

SMARTER  
TRAVEL

# safer cycling

Level 1 & 2 National Standards Edition



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**Haringey**  
LONDON

## A Message for you

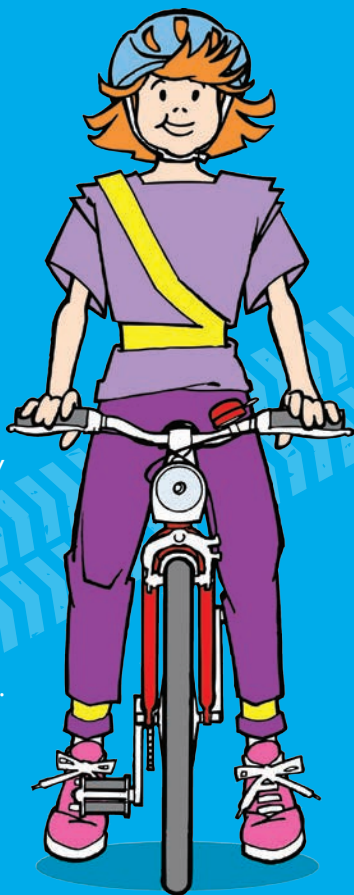
### Dear cyclist

Welcome to the Safer Cycling training scheme. Cycling can be a very pleasant way to travel; it is cheap, reliable and convenient. It is also good for the environment and an excellent exercise to keep you healthy.

This book explains the basic things you should know to become a safer cyclist, and has been developed to complement the National Standard Child Cyclist Training Level 1 and 2 Guidelines. Your Cycle Instructor will be fully qualified to deliver the required training at each Level. Study the book carefully and practise in quiet roads, off the road, at first. It is very important that you have full control of your bicycle before you ride in traffic.

Remember that, when riding on the road, you are part of the traffic and you must obey all traffic rules, traffic signs and signals. You must also be considerate to other road users, especially young children, the elderly and the disabled. If you find anything in this book difficult to understand ask your cycle training instructor, your teacher, or somebody at home, to help you.

**Enjoy your cycle training and BE SAFE.**



**By the end of Level 1 Training, you should be able to cycle and you should be able to:**

- Demonstrate understanding of safety equipment and clothing
- Carry out a simple bike check
- Get on and off your bike without help
- Start off and pedal without help
- Stop without help
- Ride along without help for one minute or more
- Make the bike go where you want
- Stop quickly with control
- Manoeuvre safely to avoid objects
- Look all around, including behind, without loss of control
- Control the bike with one hand

**Level 1 training should be undertaken in an off-road environment.**

**By the end of Level 2 Training, you should be able to:**

- Master Level 1
- Start and finish on road journey
- Be aware of potential hazards
- Understand how and when to signal intentions to other road users
- Understand where to ride on roads
- Pass parked or slow moving vehicles
- Pass side roads
- Turn left into major and minor roads
- Make a U-turn
- Turn right into major and minor roads
- Demonstrate decision making and an understanding of safe riding and the Highway Code

**Level 2 training should be undertaken on quiet roads.**



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**This book belongs to**

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## Your Bicycle and you

### Choosing a Bicycle

Bicycles come in many shapes and sizes. It is important that you get one that suits your needs.

If you are buying a new bicycle, go to a reliable dealer who can give good advice and has a wide range to choose from. If you are getting a second hand bicycle, make sure it hasn't been damaged in an accident. Check the bicycle thoroughly and carry out any repairs needed before you start riding it.

Make sure your bicycle is the right size for you.

Don't choose a bicycle that has to have the saddle at the full height as you will soon outgrow it.

**Read the chapter "Does your bicycle fit you?" on page 8.**



**Cleaning your bicycle regularly gives you a chance to check that all parts are safe and working properly.**

### Looking after your bicycle

It is important to maintain your bicycle in good condition. It will last longer, look smarter and will be safer for you to ride on.

#### Check before every journey:

**Brakes:** Do they both work properly?

**Tyres:** Are they pumped up?

Is there any damage or wear?

**Lights & Reflectors:** Are they all clean and working?

#### Checks to do regularly:

Saddle and handlebar height to make sure they are still right for your size.

Bolts, nuts and screws for wear.

Tighten if needed.

Moving parts for oiling – but never oil brake blocks or pads.

## Your Bicycle Details

Make \_\_\_\_\_

Model \_\_\_\_\_

Frame number \_\_\_\_\_

Frame size \_\_\_\_\_

Frame colour \_\_\_\_\_

Size of wheels \_\_\_\_\_

Gear make \_\_\_\_\_

Gear model \_\_\_\_\_

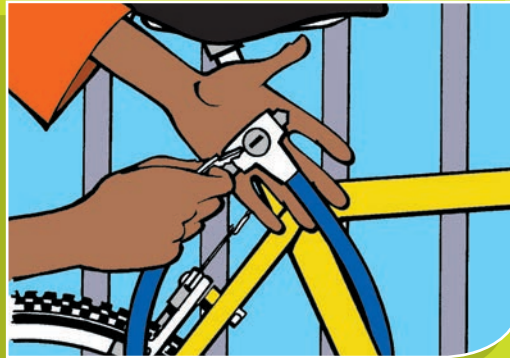
Accessories \_\_\_\_\_

Special features \_\_\_\_\_

## Keeping your Bicycle Secure

Your bicycle is valuable and you should take good care of it. Note down your bicycle details – you will need them if it gets stolen.

Have the frame stamped with your postcode or data tagged – your local police might be able to do this for you.



**Invest in a good cycle lock and use it every time you have to leave your bicycle unattended. Secure the frame and the rear wheel with the lock.**

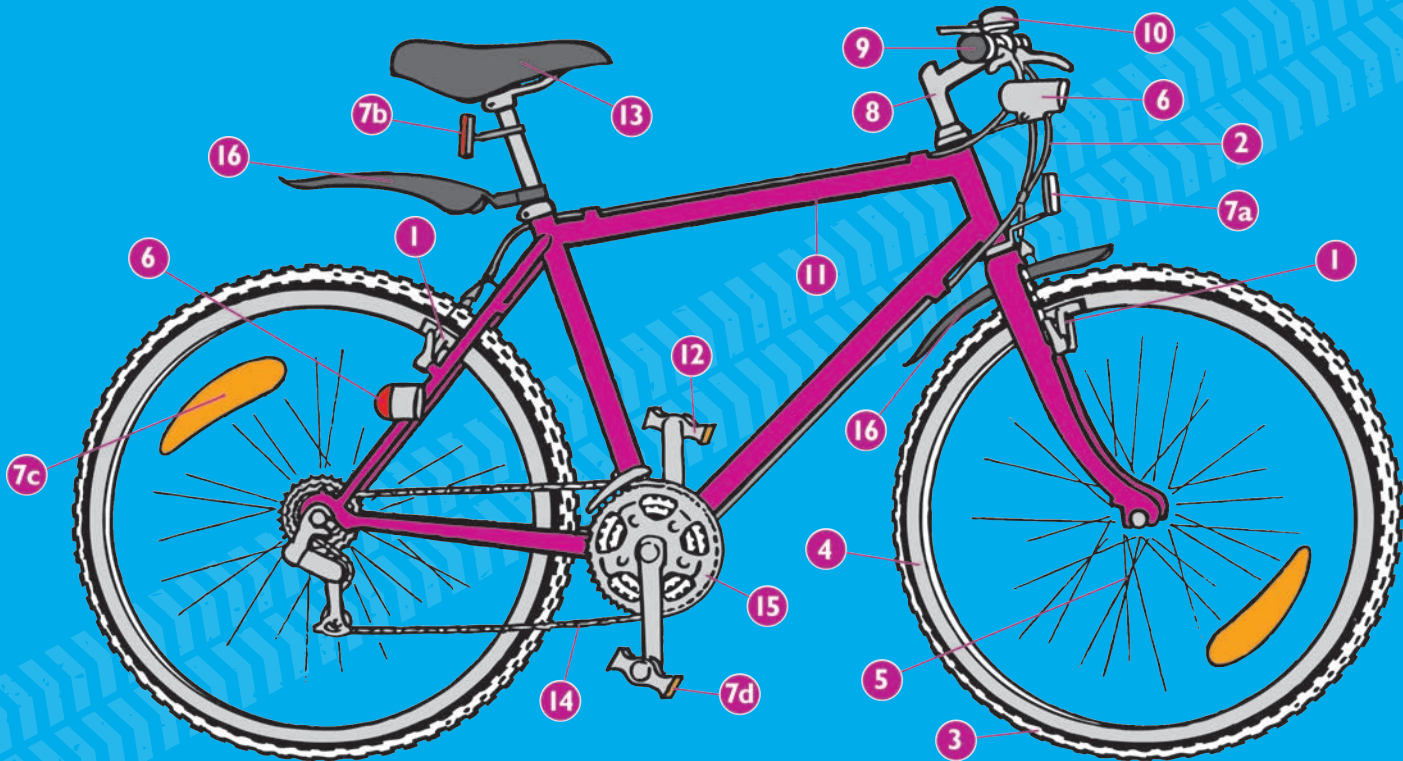
## Parking sensibly

Always park your bicycle securely. Make sure it is not in anyone's way and that it cannot fall down and injure somebody.

Lock it onto something secure such as railings, or a cycle stand.



# Know about your bicycle and how to keep it safe



## 1 Brakes

Make sure they work. Check that blocks are in the right place, not touching the tyre and that they are not badly grooved or worn out.

## 2 Brake Cables

Make sure they are not frayed.

## 3 Tyres

Both should have a tread pattern showing all round. Make sure they are well pumped up. Watch out for cuts, splits and bulges.

## 4 5 Wheels and Spokes

Check both for damage. Make sure spokes are not loose.

## 6 Lights

Should be clean and working – white at the front, red at the back. You **must** use them if you ride at night.

If your lights work on batteries, make sure these are charged. Have spare batteries with you.

## 7 Reflectors\*

If you ride in the dark you must have a red reflector at the back (as well as front and rear lights). A white front reflector, pedal and spoke reflectors also help you to be seen in the dark (bicycles made after 1985 must be sold with these reflectors).

## 8 Steering

It can become loose, especially if you use your bicycle for “off road” stunt riding.

## 9 Handlebars

Make sure they have good grips and plugs and are lined up correctly.

## 10 Bell

Use it to warn pedestrians. You must be able to use it without taking your hand off the handlebars.

## 11 Frame

Check that it is not bent and all nuts are properly tightened.

## 12 Pedals

Must have a good grip for your shoes and be able to spin freely.

## 13 Saddle

Must be adjusted for your height and all nuts tightened.

## 14 Chain

Keep it oiled and make sure it is not too loose or too tight.

## 15 Gears

If your bicycle has gears, make sure that they are properly adjusted and you know how to use them correctly.

## 16 Mudguards

If your bicycle has mudguards make sure they do not catch on any moving parts.

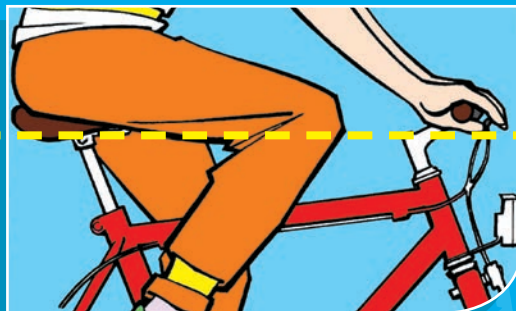
### \* Reflectors shown:

(7a) Front reflector (7b) Back reflector  
(7c) Spoke reflector (7d) Pedal reflector

## Does your bicycle fit you?

It is essential that your bicycle is the right size for you. Bicycles that are too small or too large are not only difficult to handle, but also very dangerous.

Ask an adult to help if you need to adjust your bicycle. Remember to re-check every few months, as you are still growing.



The handlebars should be roughly in line with the saddle and you must be able to reach them easily.



You must be able to rest your fingers comfortably on the brake levers, ready to react quickly.

When sitting on the saddle both your feet must touch the ground, legs straight, heels slightly raised.





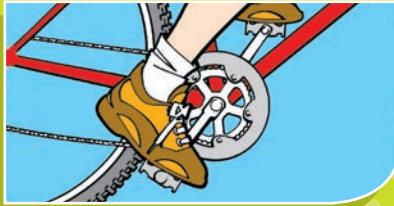


Trainees wearing a helmet should make sure their helmet fits and that the straps are always fastened securely:

- the helmet and straps should not cover your ears
- the helmet must not restrict your vision the helmet must fit snugly and feel comfortable.

When purchasing a helmet make sure it has one of the following approved standards:

**BSEN 1078:1997, SNELL B-95 AS/NZS 2063 and displays the CE mark.**



**Correct pedalling makes cycling safer and less tiring. Always sit on your saddle when pedalling. Use the ball of your foot to push on the pedals – not the instep.**

## Are you ready to ride?

You have already checked your bicycle – now make sure that you are fit to ride.

- Wear bright clothes with fluorescent and reflective strips or accessories.
- Fluorescent only helps you be seen during the day, reflective works at night.
- Always wear a cycle helmet – it will help to protect your head from serious injury if you have an accident.
- Plan your journey before you go, to find the safest route.

**Before taking your bicycle on the road, make sure you can control it! Try some of these exercises:**

- Cycle in a straight line, looking over your shoulder.
- Cycle in a straight line, signalling right, then left.
- Cycle in a straight line, looking behind and signalling at the same time.
- Cycle as slowly as possible, pedalling and braking when you need to.
- Ride through obstacles, using brakes and pedals to control the bicycle.

# Starting a Journey

## Cycling positions

**Primary position** - is the centre of the leftmost moving traffic lane in which trainee is wishing to travel.

**Secondary position** - about 1 metre out from the edge of the road.

- 1 Wheel your bicycle to the left side of the road, where you have good visibility, near the kerb or on the outside of a parked vehicle.
- 2 Sit on your bicycle with your left foot on the ground and your right foot on the pedal ready to push down for a smooth start.
- 3 Other road users have right of way, look all round to see if the way is clear. **Especially behind, over your right shoulder.**
- 4 When you are sure the way is clear, set off along the road 1m away from the edge of the road.



This is often called the “2 o’clock” position or “pedal ready”.  
Get in this position every time you stop, ready to start again.

## Positioning

Trainees must position themselves where they can be seen and should not cycle in the gutter. Cycling in the primary position where appropriate will offer trainees more protection as they will be seen more easily and prevent drivers from overtaking when roads are too narrow.

Looking behind over your right shoulder is very important when you plan to stop.

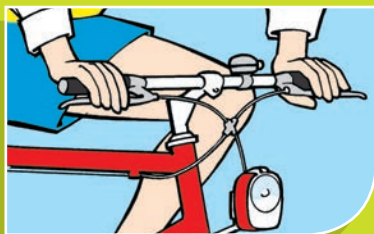
You must be able to look behind without losing your balance or control of your bicycle.



### Looking

There are 3 types of looks:

- **Glance**, done regularly, to know who is behind
- **Longer look**, allows a more detailed assessment of what is happening behind
- **Stare**, used in conjunction with a signal to communicate with other road users. Also establishes eye contact and getting a response from other road users confirms that you have been seen.



The back brake is operated by your left hand and the front by your right.

If there is a kerb, stop so that you can easily put your left foot down on it.



## Stopping

Try to stop where you will not be in the way of other traffic, or pedestrians trying to cross the road.

Before you stop, checking behind is essential, it lets other road users know that you are going to do something. Therefore it is safer to look all round before stopping journey and if appropriate signal.

Use both brakes to stop – the back brake slightly **before** the front brake. Spread your braking over a distance. When the bicycle stops, always put your **left** foot down.

### Emergency Stop

In an emergency you must be able to stop quickly, without skidding or losing control. Practise this away from traffic.

## Overtaking

### If you need to overtake a parked vehicle or another obstruction:

- 1 Look all around well ahead of the obstacle, especially over your right shoulder. If the way is clear move out into the primary position. Looking ahead well in advance may save you having to stop or slow down when you reach the obstacle.
- 2 You must now decide:
  - a) If the way is clear, gradually move out, around the obstruction.
  - b) If the way is not clear, slow down and stop behind the obstruction, but not so close that it will make it difficult to see clearly. Then, pedal ready, check all around for traffic, and if the way is clear, move out and around the obstruction.
- 3 If cyclist has taken a prominent road position early there is usually no need to signal unless there is something behind or in front of you.
- 4 Leave enough room to pass the obstruction about a car door's length, but try not to cross over the markings in the middle of the road. (If there are several cars parked along your way, ride past them in a straight line; do not zig-zag in and out.)
- 5 Once past the obstruction give a final check over the left shoulder and return to appropriate road position.



## Hand Signal

Signals should be given clearly and correctly whilst maintaining complete control of your bike.

Signals should only be given where appropriate and of benefit to other road users.

**Discuss with your instructor when it is appropriate to signal. There can be occasions where you choose not to signal, this should only happen where the particular hazards associated with controlling the cycle are more important than signalling.**

A hand signal should be given at point **2** of the diagram if appropriate.

At point **4** return hand if required to the handlebar and move past the obstacle.

## When you are overtaking, watch out for:

- Other road users coming towards you, in case a vehicle is also overtaking and has crossed over the middle of the road.
- Doors of parked cars opening.



- People or animals darting out from behind parked cars.
- Other cyclists – they may wobble or change direction as you overtake them.



- Parked vehicles moving off or reversing without warning.  
**Clues to look out for are:** a driver in the vehicle, indicators flashing, exhaust smoke, white reversing lights at the back.

### Remember:

**If you do have to stop, do not stop so close to the obstacle that you cannot see clearly.**

## Turning Left

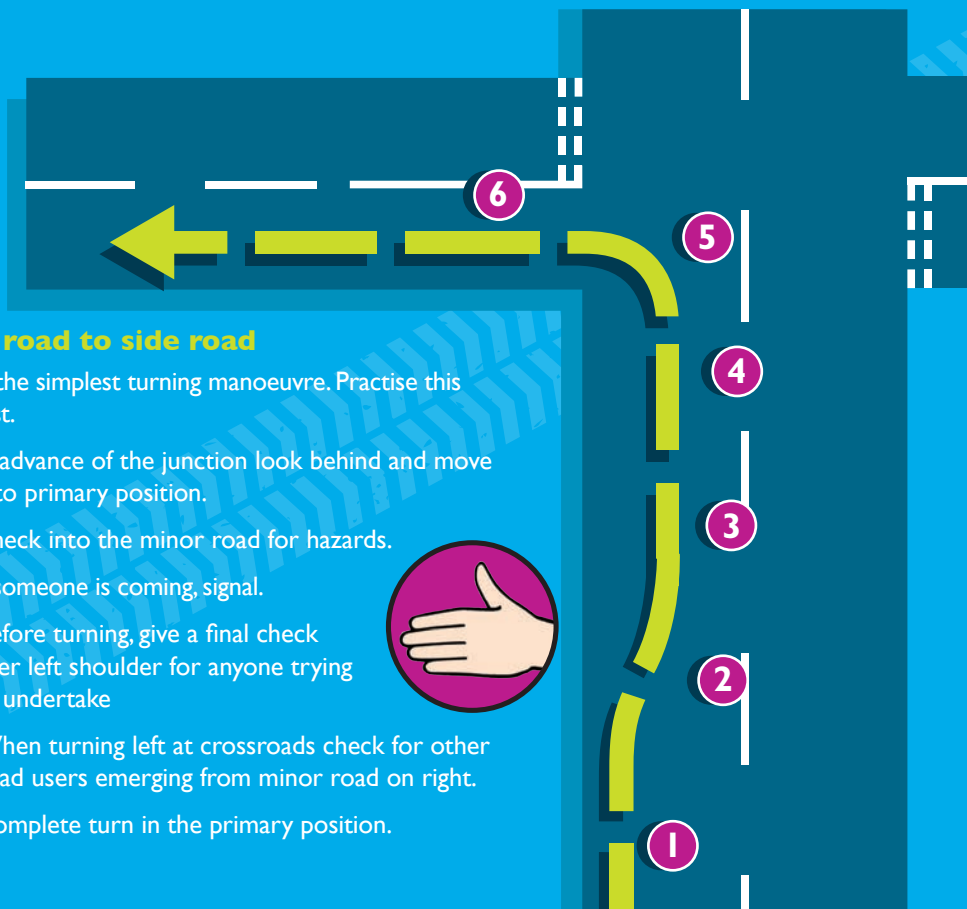
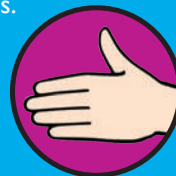
When turning left watch out for people crossing the road. Be prepared to stop and give way to them.



### Main road to side road

This is the simplest turning manoeuvre. Practise this one first.

- 1 In advance of the junction look behind and move into primary position.
- 2 Check into the minor road for hazards.
- 3 If someone is coming, signal.
- 4 Before turning, give a final check over left shoulder for anyone trying to undertake
- 5 When turning left at crossroads check for other road users emerging from minor road on right.
- 6 Complete turn in the primary position.



**Stop if a solid white line. If broken white line and the road ahead is clear it is not always necessary to stop and cyclists should keep moving.**



### Side road to main road

- 1 In advance of the junction, observe behind and move into primary position and if necessary signal left returning hand to handlebar.
- 2 On approach start checking for other road users on the major road, particularly from the right and adjust your speed accordingly.
- 3 Give way as appropriate.
- 4 When there is a gap in the traffic coming from the right perform final check and start off and complete turn. At crossroads check for traffic emerging and turning right from minor road ahead.

When turning left, you should take an appropriate road position to prevent vehicles behind you moving up alongside you.

If there are other vehicles in front of you at the junction wait until they move off, then move up to the head of the junction.

- If there is a solid white line at the junction **Stop**, check for other road users, particularly those coming from the right, and look over your left shoulder for cyclists or motorcyclists. Pedal ready, signal, move out when the road ahead is clear.
- If there is a broken white line, slow down, check for other road users, particularly those coming from the right, and over your left shoulder for cyclists or motorcyclists. Move out if the road ahead is clear.

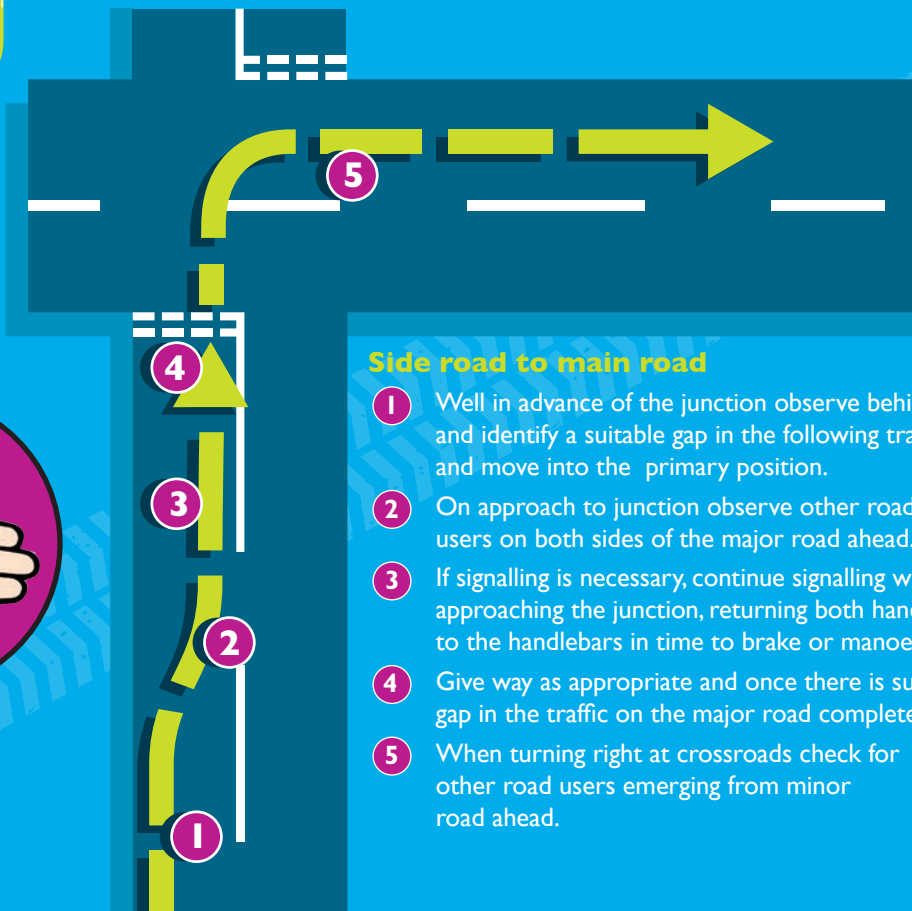
**When turning left, watch out for other road users also turning left, particularly lorries – they may accidentally drive across your path. Do not go alongside them. Perform a left shoulder check just before turning.**

## Turning Right

Remember, this is a complex manoeuvre and practicing first on quiet roads is required.



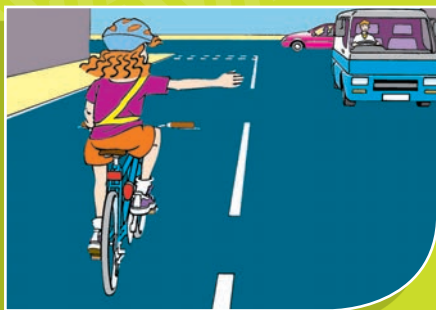
It is important that you can control your bicycle and do not wobble when hand signalling.



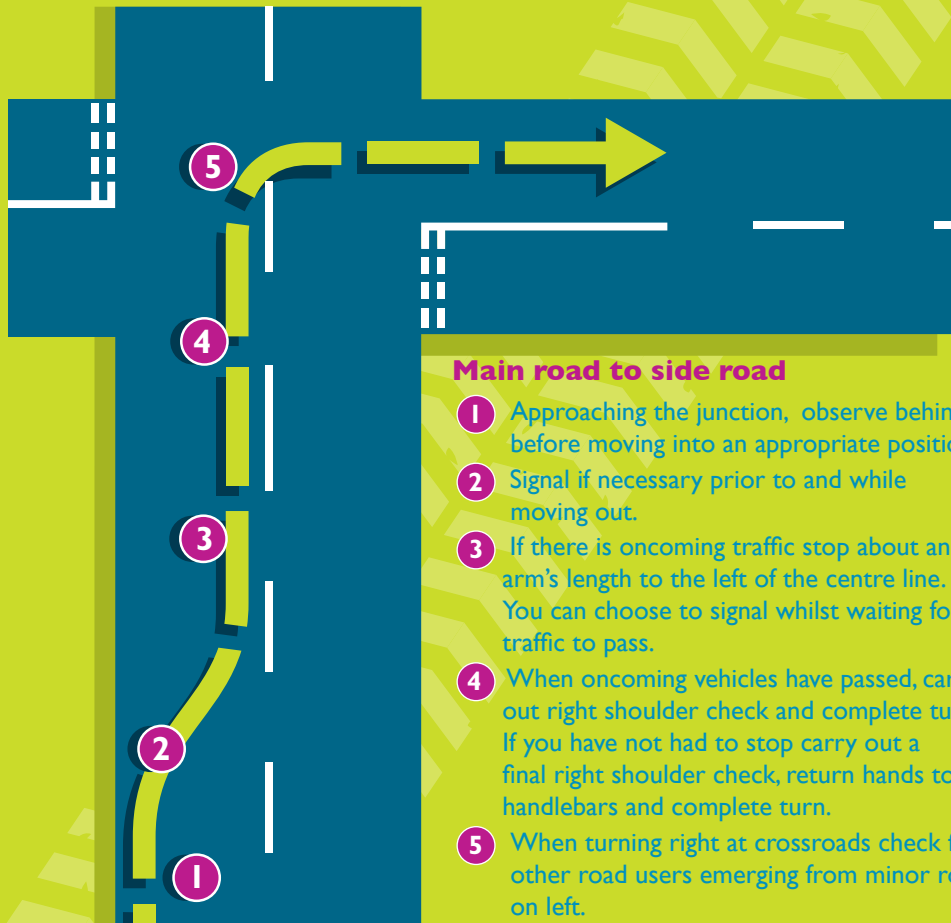
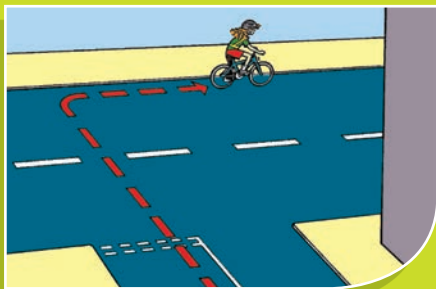
### Side road to main road

- 1 Well in advance of the junction observe behind and identify a suitable gap in the following traffic and move into the primary position.
- 2 On approach to junction observe other road users on both sides of the major road ahead.
- 3 If signalling is necessary, continue signalling while approaching the junction, returning both hands to the handlebars in time to brake or manoeuvre.
- 4 Give way as appropriate and once there is sufficient gap in the traffic on the major road complete turn.
- 5 When turning right at crossroads check for other road users emerging from minor road ahead.





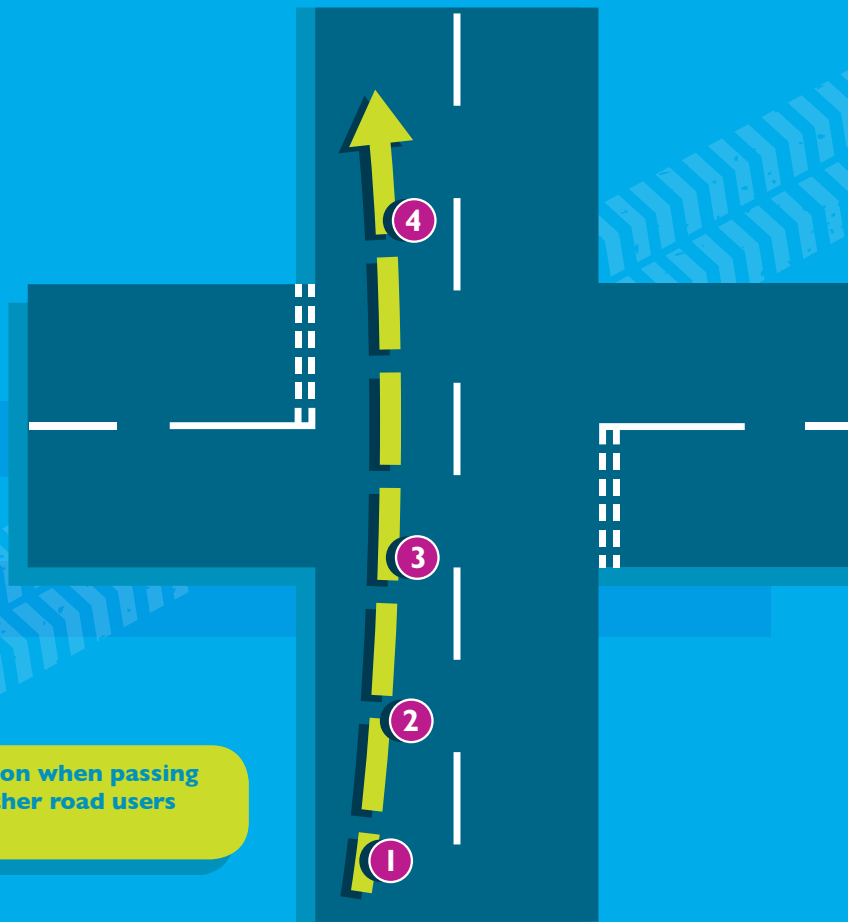
When you are signalling, make sure your hand does not cross the centre of the road. Do not 'cut' the corner when turning right.



## Passing a side Road

- 1 On approaching the side road look over your shoulder and keeping the same speed and pace move into primary position.
- 2 Look into side road and make eye contact with other road users that may be about to emerge. Also check ahead for oncoming vehicles turning into the side road.
- 3 You have the right of way and keeping up the same speed proceed through the junction whilst still checking for other road users emerging from the minor roads.
- 4 When you have passed the side road take a final left shoulder check and move back into the appropriate road position.

**Taking a prominent primary road position when passing side roads makes you more visible to other road users turning into, or out of, the side road.**



## Traffic lights

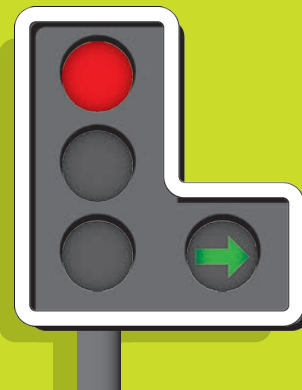
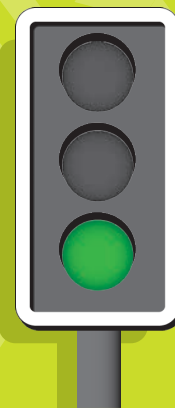
Traffic lights make junctions easier to handle, but you must still be very careful. The traffic lights will stop some of the traffic, but watch out for vehicles turning and crossing your path.



- If the lights are green, carry out the type of turn you wish to make following the relevant procedures detailed in this manual.
- If the lights are red or amber, you must stop and pedal ready. When lights become green, make sure it is safe, then continue your manoeuvre.

### Traffic lights with filter arrows

- When a green filter arrow is lit, the traffic coming from the opposite direction has a red light and should stop.
- If the green filter arrow is not lit, the 'main' green light means that you may go if the way is clear and keep checking both ways. You must still give way to traffic coming from the opposite direction.



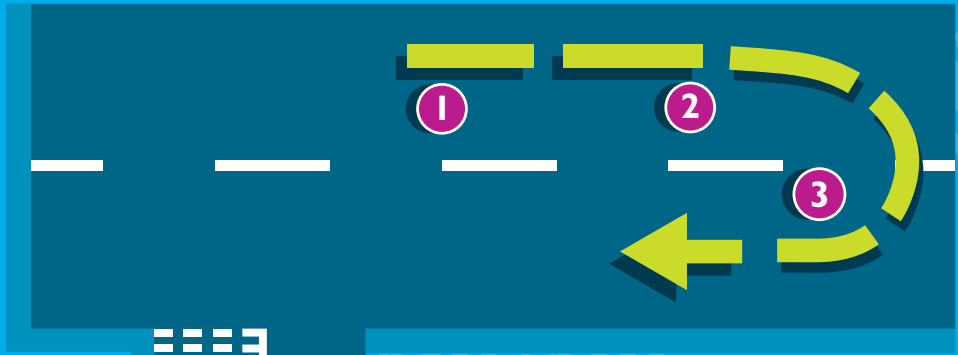
## U-turn

The U-turn is a very useful manoeuvre for trainees to master as it shows good use of balance, brakes, gears and appropriate speed.

Care should be taken to avoid feet touching mudguard or front wheel and this can result in trainees being locked into the turn and can result in a fall.

It also offers an excellent opportunity for turning practice in relation to how tight a U-turn a trainee can achieve.

The U-turn also allows a greater throughput of trainees and therefore speeds up the training process.



### Side road to main road

- 1 Approach the point where you intend to turn and then look behind over right shoulder.
- 2 If no one is coming in either direction complete the turn, slowing down as necessary, and then take up the correct cycling position on the opposite carriageway.
- 3 Remember to your cover your brakes in case of emergency and do not leave the carriageway when making this manoeuvre.

# Cycle routes and facilities

Cycle routes are recommended routes for cyclists. They include special cycling facilities and often avoid roads with busy traffic.

Remember, you will need to be just as careful on a cycle route as anywhere else.



**This sign shows direction on a recommended cycle route.**

## Cycle Lanes

Cycle lanes are marked out by white lines along the road. White cycle logos are painted within these lanes. There are two types:

## Advisory Cycle Lanes

Marked out by a broken white line, they warn drivers of motor vehicles that cyclists might be present.

## Mandatory Cycle Lanes

These are marked out by a solid white line.



Motor traffic is not allowed on mandatory cycle lanes but, be careful – drivers might disobey the rule. Some of these lanes are surfaced in a different colour to make them stand out.

## Cycle paths/tracks

Cycle paths are often shared with pedestrians. Take extra care when approaching or overtaking pedestrians, particularly children, the elderly, or the disabled. Use your bell to warn them of your presence.



**This sign shows direction on a recommended cycle route.**

## Bus lanes

Cyclists are allowed to travel along bus lanes if there is a bicycle symbol on the bus lane sign.



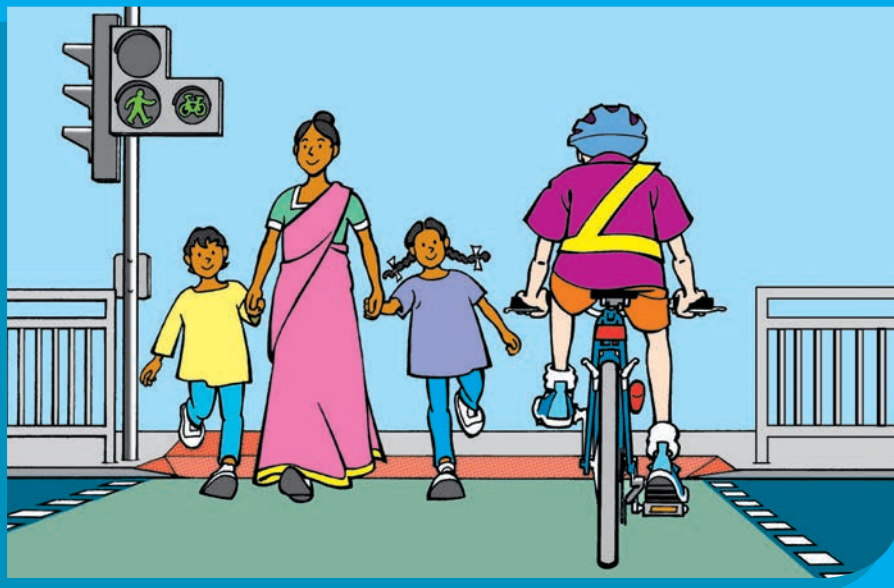
**Bus lane shared with cyclists**

## Advanced Stop Lines

These allow cyclists to stop ahead of motor vehicles at junctions controlled by traffic lights.

This facility gives cyclists a head start when the lights turn green.

Great care should be taken by a cyclist on the left hand side at ASLs and should watch out for drivers turning left, particularly HGVs. If they cannot see you they will drive across your path.



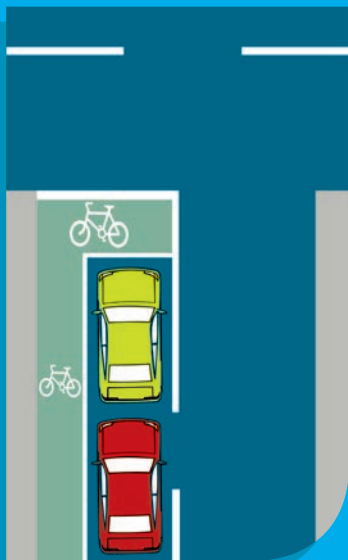
## Toucan crossings

Toucan crossings allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross the road at the same time.

They look similar to pelican crossings except that they have an extra “green bicycle” signal next to the green man, lighting up at the same time.

Use a Toucan crossing as you would a pelican – only cross when the green bicycle appears. If the red man shows, press the button and wait.

Be considerate to pedestrians when using a Toucan crossing.



## Assessment level 2

	A	B	C
<b>Master Level 1</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Start and Finish an on-road journey</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Understand where to ride on the roads being used</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Be aware of potential hazards</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Understand how and when to signal</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Pass other vehicles, pass side roads, turn left, turn right and make a U-turn</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Understanding of safe cycling and the Highway Code</b>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**A** – Meets National Standard   **B** – Still requires practise   **C** – Marked improvement, still requires more practise

If you have completed Level 2 to the satisfaction of your instructor, ask about Level 3 Training.

# Road Signs

Always obey traffic light signals, road signs and the signals given by police officers, traffic wardens and school crossing patrols.

Learn the meaning of all road signs and markings. Circular signs usually give orders, triangular signs give warnings and rectangular signs give information.

## Signs giving orders

**These signs are mostly circular.**

Those with blue circles usually tell you what you must do.



Keep left



Keep right



Turn left ahead



Turn right ahead



Ahead only



Mini roundabout

**Signs with red circles tell you NOT to do something.**



No cycling



No right turn



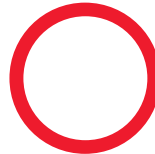
No entry for vehicles including pedal cycles



No motor vehicles



No pedestrians



No vehicles except pedal cycles being pushed by hand

**These two signs must also be obeyed.**



Give way to traffic on major road



Stop and give way



## Warning signs – these are usually triangular



Road works



Slippery road



Steep hill downwards



Crossroads



Roundabout



Cycle route ahead



Traffic signals ahead



Danger - words describe the danger



Hump bridge



Road narrows on both sides



Pedestrian crossing



Level crossing

## Information signs – these are usually rectangular



One way street



Cycle route forming network



Tourist attraction



Route for pedestrians to place shown

# Road Markings

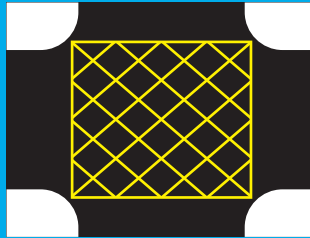
## Across the road



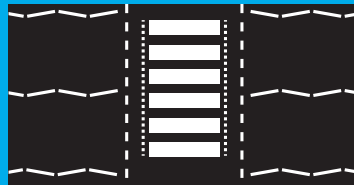
Give way to traffic on the major road



Stop on the STOP line



Box Junction: Do not enter the box unless your exit road or lane is clear, except to turn right



Zebra and pelican crossings' zig zag lines: Vehicles must not overtake, wait or park in the zig zag areas. Pedestrians should not cross on the zig zag areas. They should always use the crossing.



Keep school entrance clear

## Along the road



Lane Line



Centre Line



Hazard warning line



Do not cross double white lines

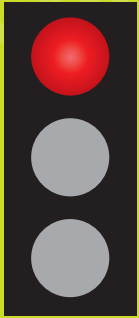


Do not cross solid line if it is on your side



Do not enter marked area unless it is safe to do so

# Traffic Lights



**Red: STOP**  
Wait behind the **stop** line



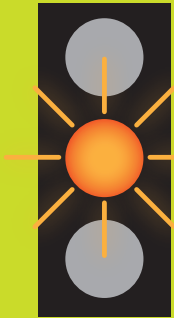
**Red and amber**  
also means **STOP**.



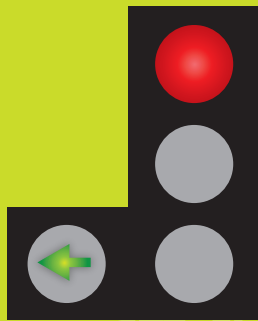
**Green:** you may go if it is safe to do so. Take special care if you mean to turn left or right and give way to pedestrians who are crossing.



**Amber**  
also means **STOP**

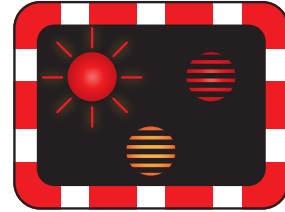


**Flashing amber** means you **must give way to pedestrians** on the crossing, but you may continue if there is nobody on the crossing.



If there is a **green arrow** you can go in the direction shown if it is safe to do so. You can do this whatever other lights are showing.

## Flashing lights



Flashing lights mean you **must stop**. They appear at level crossings, lifting bridges, air fields, fire stations etc.



Flashing amber lights tell you there could be school children crossing ahead.



London Borough of Haringey, Commercial & Operations  
Tel: 020 8489 5351 | Email: [smarter.travel@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:smarter.travel@haringey.gov.uk) | Website: [www.haringey.gov.uk/smartertravel](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/smartertravel)



† 0845 303 3311 | e [hello@zincmedia.com](mailto:hello@zincmedia.com) | w [zincmedia.com](http://zincmedia.com)  
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