

# Bicycling

The purpose of this document is to summarize and explain some of the more significant laws and best practices pertaining to bicycling in the City of Chula Vista. The topics covered in this document are as follows:

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## Best Practices

Bicycles are not vehicles, according to the statute that defines vehicles, but a person riding a bicycle has all the rights and duties of the driver of a motor vehicle. By obeying the laws and riding predictably, you make it easier for everyone to share the road. Following these guidelines will reduce your risk of collision or fines and help show that bikes have a positive presence on Chula Vista streets.

- Always ride with traffic, never against it
- Obey traffic signs and signs and observe others' right-of-way
- Don't pass other vehicles in the same lane
- Stay visible, predictable and assertive



- ✓ Always wear a Helmet
- ✓ Use lights at night
- ✓ Stop at all stop signs
- ✓ Ride on the road
- ✓ Take out earbuds

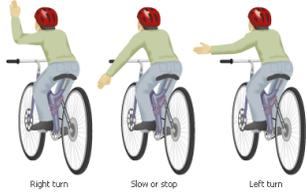
Source: CA Vehicle Code § 21200

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## Bicycling on Roads

A bicyclist, traveling at a speed less than the speed of traffic, should generally ride as far to the right of the roadway as safe. The right edge of the road often has hazards like storm drains, gutters, ditches, gravel shoulders and so on. Leave space between yourself and these hazards as needed for safety. You may move more toward the middle or left of the lane or roadway in the following situations:

- When overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle moving in the same direction
- When preparing for a left or right turn at an intersection, private road or driveway or where otherwise authorized
- When reasonably necessary to avoid unsafe conditions such as fixed or moving objects (vehicles, other bicycles, pedestrians, animals), surface hazards (e.g. potholes, debris, etc.) or substandard width lanes (a lane too narrow for a bicycle and vehicle to safely travel side by side)



Always check traffic and give an appropriate signal (using your right or left arm depending upon which direction you are moving) before changing lanes or changing your position in the lane.

Bicyclists may make left turns as either motorists or pedestrians do. To make a pedestrian left turn, the bicyclist should continue straight across the intersecting road, obey the traffic signals, turn left at the corner, and proceed as usual. Bicyclists may also dismount and walk in the crosswalks of the two intersecting roads. If traffic control devices specify the method of crossings, these directions must be followed.



Bicyclists must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians within marked crosswalks or at intersections.

Bicyclists must also yield the right-of-way to totally or partially blind pedestrians carrying a predominantly white cane or using a guide dog.

Bicyclists must follow all official traffic control devices including signals, signs, and other control devices unless otherwise directed by a police officer just like any vehicle driver. This means, bicycle riders must follow light signals (green for go and red for stop) and all signs (e.g. stop, yield, merge, etc.)

Sources: CA Vehicle Code § 21202; 21208

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## Bicycling on Sidewalks

Bicycles may be ridden on sidewalks in residential areas, however sidewalks are primarily meant for pedestrians, and reducing your speed is important in helping to avoid collisions and possible injury. Crossing motorists may not expect fast-moving sidewalk traffic coming from sidewalks. Ride carefully, checking before crossing streets and driveways. Slow down for pedestrians, and give an audible signal well before passing them.

Bicycles may not be ridden on sidewalks in **business districts** or in any location where signage has been posted by the City prohibiting such riding.

Sources: CVMC §10.72.150

<http://www.codepublishing.com/CA/ChulaVista/#!/ChulaVista10/ChulaVista1072.html#10.72.150>

## Bikes Must be Sized and Equipped Appropriately

Bikes operated on roadways are required to have at least one brake.

Handlebars may not be so raised that the bicycle operator must elevate his or her hands above the level of his or her shoulders to grasp the steering grip area.

The bike must be of a size that allows the operator to safely stop the bicycle, supporting it in an upright position with at least one foot on the ground.

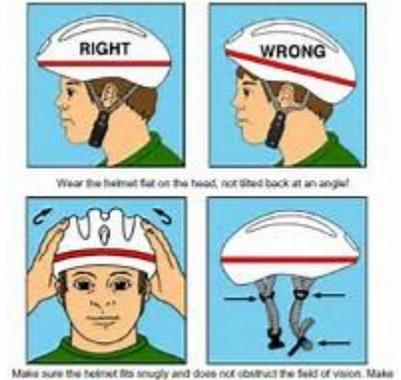
Source: CA Vehicle Code § 21201

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## Helmets are Required

Bicyclist and bicycle passengers **18 and under** must wear an **approved** helmet when riding on a bicycle. An approved helmet should be properly fitted and fastened and meet the standards of either the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Generally, if the helmet has been approved by one of these agencies, there will be a sticker/certification in the helmet. Wearing an approved helmet can help prevent serious head injuries or death.

Although not required, it is recommended that **all** cyclists wear helmets.



Source: CA Vehicle Code § 21212

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=VEH&sectionNum=21212](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=VEH&sectionNum=21212)

## Bicycles Operated at Night

If riding at night, bicycles are required to have **ALL** of the following types of lights:

- Lamp emitting white light visible from a distance of 300' or a lamp or lamp combination emitting white light attached to the operator and visible from a distance of 300' in front of and from the sides
- Red reflector or solid or flashing red light at the rear of the bike visible from 500'
- White or yellow reflector on each pedal, shoe or ankle visible from a distance of 200'
- White or yellow reflector on each side to the front of the bike (forward of the center)
- White or red reflector on each side to the rear of the bike (rear of the center)

Source: CA Vehicle Code § 21202(d)

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## General Rules for Bicyclists

Bicyclists may not wear **earplugs** in **both** ears or a **headset** covering **both** ears with the exception of Hearing aid devices.

Bicyclists may not ride while under the influence of **alcohol or drugs**.

Bicyclists may not hitch rides on vehicles.

Bicyclists may not carry items which keep them from using at least **one hand** on the handlebars.

Bicyclists may not lay bicycles on their sides on the sidewalk or park bicycles in a manner which obstructs pedestrians.

Source: CA Vehicle Code § 21200.5; 21203; 21205; 21210; 27400

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## Safe Passing Law (Three Feet for Safety Act)

Drivers or motor vehicles must provide a **minimum three feet (3') clearance** between any part of the motor vehicle and any part of the bicycle or its operator when overtaking or passing a bicycle moving in the same direction.

There are context sensitive considerations within the law, however, in **ALL** cases, the safe passing distance must not interfere with the safe operation of the bicycle.

Source: CA Vehicle Code § 21760

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