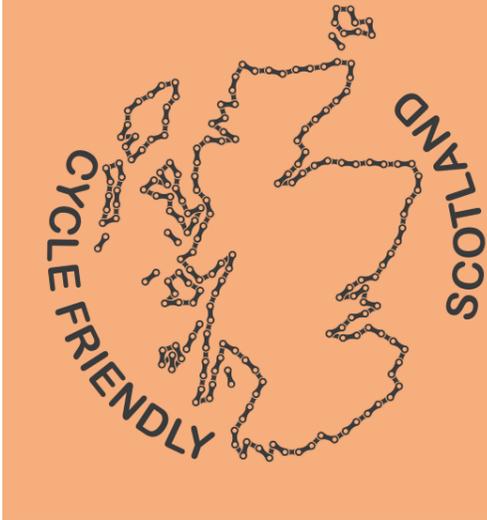


DR BIKE'S HOW TO RIDE SAFELY



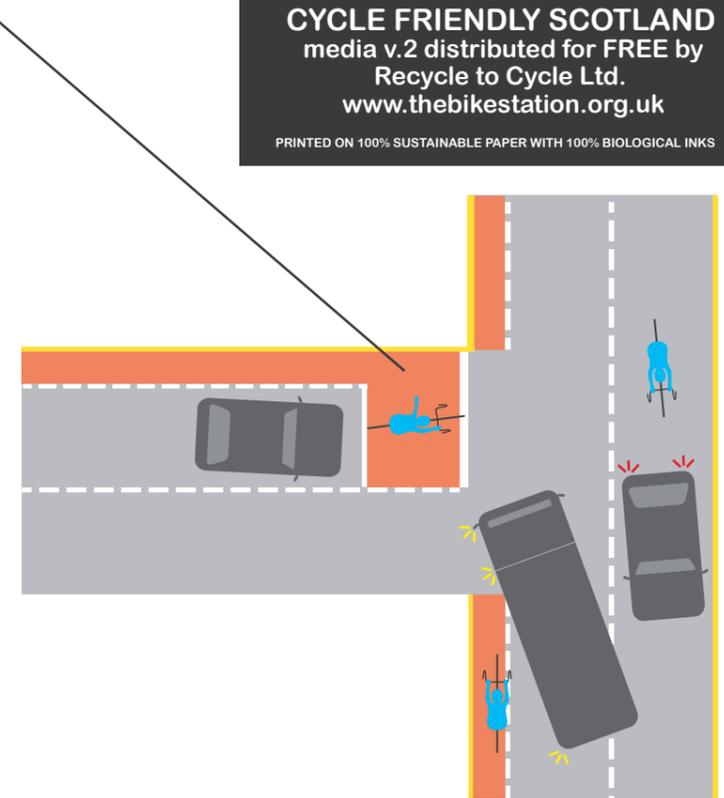
CYCLE FRIENDLY SCOTLAND
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THE BIKE BOX (Advance Stop Line)

Bike boxes are not a safe haven. They are great but the difficulty in getting to them safely can outweigh their benefits. Though it is an offence for any motor vehicle stop in them, motorbikes regularly use them and you will often find cars in them too. Getting to the bike box can also be dangerous (if filtering and traffic starts moving).

When you are in the bike box, you often have the chance to get across a junction before traffic and you are in front of the exhaust fumes of waiting traffic.

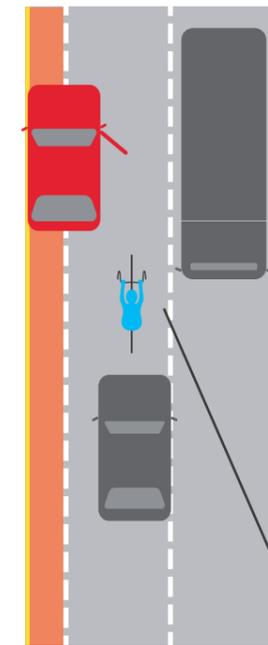


ACT CAR: BE TREATED LIKE CAR

As a road vehicle, you should behave like a car, most of the time. So if you are making a manoeuvre which requires you to cross over traffic, it is safest for you to 'take the lane' (ride in the middle) BEFORE you put yourself at risk. This can be done safely if you are able to ride at the same speed as the traffic. Indicate your intended manoeuvres clearly to other road users and try not to get angry if someone else makes a mistake. We all make mistakes, it's human.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Using the road is about sharing the road with other people, and if you are nice about it, people will be nice back. Make eye contact, and if someone lets you out, then wave in thanks, or give them a thumbs-up. Once you start doing this, you will notice that van and bus drivers do this all the time.



THE DOOR ZONE

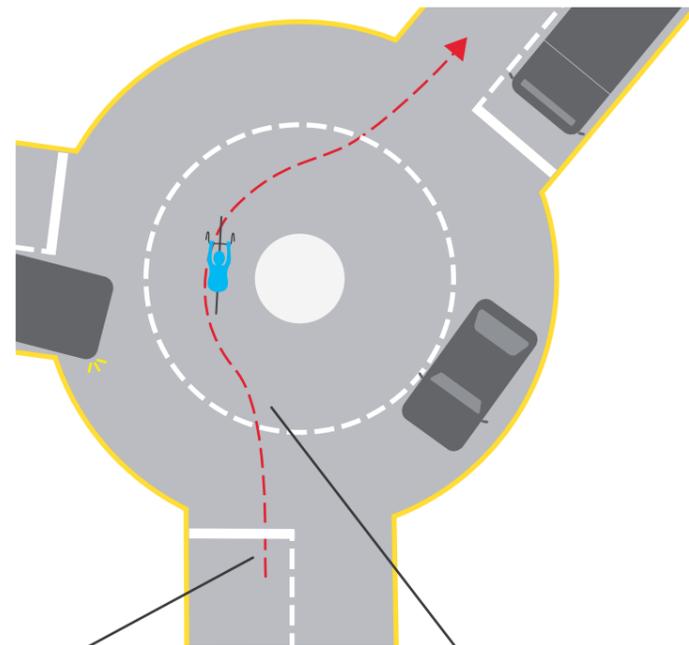
When you are getting out of a car, it is hard to see a cyclist, and when you are riding a bike, it is not always easy to see if someone is in a car. Just be aware, doors do open (and people do park on yellow lines and in cycle lanes, constantly). One of the greatest hazards to urban cycling is not the speed of traffic, but rather the presence of parked cars. The danger of being 'doored' by a careless person opening a car-door can be reduced by riding at arm's length from parked cars and keeping an eye on whether there are people in the cars you pass.

BE VISIBLE AND PREDICTABLE

This doesn't mean you have to wear hi-vis and cover yourself in lights. Ride like a motorist, don't hide, dip in and out of traffic or tailgate. Don't come up the inside of moving traffic unless you have a decent cycle or bus lane to keep you safe. Indicate your intended manoeuvres clearly to other road users and try not to get angry if someone else makes a mistake.

CYCLE LANES

Don't assume that cycle lanes are the safest place to be at all times. They are often riddled with obstacles including drains, broken glass and potholes, as well as parked cars. Beware of pedestrians stepping into cycle lanes too.



ACT CAR: TAKE THE LANE

Roundabouts are scary, and the last thing cars need is a scared cyclist hugging the outside edge of one and crossing over lanes. Act like a car, indicate and take the lane cars expect you to take!

For example, if you are turning right, move into the middle of the road before you get to the point that you are forced to stop and wait for a clearing in the traffic to cross over.

WATER

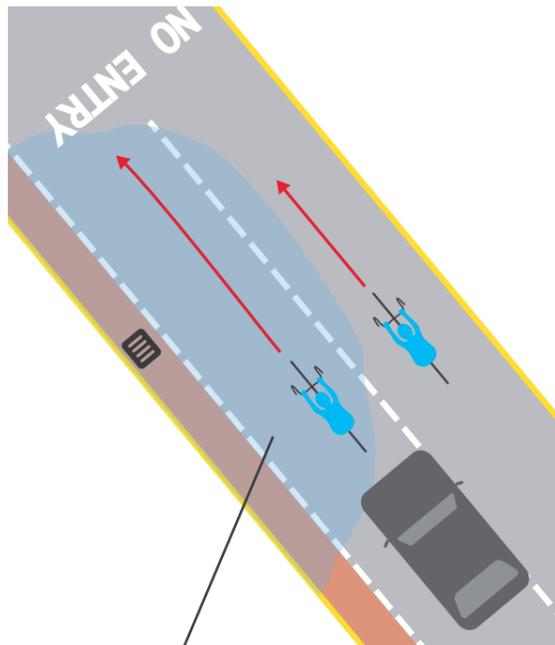
Water plays a big part in British weather.

Water will increase your braking distance, and remember that it will do the same to all other road vehicles!

Rain will also reduce visibility, so if it is raining, don't hide from traffic near the edge of the road, and if cars have their lights on, it can't hurt for you to put yours on too.

PRACTICE

Try your route at quiet times - don't traumatise yourself with rush-hour! Cycling Scotland's free Essential Cycling Skills mobile app is full of advice for new or returning cyclists.

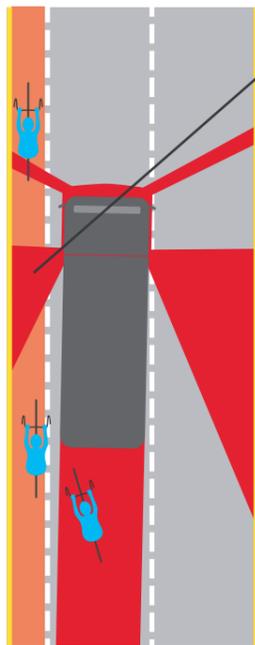


STAY CLEAR OF BLIND SPOTS

Blind spots are a fact. All road users have areas they cannot see. Don't pass inside (under-take) a bus or lorry near a junction, not even on a cycle path. Make sure you are well in front of large vehicles if there is a chance that they might be turning left (and into you). A left-turning bus or lorry is a great danger to cyclists, so given the choice, avoid putting yourself in the danger zone: it will only cost you a few seconds of time to stay behind that lorry.

FILTERING

Filtering through standing traffic is one of the perks of riding a bike in town, but don't be reckless, filtering needs to be safe, so take it slow, watch out for pedestrians and be aware of your surroundings.



DR BIKE

DR BIKE'S HOW TO RIDE A BIKE & RIDE SAFELY



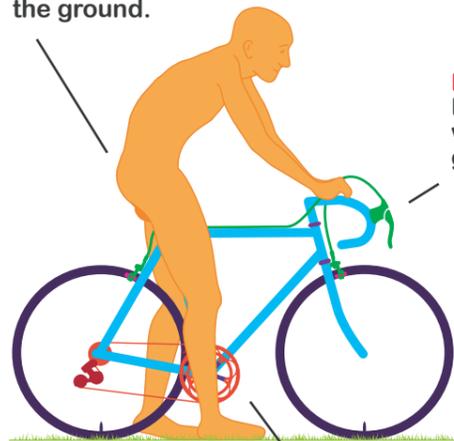
DR BIKE'S HOW TO RIDE A BIKE

“When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road, without thought on anything but the ride you are taking.”

— Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

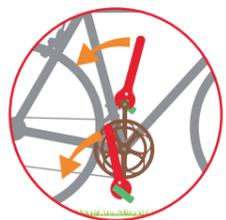
SADDLE
Lower it so you can easily touch the ground.

BRAKES
Don't hold on with a death grip.



WHERE?
Find a quiet bit of grass, on a very slight incline.

PEDALS
Take the pedals off (see illustration)



REMOVING PEDALS
Using a 15mm spanner, position it at 12 O'Clock and move it towards the back wheel (the left side is a l e f t - h a n d thread). When

putting them back on make sure you put the right pedal on the right side (there is often an L and R on the pedal, near the thread, to help with this), and be careful to not force anything. They don't need to be super-tight, and it is easy to cross-thread the cranks.

WHERE?

Grass is softer than tarmac. Gravel is uneven and slippery. Choose a gentle hill or slope.

SADDLE HEIGHT

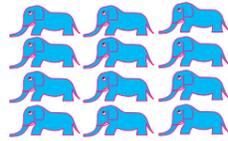
To begin, set the saddle so that you can touch the ground comfortably with both feet. Take off the pedals (see illustration). Tuck trousers into socks, and your laces into your shoes.

RELAX

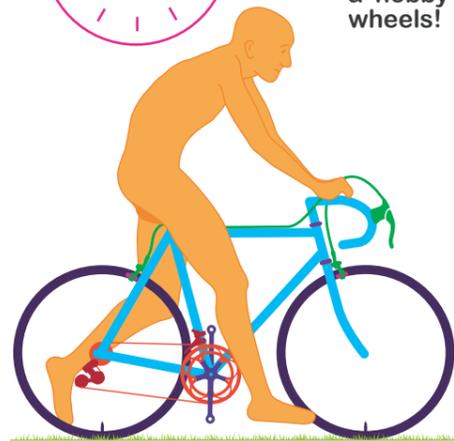
Don't clutch the brakes with a death-grip. Relax your arms and shoulders.

WALK

Walk the bike down the hill, sitting on the saddle. Don't be a hero, do it a few times.



PADDLING
Use your bike like a sit-down scooter or a hobby-horse with wheels!



ELEPHANTS
Glide further and further with each step, until you glide along for 12 elephants

PADDLE

Paddle with your feet, both at a time. Pretend you are sitting on a scooter, or kicking on an office-chair. Do this a few times.

ELEPHANTS

As you paddle, count elephants between paddle "steps". You are really counting how long you are comfortable balancing. By counting you are measuring progress.

8-12 ELEPHANTS

When you reach 8-12 elephants, take a break. Put the pedals back on the bike (see illustration).



FIND YOUR FEET
Teach them where the pedals are, until you can put your feet on them with your eyes closed.

FEET

Find something solid to hold onto - sitting on the saddle, practice placing your feet on the pedals, then back on the ground. Do this until you can do it without looking down.

PEDAL

Pedal backwards. You might need to shift gears so your chain is in the middle of the cassette (gears at the back). Remember that pedalling is a circular movement - not like stomping up stairs.

COAST

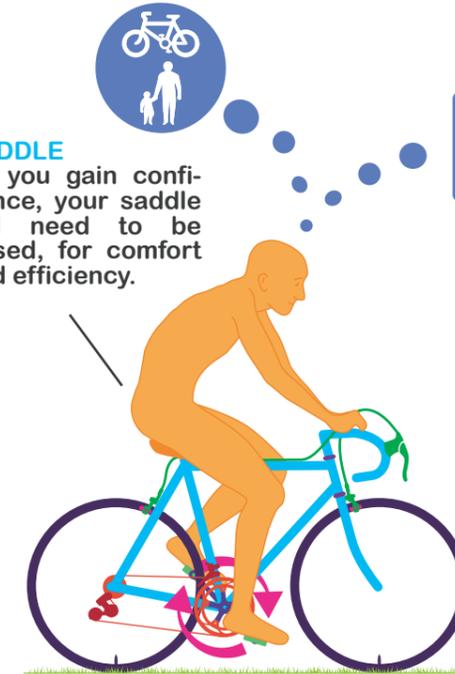
Pop your feet on the pedals and coast or glide a little. Try a little bit more. And again.

PEDAL

Try pedalling a little when you are coasting.

SADDLE

As you gain confidence, your saddle will need to be raised, for comfort and efficiency.



THE WORLD IS YOUR CYCLEPATH!

START

On a quiet road or an empty car-park with no hill, put your strong foot on a pedal which is pointed forwards in the 2 o'clock position. Relax. Push: this will give you enough momentum to put your other foot on its pedal. Don't rush things. You might hit your shin off your pedal, so be gentle.

PEDAL

Pedal in smooth circles, no stomping. Keep your arms and shoulders relaxed, and don't use the death-grip on your brakes. Look where you want to go.

TURNING

Turning is a combination which happens more by looking than turning the handlebars. Take things slowly.

STOP

Stop pedalling. Gently touch the brakes. Slow down until you feel its safe to put your feet on the ground - just before you think you might fall over.

RIDE!

Now you are free! Practice in open spaces like quiet car parks, and when you feel confident, try cycle paths. Cycle paths are a safe place to practice - Scotland has a great network of paved off-road paths, far from traffic.

Printed cycle maps are available from Sustrans and some local authorities. Cycle routes can also be plotted using CycleStreets (web and mobile app) which allows for options on quiet roads, and turn-by-turn instructions.