



# SAFE CYCLING GUIDE

6th Edition



# BEFORE SETTING OUT

A WELL-MAINTAINED  
BICYCLE ... is key

- A** Check tire pressure
- B** Check that the chain does not slip
- C** Check the brakes
- D** Check lights and reflectors:



- 1** Rear red reflector
- 2** Red or white reflector on rear wheel spokes

- 3** Front white reflector
- 4** Amber pedal reflectors
- 5** Yellow or white reflector on front wheel spokes

## Adjust the frame to the rider's height

To check if the height is correct, the rider should stand astride the bicycle above the crossbar with both feet flat on the ground. There should be a clearance of at least 2 cm between the crotch and crossbar. The seat should be parallel to the ground.

To adjust the seat correctly, the rider's leg should be completely extended with the heel on the pedal. Thus, when the foot is in pedalling position, the leg will have to bend slightly. The handlebars should be set to the same level as the seat or slightly lower.



Bike frames that are too large create a loss of balance and cause accidents, especially in children.

# WEARING A HELMET,

my only  
protection

## DID YOU KNOW?

Head injuries are the cause of death in approximately 60% of fatal biking accidents. If you fall, this part of the body is the most exposed to serious injury. In an accident, the force of the impact is distributed over the surface of the helmet, rather than on the head. That's why it's important to have a good helmet.

## The perfect fit

Try on the helmet to ensure that the weight, padding and adjustment straps are right. The front and back straps of a properly adjusted helmet come together under the ear and the chin strap is not too tight.

Check that the helmet fits snugly. It should remain in position and not slide forward over the forehead or down the back of the neck.

## Choosing the right helmet

When buying a bicycle helmet, look for one that has the following stickers on the inside: CSA, CPSC, ASTM, CEN or SNELL. They are a guarantee of durability and proof that the helmet meets performance standards.



# FOR GREATER SAFETY...

Bicycles that are well maintained, with all of the required equipment, help guarantee that cyclists and other road users are safer. We also suggest the following equipment:

## 1 A horn or bell

Since a bicycle is nearly silent, a simple bell allows cyclists to make their presence known to pedestrians and other cyclists, preventing collisions.

## 2 A rearview mirror

Cyclists who can see what is approaching from behind won't be taken by surprise when a car passes them. A rearview mirror also lets cyclists check traffic safely before passing.

## 3 A safety flag

Putting a horizontal flag on your bicycle is sometimes all it takes to encourage motorists to pass at a safe distance.

## 4 A basket or rack

Whether it's a basket on the front or a rack on the back, any accessory that helps cyclists carry their belongings safely can turn a bicycle into a real sport utility vehicle.

## 5 Tires with reflective strips



# COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS

## DID YOU KNOW

**that almost a third of fatal accidents involving cyclists occur after dusk?**

That's why a cyclist who rides at night must have a white headlight and a red light at the rear to ride, as well as reflectors.

Dealers are required to equip any bicycle rented or sold with eight mandatory reflectors.

Brighter is better! Wearing bright colours and **reflective** clothing enables motorists to see cyclists from further away. Cyclists can now get tires, panniers, clips for pants, or shoes with reflective strips, or else apply the strips themselves. And of course, a reflective patch on your back is still the best way to make you sure you will be seen.





# CYCLISTS, LIKE MOTORISTS,

have to follow  
the rules

QUÉBEC'S *HIGHWAY SAFETY CODE*  
REQUIRES CYCLISTS TO:

**Ride on the far right-hand side of the road**

**Signal their intentions**

...over a reasonable distance so motorists can see them.



Left  
turn



Right  
turn



Slowing  
or stop

## Ride in single file when travelling in a group

... no more than 15 riders is allowed.



## Ride astride the bicycle and keep hold of the handlebars

...the road is not a place for acrobatics!

## Ride with the flow of traffic

...unless signs or signals authorize cyclists to ride against traffic.



## **IMPORTANT**, the Code prohibits:

- riding on expressways or access ramps.**
- riding against the flow of traffic\* .**
- riding on the sidewalk.**
- riding with earphones or headsets.**
- carrying a passenger, unless the bicycle is equipped with a fixed seat for this purpose.**
- riding between two lanes of moving vehicles.**
- drinking alcohol while riding a bicycle.**
- riding a bicycle with a faulty brake system.**

\*unless signs or signals authorize cyclists to ride against traffic.



# WATCH OUT FOR

- vehicles coming out of driveways
- transit buses (never try to pass them on the right)
- vehicles turning right at a red light



- the doors of a stationary vehicle
- spaces between parked vehicles (ride in a straight line so motorists can see you)

- drivers who may not have seen you. Make eye contact with drivers before making your move.



# DIFFERENT TYPES OF BICYCLE LANES

Cyclists in Québec are allowed to ride on any type of road, except highways. For their safety, four different types of bicycle lanes have been designated for use:



## Paved shoulders

On paved shoulders, cyclists ride with the flow of traffic.



## Bicycle lanes

Road signs, traffic signals and road markings indicate that these lanes are reserved exclusively for cyclists.

... to better share  
the road



## Designated roadways

There is no corridor reserved for cyclists, but they are controlled using road signs. A bicycle outline is also painted on the roadway.



## Bicycle paths

Bicycle paths are lanes designed for cyclists and are generally located away from automobile traffic or separated from traffic by a physical barrier.

# ROAD SIGNS AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS!

Like any road user, cyclists have to obey road signs and traffic signals. In fact, specific signs and signals have been developed for bicycle lanes. The following are a few examples:



Indicates the need for children under 12 to be accompanied by an adult on a road where the speed limit is 50 km/h or over.



Indicates a bicycle crossing.



Indicates a bicycle lane on the shoulder.



Indicates the need to get off a bicycle for safety reasons.



Indicates mandatory cyclist and pedestrian route.



Indicates that you are cycling on the Route verte.



Indicates the period during which the bicycle lane is not maintained.



Indicates that there is a parking lot near a bicycle lane.





Indicates that cyclists can ride against the flow of traffic on a one-way street.



Indicates the presence of a business service (in this case, a mechanic's shop).



Indicates that parking a bicycle at this location is prohibited.



Indicates a temporary detour due to work on the bicycle lane.



Traffic signals for cyclists are placed alongside bicycle lanes.



These symbols painted on the roadway indicate that a lane is reserved for cyclists.



Indicates that cyclists must respect a pedestrian light.

**IMPORTANT:** Where this sign is not posted, cyclists must obey traffic lights for vehicles and cannot use a pedestrian signal unless they get off their bicycle.

# ELECTRIC BICYCLES ARE NOW ALLOWED!

BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14 AND 17, THE RIDER MUST HOLD A LICENCE AUTHORIZING USE OF AT LEAST A MOPED.



## Characteristics:

- They have handlebars and pedals.
- They are designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground.
- They can be propelled by muscle power applied to the pedals.
- They have an electric motor (but not a gasoline motor) of 500 W or less.

## The rider must:

- wear a bicycle helmet
- be at least 14 years of age

Riders age 18 or over do not require a licence.

Equipment on an electric bicycle must comply with *Highway Safety Code* requirements, in particular, reflectors

## Non-motorized scooters

As required for riding on public roads at night, scooters that are rented or sold must have at least one white reflector or else white reflective material in front and a red reflector or red reflective material on the back. Riders are exempt from this requirement if they wear reflective clothing or accessories so that they are visible to other road users.

Finally, scooters must be equipped with a rear-wheel braking system. The brakes must be powerful enough to bring the vehicle to a quick stop when riding on a dry, paved, level road.

## Fines

<b>OFFENCE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Travelling on a roadway on skates, skis, a skateboard or toy vehicle	\$30 to \$60
Travelling on a roadway on a scooter without a rear-wheel braking system	\$15 to \$30
Travelling on a scooter at night without being visible to other road users	\$25 to \$50
Travelling on a public road with a motorized scooter	\$100 to \$200

## IN-LINE SKATES, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS... allowed or prohibited?

Bicycles are very popular, but there are also other ways of getting around. However, are we allowed to use the road network with these types of wheels?

According to *the Highway Safety Code*:

**ALLOWED** on the roadway: non-motorized scooters

**PROHIBITED** on the roadway:  
motorized scooters, in-line skates,  
skis, skateboards and toy vehicles

Contact your municipality to find out where you can safely use these types of equipment.



# KIDS AND BICYCLE SAFETY

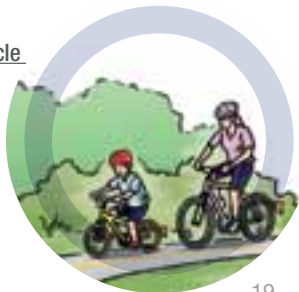
Children under age 9 should always be accompanied by a responsible adult. The majority of children in this age group have not yet acquired the skills necessary to ride their bikes safely.

To ride a bike, first you have to listen to and observe traffic  
Give your children support while they are learning:

- Go for bike rides with them and keep an eye on them.
- Practice stopping and turning to help them learn how to deal with unexpected situations.
- Make sure they understand the importance of performing a shoulder check every time they want to change directions.

For more details about what to teach your children, see our Web site at [saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/accident\\_prevention/bicycle](http://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/accident_prevention/bicycle)

**Important:** Under *the Highway Safety Code*, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult on a road where the speed limit is 50 km/h or over, unless they are on a bicycle path.



# CYCLISTS, LIKE MOTORISTS,

OFFENCE	PENALTY
Riding between two rows of moving vehicles	\$15 to \$30
Riding on a sidewalk	\$15 to \$30
Riding against the flow of traffic (unless signs or signals indicate otherwise)	\$15 to \$30
Riding on the roadway other than the far right	\$15 to \$30
Riding with earphones or a headset	\$30 to \$60
Drinking alcohol while riding	\$15 to \$30
Turning right at a red light where signs prohibit it	\$15 to \$30 + 3 demerit points
Failure to stop at a red light or stop sign	\$15 to \$30 + 3 demerit points

must obey the  
*Highway Safety Code*

**OFFENCE**

**PENALTY**

Failing to yield the right of way at an  
intersection users who have priority

\$15 to \$30  
+ demerit points

Failure to obey a road sign or traffic light

\$15 to \$30

Failing to ride in single file

\$15 to \$30

Failure to signal one's intentions  
(stopping and turning)

\$15 to \$30

Failing to hold onto the handlebars

\$15 to \$30

Riding two on a bicycle without  
a fixed seat for the purpose

\$15 to \$30



For more information, go to  
[www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.saaq.gouv.qc.ca) under  
*"Accident Prevention."*

For questions regarding road signs  
and traffic signals as well as cycling  
facilities, go to [www.mtq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.mtq.gouv.qc.ca).

This guide is not a text of law.  
For questions of a legal nature, please  
refer to the *Highway Safety Code*.

Québec 

With the cooperation of:  
– Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec  
– Ministère des Transports du Québec

