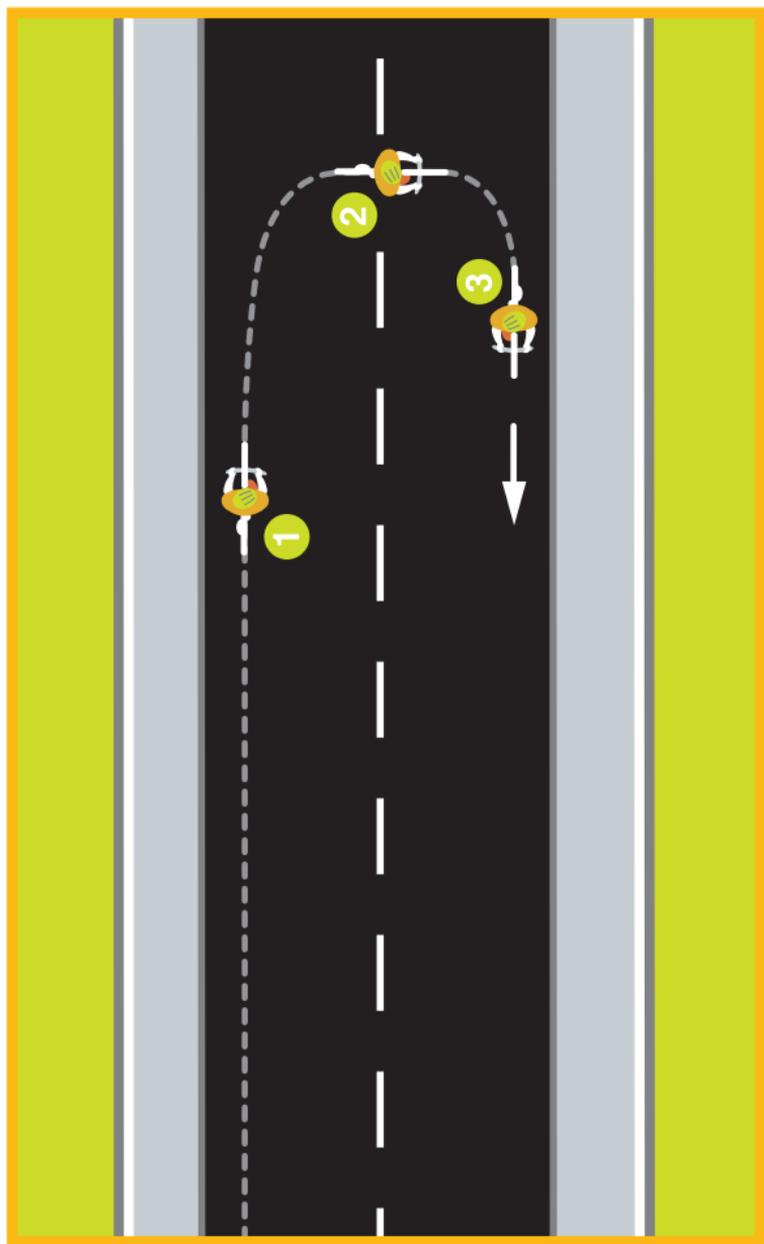
There is likely to be a time when you find yourself riding in the direction opposite from the direction you want to travel in. An easy solution can be to get off your bike and push it across the road before moving off from the kerb.

Another option is to make a U-turn. This involves crossing both lanes, so it is important to be aware of traffic passing in both directions.



You should only do a U-turn when both lanes are clear of traffic and you can complete the manoeuvre without having to stop in the middle of the road. As you will only do this manoeuvre when there is no traffic, there is no need to signal.





1 Look – Check all around, looking back over your right shoulder to see if it's safe. Make sure you have checked for traffic in both directions. Have both hands on the handlebars.

2 Manoeuvre – Start to turn and use the pedals and your brakes to control your speed. Keep checking for traffic in both directions. If both lanes are clear of traffic, complete the turn, slowing down if necessary. You must not leave the road whilst making your turn.

3 Lifesaver – Carry out a lifesaver check over your right shoulder before moving back to a safe position.

Different types of road

When you are on the road, you are responsible for deciding when it is safe to make a manoeuvre. This has to be your own decision. Sometimes, it may be safer to get off your bike and push it rather than make a manoeuvre that could be very dangerous. Pushing your bike could also take less time!

One way streets

As a cyclist, you must know and obey all road signs. Don't cycle the wrong way along a one way street. If you want to go in the opposite direction, get off your bike safely and push it along the pavement.



Single track roads

When cycling along a single track road, make sure you:

- use passing places to allow cars to overtake you
- use passing places to allow vehicles coming from the opposite direction to pass (wait opposite the passing place if it's on the other side of the road)
- don't park or leave your bike in passing places.

Dual carriageways

Dual carriageways can be very busy roads with fast moving traffic. Avoid them by planning a different route. These are not suitable for an inexperienced cyclist.



Off the road

It is illegal to cycle on the pavement, unless there are signs to say that this is allowed. When it is allowed, you will be sharing the space with pedestrians and it is important to remember to:

- watch for people on the pavement
- give clear warnings that you are behind people
- slow down when near people and animals
- slow down when merging with traffic ahead
- thank people if they move to let you past
- be careful!

Take care when pushing your bike along the pavement, and remember not to leave your bike lying on a pavement or path, as it can be a danger to others.



You can cycle across a toucan crossing (a crossing that displays a bike as well as a person), but not at a pelican crossing.

Planning your route

When you're planning a journey on your bike, even if it's just round the corner to your friends or to school, ask yourself the following:

- Can I avoid busy roads? Can I avoid dangerous junctions and large roundabouts?
- Is there a safe cycle route I can use?

It's always a good idea to think about the route you're going to take and plan your journey. Your school might have copies of cycle maps showing local routes.

Remember the following:

- You can walk with your bike across pedestrian crossings.
- Find out about road signs for cyclists.
- Find out about cycle routes from your local cycle trainer or school travel co-ordinator.

Extra skills

Here are some more skills which may be useful, depending on your local area. It is important that you only use these skills if they have been taught by a trained instructor as part of your Bikeability Scotland training, or by your parent/carer.

Going straight on from minor road to minor road at a crossroads

If the road is busy and you're not comfortable with this manoeuvre, remember you can get off and walk your bike across.

1 Look – As you approach the junction, check behind you. If you are not already in the primary position, move into it when it is safe to do so.

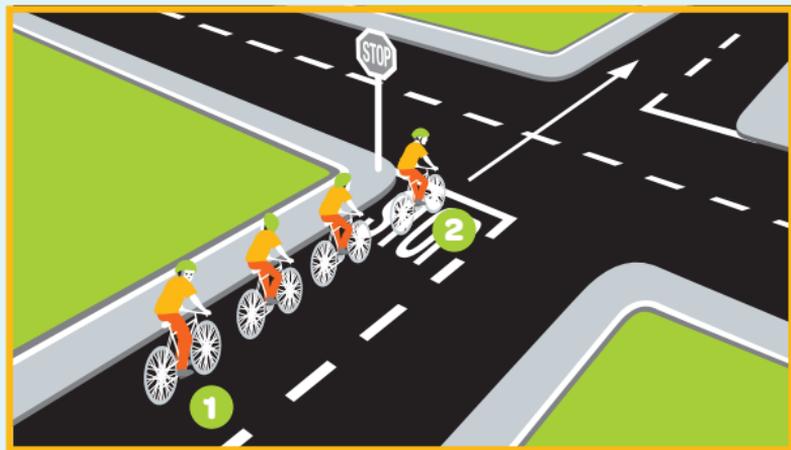
As you approach the junction, start checking for traffic coming from both directions on the major road. Also check for traffic that may come from the minor road ahead and be prepared to give way if necessary.

2 Manoeuvre – If there is a ‘Stop’ sign, stop at the stop line and check for traffic from right, left and ahead. If it is safe to do so, cycle ahead into the other minor road, continuing in the primary position.

If the junction is a Give Way junction, you don’t need to stop if there are no cars and it’s safe to go.



At a crossroads, you have to be aware of three different lanes of traffic that may be a hazard. Using the primary position helps you to see, makes you more visible and allows you to move safely by reducing the risk from vehicles overtaking you. If the road is busy and you’re not comfortable with this manoeuvre, remember you can get off your bike and push it across the road.



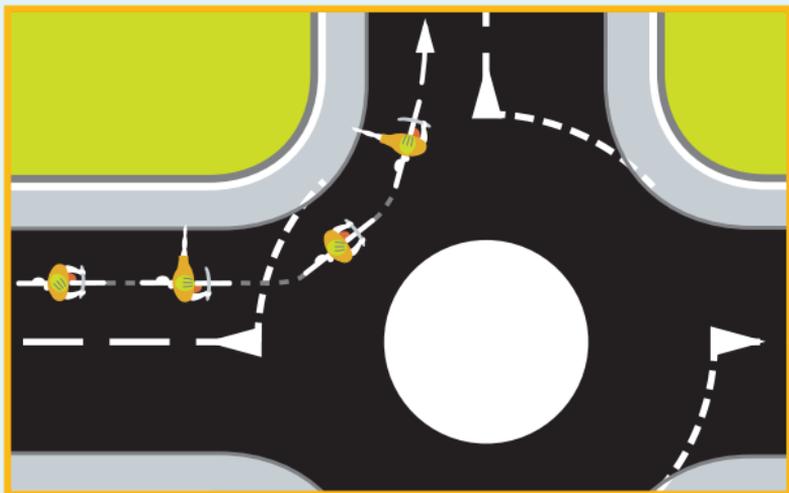
Roundabouts

Single-lane roundabouts

● **Look** – As you approach the roundabout, check behind. If you are not already in the primary position, move into it when it is safe to do so. As you approach the give-way line, check for traffic from the right, either on the roundabout or joining it from other road, you must stop and give way to these vehicles.

● **Lifesaver** – Before entering the roundabout and setting off, carry out a lifesaver look.

● **Manoeuvre** – Cycle round the roundabout. When you have passed the exit before the one you want to take, check behind and ahead for traffic and signal left.

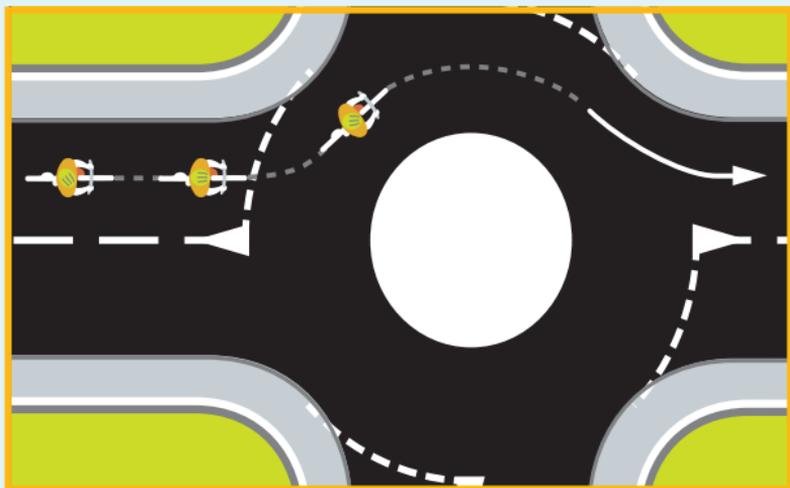


If you are taking the first exit, you should signal before entering the roundabout. If you are turning right, it can be courteous to other drivers to signal right, but only if you have good control of the bike.

On a single-lane roundabout, the safest position is usually the primary position so that you can see other vehicles and drivers can see you. You should stay in this position until you have safely left the roundabout.

Mini-roundabouts

Mini-roundabouts are often found in quiet areas where the speed limit is no more than 30mph. You should approach mini-roundabouts in the same way you would a single-lane roundabout, making sure you look, signal, and manoeuvre safely.



Other things to be aware of with mini-roundabouts:

- Vehicles can go across the top of a mini-roundabout, so make sure you can be seen and can see properly.

- Mini-roundabouts are often on very small roads so it is difficult to turn and signal at the same time. Always make sure you have control of the bike. If you cannot signal, try to make eye contact with any drivers.



Always be aware of traffic on the roundabout, and make a lifesaver to the left before exiting in case of undertaking traffic.

What's next?

Here is a list of useful contacts where you can find out more about cycling.

Cycling Scotland

Cycling Scotland

24 Blythswood Square, Glasgow G3 4BG

Phone: 0141 229 5350

www.cycling.scot

www.bikeability.scot

Ask your teacher or instructor about these other great Cycling Scotland programmes:

Cycle Friendly School Award – an award for schools which encourage and promote cycling for staff and pupils.

www.cyclefriendlyschool.org

Go Mountain Bike – a mountain bike personal awards scheme.

www.gomtb.org.uk



Sustrans

Rosebery House

9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5EZ

Phone: 0131 539 8122

www.sustrans.org.uk

www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk



Scottish Cycling

Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome Emirates Arena

1000 London Road,

Glasgow G40 3HY

Phone: 0141 554 6021

www.scottishcycling.org.uk



Cycling UK

www.cyclinguk.org



Transport Scotland – promoting more environmentally-friendly travel choices

www.chooseanotherway.com



Road Safety Scotland
Pentland House
47 Robb's Loan
Edinburgh EH14 1TY

www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk



Education Scotland
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston
EH54 6GA

www.educationscotland.gov.uk

Other resources

Additional road safety advice, including more information on road signs, can be found in the Tales of the Road booklet, published by the Department for Transport:

talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk



Cycling Scotland

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Bike check

Use this diagram to check that your bike is safe before riding. Ask an adult to help if there are any problems with your bike. You don't need to use the diagram every time, but it's good to get into the habit of checking your bike often.

