

# What Every Young Michigan Bicyclist Must Know

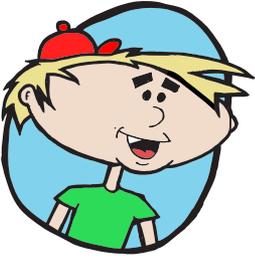
A Guide for Youth



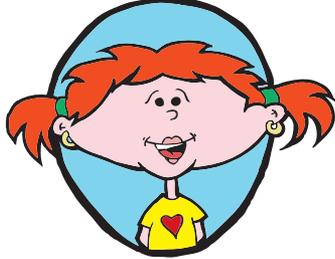
**Tips for Riding Your Bicycle  
Legally and Safely**



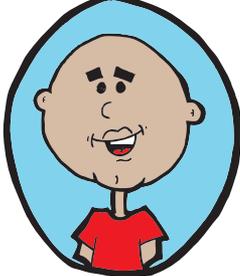
# Meet the LMB Safety Kids



Sprocket



Madison



Spokes



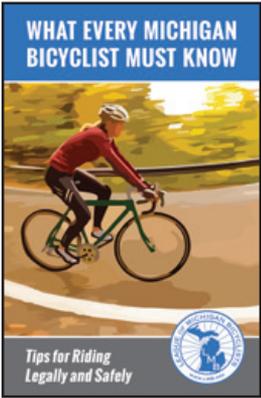
Hub



Chase



Ryder



**Also Available from LMB:  
What Every Michigan  
Bicyclist Must Know  
[www.LMB.org/wembmk](http://www.LMB.org/wembmk)**

What Every Young Michigan Bicyclist Must Know and What Every Michigan Bicyclist Must Know were both recognized by the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission with a 2012 Outstanding Traffic Safety Achievement Award.



Dear Parents and Law Enforcement,

Congratulations! Learning to ride a bicycle is an important accomplishment of early childhood. By sharing this booklet, you are taking an important step in educating children about safe bicycling and basic traffic laws in Michigan.

LMB offers a number of companion resources to this booklet, including an adult version titled *What Every Michigan Bicyclist Must Know*. Additionally, our Education Toolkit includes resources about organizing bicycle rodeos, camps, repair classes, information about properly fitting bicycles and bicycle helmets, and much more. You can download these free resources at [www.LMB.org/toolkit](http://www.LMB.org/toolkit).

If you are interested in volunteering to help make Michigan bicycling safer, please contact the LMB office using the contact information on the back cover.

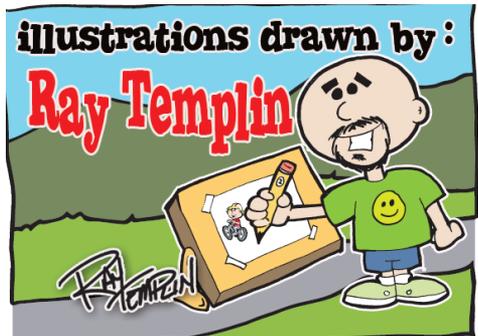
# What Every Young Michigan Bicyclist Must Know

was created to help young bicyclists understand how to ride their bicycles legally and safely in Michigan. This booklet is made possible by the generous donations from Michigan bicyclists. The content of this booklet was created by Rich Moeller with input from Michigan bicyclists.

Layout & Design by Rich Moeller and John Lindenmayer.

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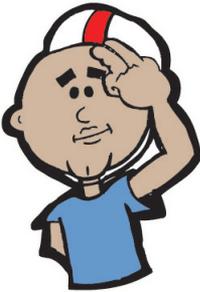


# Protect Your Head!

Everyone — adults and children — should wear bicycle helmets every time they ride. Helmets are the best way to prevent head injuries resulting from bicycle crashes.

All new helmets meet government safety standards. Bicycle helmets range in price from \$20 to over \$200, but they all protect your head equally well.

## Make sure your helmet fits properly



*Level on head  
with two (2)  
fingers above  
eyebrow*



*“V” under the  
ears*



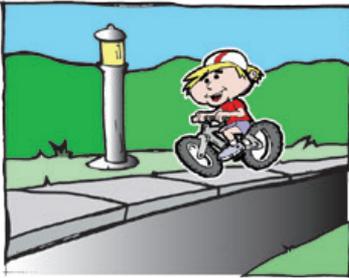
*Two (2) fingers  
between strap and  
chin*

*Helmets may seem uncool, but an accident that causes permanent injury would be even less cool!*

# Get Ready To Ride On Your Own



It is recommended that until the age of 10 young bicyclists should ride on the sidewalk or a bicycle trail unless accompanied by an adult.



When riding on a sidewalk or trail bicyclists should ride to the right, ride single file and yield to people walking. When riding on sidewalks bicyclists must be very careful to watch for cars backing out of

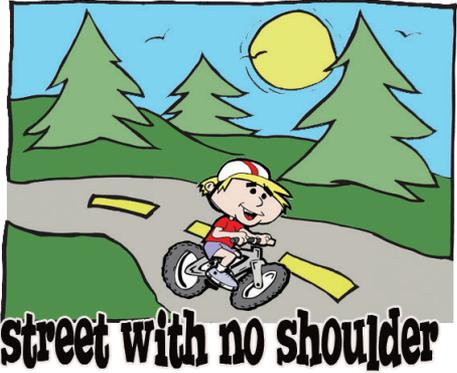
driveways or turning into driveways from the road. When passing on a sidewalk or trail, bicyclists should always call out “on your left” to warn walkers that you are passing on their left-hand side.



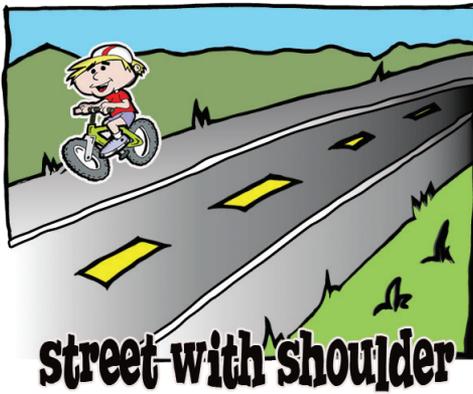
When riding on a street or roadway you should act as a vehicle and follow the same rules of the road that drivers follow.

**Bicyclists should ride with traffic on the right side just as cars do.**

Ride about an arm's length from the edge of the road to allow room to ride around dangerous objects in the street.

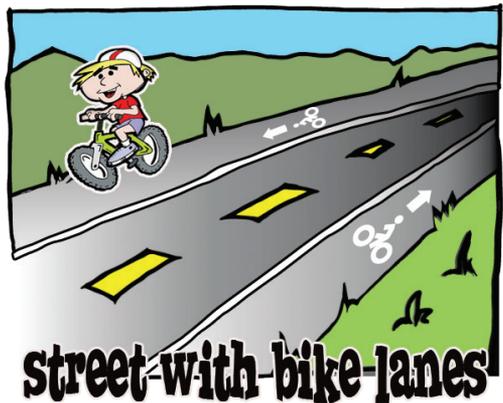


**street with no shoulder**



**street with shoulder**

Ride to the right of the striped line in the middle of the shoulder.



Ride in the middle of a striped bike lane.

**street with bike lanes**



# A Bicycle as a Vehicle

## ... "It's the Law"

When riding on the road or street, bicyclists should follow the same rules as motorists. A bicyclist must ride in the same direction as cars, not against traffic. It is extremely dangerous to ride against traffic!

**Talk with your Mom and Dad about what rules cars must follow.**

### **Bicyclists must signal all turns**



**left-turn**



**right-turn**

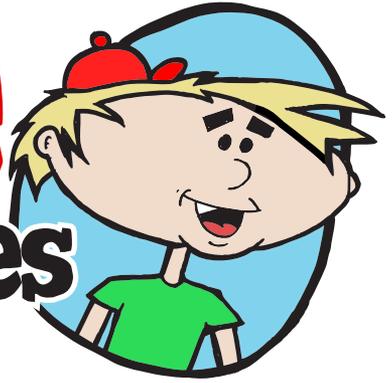


**stopping**

Bicyclists must obey all traffic signals and signs such as stop signs and stop lights.



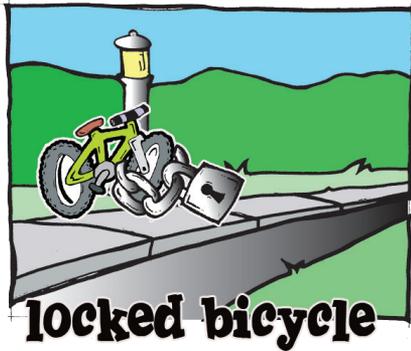
# Be Safe at All Times



Bright visible clothing makes you stand out to motorists and helps prevent crashes. A light weight safety vest works on those days that you must wear dark clothing.

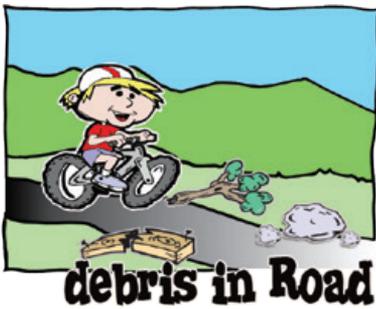
While night riding is not recommended for children, if you get caught out after dark you need a front white light and a red rear tail light.



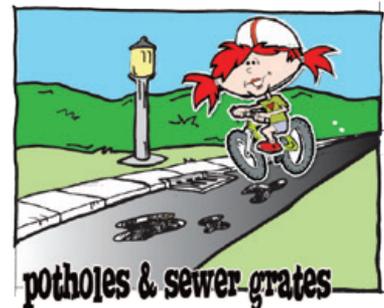


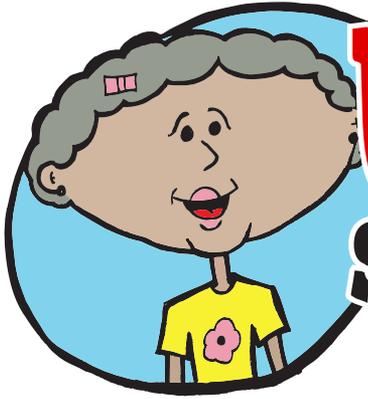
Bicycles are stolen every day. Bicyclists should always carry a lock when they ride so that they can lock up their bicycle when they need to leave it. If you don't, you might be in for a surprise when you come back to get your bike.

### **Special road conditions you need to be aware of:**

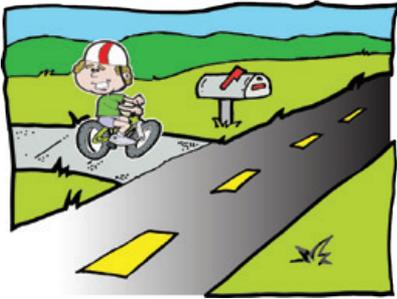


Bicyclists should look ahead for these obstacles and always be prepared to take action to avoid them, such as slowing down and riding in a straight line.



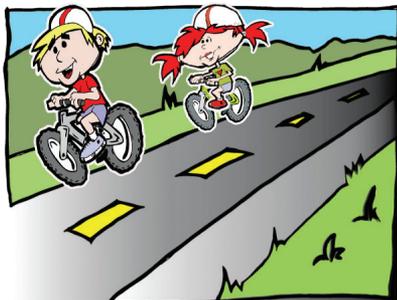
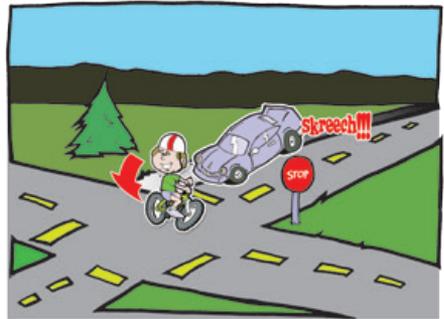


# Use Your Street Sense

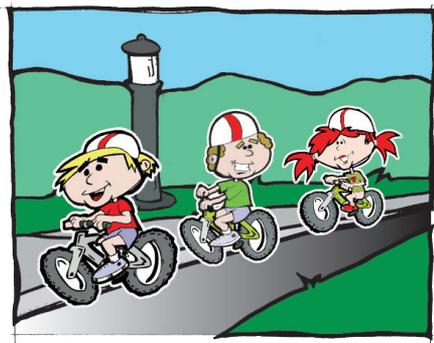


Before entering the street always stop, look left, right and left again. Also use your ears to listen for oncoming traffic.

Always look before you turn.

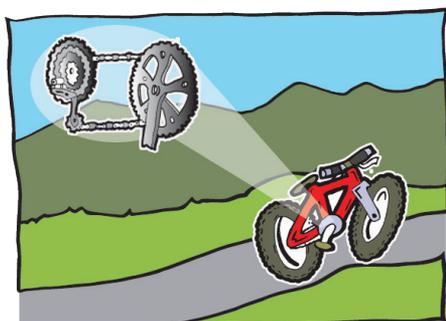
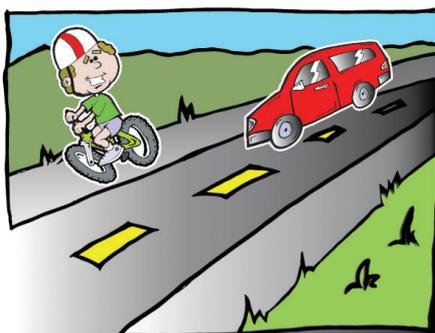


Bicyclists should ride in a straight line. Don't zig-zag while riding. Typically, ride about an arm's length from the edge of the road and in single file. Don't ride too close to the curb as you might catch your pedal and fall.



Riding in a straight line is important when you ride on the street or roadway so that motorists can see you and understand what you are going to do.

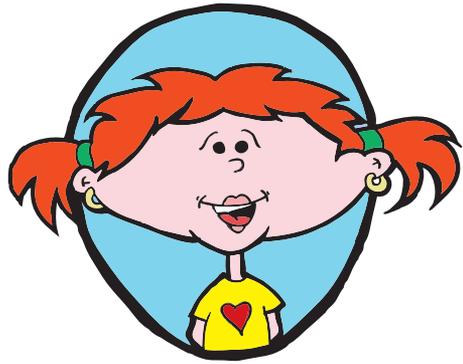
You should be able to check over your left shoulder for traffic behind you and still ride in a straight line.



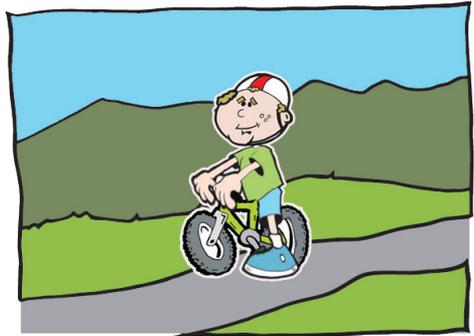
Gears make riding your bike easier to pedal and more fun. Practice using all of your gears and learn which ones you need for which terrain.

*You should never listen to music on headphones or talk on a cell phone while riding your bike. It is unsafe!*

# Handling Your Bike



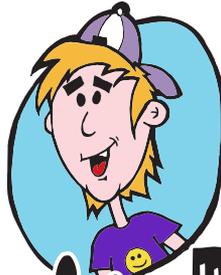
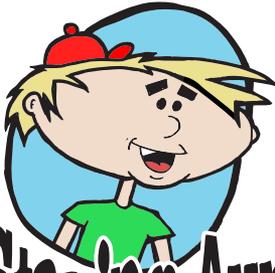
Practice starting so you don't swerve as you take off. One foot should be on the ground and you should push off in a straight line.



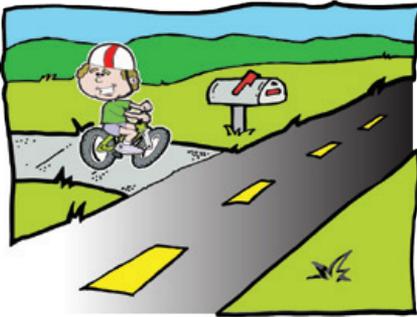
If you have **hand brakes**, make sure you apply pressure evenly to both brakes when stopping. Skidding your rear tire may be fun, but it will wear out your tire quickly and can be dangerous.

If you have **coaster brakes** practice pushing backwards on the pedals to stop your bike without skidding the rear tire. A worn rear tire is not safe.





# Staying Away from Trouble Spots

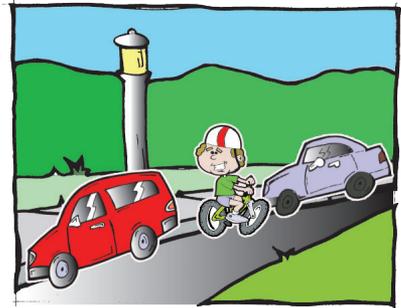


**Do**

look left, look right and then look left again whenever exiting a driveway or crossing at an intersection.

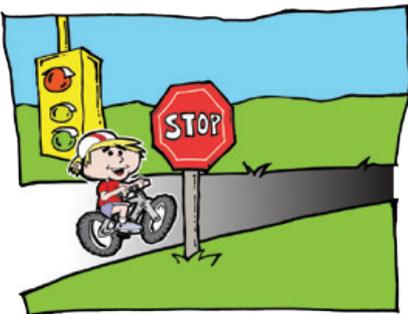
**Don't**

weave in between parked cars. Always ride in a straight line and be predictable.

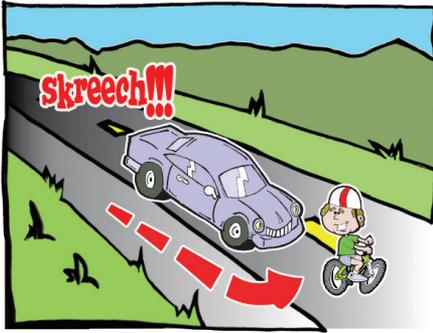


**Don't**

ride through stop signs or stoplights. Always stop, and look for traffic. If it is a stop light wait for the light to turn green.



**Make sure you look, signal, and look again.**

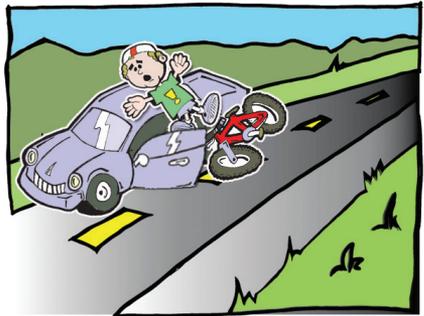


**Don't**

turn without checking or stopping. Always check behind you for traffic and then signal before turning.

**Don't**

bicycle too close to car doors. Stay alert for car doors opening into you. You should ride slower and look into the window to see if someone is in the car.

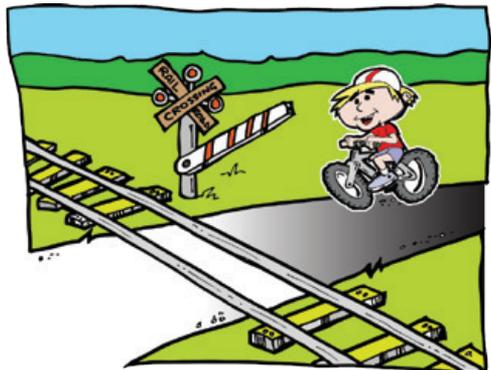


**Don't**

carry friends on your bike. It is very dangerous and illegal.

**Do**

Always cross railroad tracks carefully at a right angle.

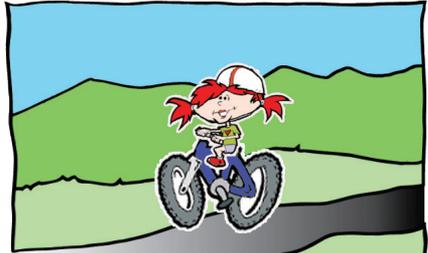




# Your Bicycle



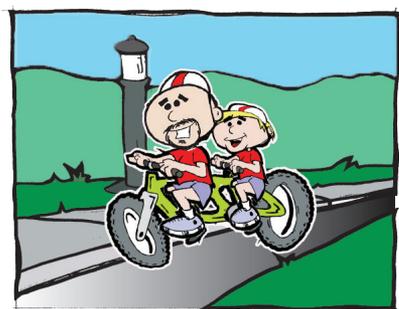
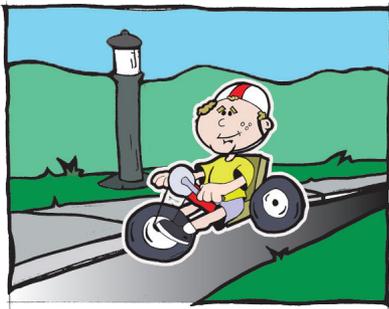
**too small-of-a-bike**



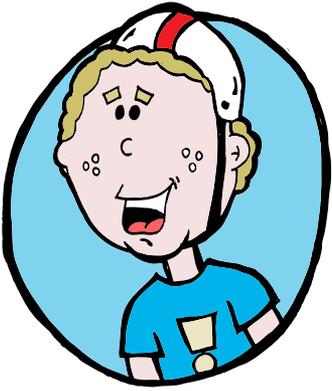
**too large-of-a-bike**

Bikes too big or too small are unsafe. Make sure your bike fits you perfectly. The store or shop where you bought your bike from can help you get a safe fit.

*NOTE FOR MOM AND DAD: Buying a bike for your child to grow into is not recommended.*



Children of all abilities can enjoy cycling! Children with difficulties moving their legs can ride handcycles. Children who have difficulty making decisions can ride with an adult on a bike built for two.



# ABC

## Quick Check . . .

Before every ride you should do an **ABC Quick Check** on your bike. If you find a problem ask Mom or Dad to help fix it!

## **A** is for Air

Make sure your tires are inflated to the recommended pressure on the side of the tires.

Use a tire gauge to ensure proper tire pressure.

Check for damage in the tread and sidewall; have damaged tire replaced if needed.



# B is for Brakes

Check to make sure that your brakes stop your bike.

If you have rim brakes:

1) Check brake pads for wear and make sure they don't rub the tires.

2) Check levers so there is not too much play when you pull the levers.



# C is for Cranks & Chains

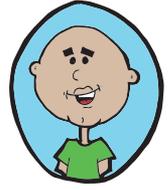
Make sure the bolts that hold your cranks on are tight.

Check your chain to see if it needs lubrication.

If your chain skips when pedaling, you may need a new chain.



# Know and obey your Traffic Signs



Stop, put your foot down and look both ways



Stop and look both ways, let other traffic go first



Watch for people walking, yield to walkers



No right turn allowed



Stoplight ahead, stop on red and go on green



Caution railroad track, cross carefully



Separate lane for bikes to ride in



Designated bike route



One way, only ride with traffic

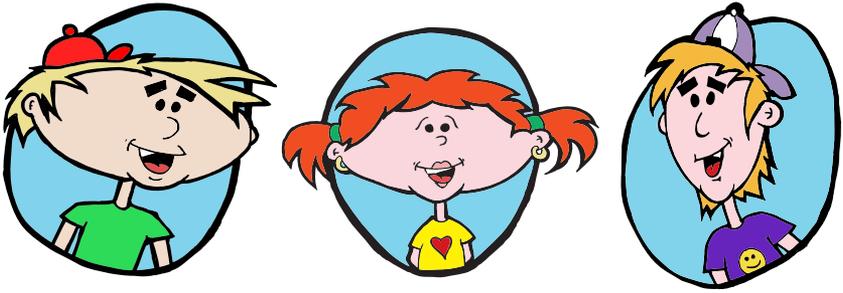


Cross street ahead, be careful



Bikes not allowed, avoid these areas





The **League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB)** is a state-wide organization that works to promote bicycling and the safety of bicyclists on the streets in Michigan for all bicycle riders.

Our job is best summed up by this quote from Conor Waterman, age 9, Saline, MI.

*“I want safe streets so that I can ride my bicycle without getting squished!”*

LMB provides educational materials like this booklet for both youth and adults. We also work with our lawmakers to ensure that it is safe to ride your bike.

LMB hosts multi-day bicycle vacations for youth and adults. LMB also publishes an annual Ride Calendar with hundreds of fun bicycle events for your family to participate in across Michigan.

For more information on bicycling please visit our website at [www.LMB.org](http://www.LMB.org) or call us at **888-642-4537**.



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