

Chatham-Kent Cyclist Handbook



Cycling is for Everyone!

This handbook will assist you with learning about your bicycle, our traffic laws and safe cycling habits.

When cycling within Chatham-Kent, always remember to use your best judgment, take your time, plan your route and have fun!



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Reasons to Ride

Affordable

Owning and operating a bicycle is a fraction of the cost of the ownership of a vehicle, and a cost efficient option from public transit. Once you own a bike, it is free to operate and requires minimal maintenance costs.

Convenient

You can go wherever you want, whenever you want, as soon as you jump on. A bicycle is often faster than public transit and helps avoid road congestion, bypassing traffic, especially within the communities.

Cycling offers an environmentally friendly option to your daily commute, contributing to cleaner air and less road congestion.

Healthy

Cycling regularly is a healthy way to get in shape, improve your health. This helps with making you feel more energetic.

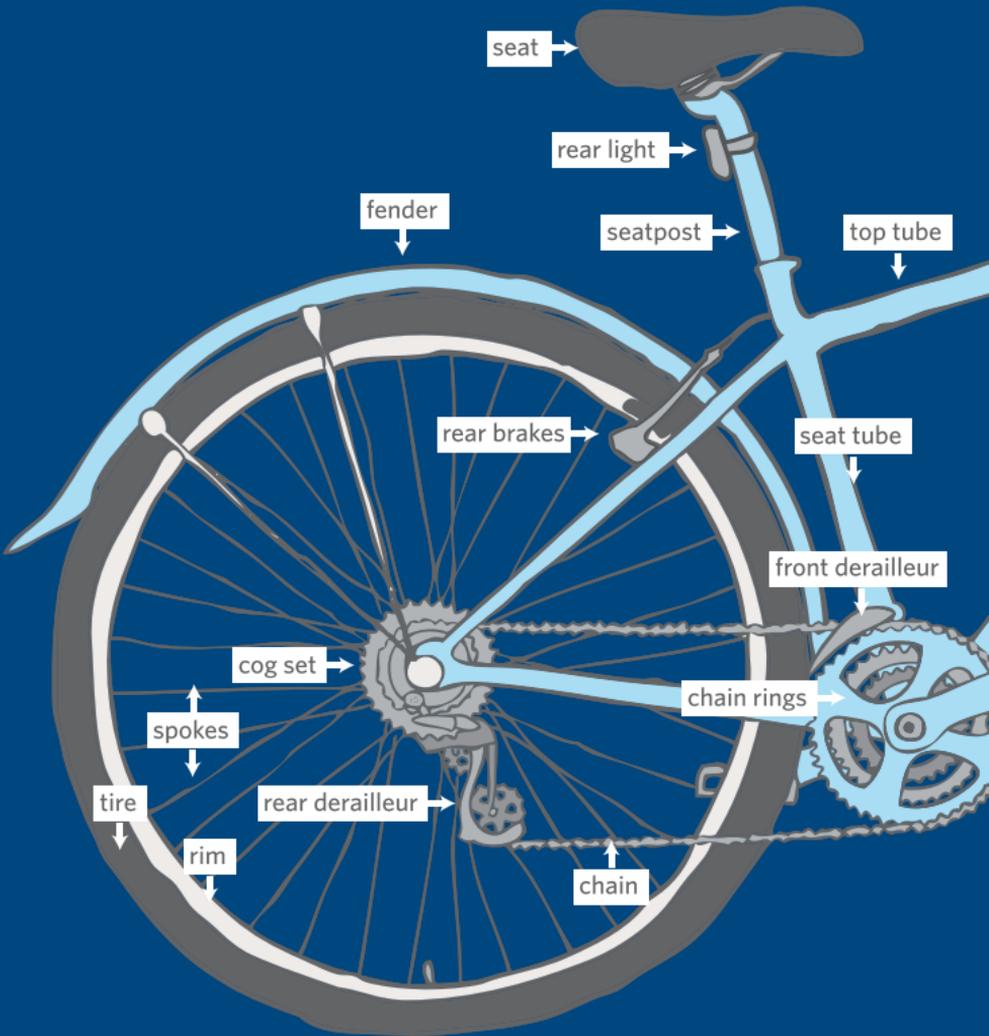
Enjoyable

Exploring Chatham-Kent through our parks, trails, pathways, cycling routes with friends and family is a wonderful way to have fun and see your community from another perspective.

A safe way to explore the Municipality of Chatham-Kent

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent is slowly growing their cycling network, by the connecting parks, pathways, trails, and cycling routes to create safe passage throughout the communities. Traffic laws are also in place to protect cycling, making cycling more enjoyable and a safer option.

Get to Know Your Bicycle

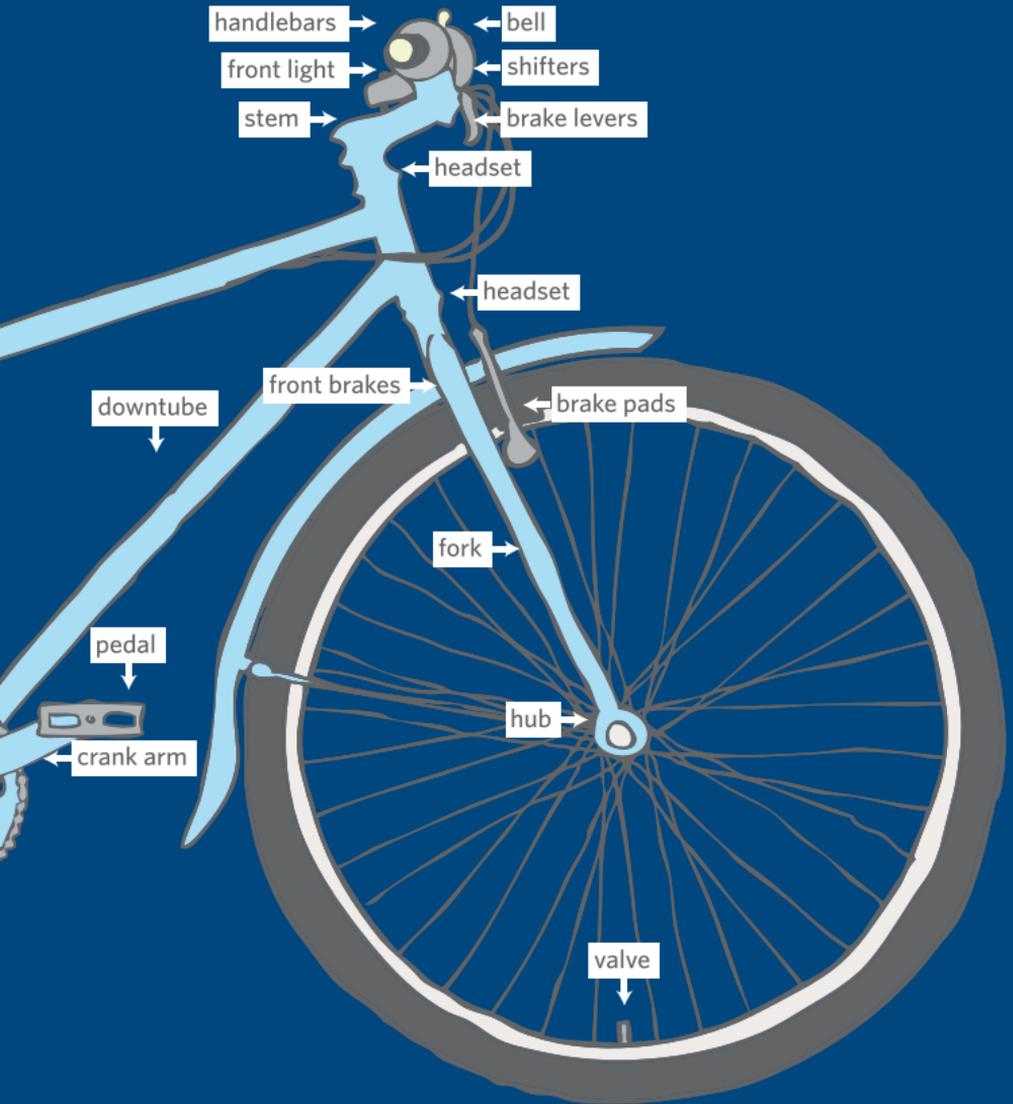




You can connect with Smith Cycle & More at 181 Thames St. Chatham or visit <http://www.smithcycle.ca>

This local bike shop offers a complete professional service shop and can handle any repair, no job is to big or small that they won't tackle.

e



Now You are Ready to Ride

Making sure your bicycle fits

Make sure you can stand over the cross bar of the bicycle. When sitting on the bicycle you should be comfortably able to reach the handlebars, and your leg should be slightly bent while touching the pedal at the lowest point.

A Helmet is a great idea, make sure it fits properly by following the 2-V-1 Rule.

A properly worn helmet may help protect your head in a fall. In Ontario, the law states cyclists under 18 must wear a helmet.



*2 fingers
between your
eyebrows and
your helmet.*



*The straps
should for a "V"
around your
ears.*



*1 finger should
fit between your
chin and the
strap.*

Taking care of small children

In Ontario, by law, small children must be seated in an approved child bicycle seat or a bicycle trailer. It is illegal for two people to ride on a bicycle meant for one person.

Be Heard, Be Seen, Be Safe

Ontario law requires that a bicycle be equipped with a front white light and a rear red light or red reflector at night, as well as a bell or a horn at all times.

A bell lets people know you are approaching. Ring it when passing parked, pulled over or turning vehicles.

This alerts the driver of your presence; the more people see and hear you, the safer you are.



At night a cyclist can become invisible. Lights, reflectors, and bright clothing help drivers see you.



Ride With Safety Using the ABC

Checklist

Air

- Tires have enough air
- Wheels spin freely and do not wobble

Brakes & Bars

- Brakes are working properly
- Handlebars are stable

Chain & Crank

- Chain is tight and lubricated
- Pedals spin freely
- Crank arm is not wobbly

Know the Rules of the Road

Highway Traffic Act

Ontario Highway Traffic Act (HTA) outlines how all road users must behave- including cyclists. You must follow all regular traffic laws in the HTA, as well as those laws that are specific to bikes.

Cyclists and the Law

Riding a bicycle within the Municipality of Chatham-Kent does not require a license or a special permit. Anyone can cycle, however cyclists are legally required to follow the HTA, following traffic rules, obeying signs and using hand signals.

A cyclist who has disobeyed a traffic law can be stopped by a police officer and fined.

Riding on the Road

A general rule, the slowest moving vehicle, like bikes occupy the road lane closest to the curb. Keeping 1 metre between you and the curb, or parked cars, ensuring that you are visible to other road users. Allowing room to maneuver if a car passes you too closely.

On roads with narrow lanes, a cyclist is entitled to take the entire lane. Drivers must give 1 metre when passing a cyclist in Ontario. The consequences of this infraction result in a fine and demerit points.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are for walking, cyclist should almost never be mixed with pedestrian traffic.

The only exception is for children (typically under the age of 11) who may lack the necessary skills to operate a bike on a roadway with vehicular traffic.

Fines, not demerit points

Cyclists do not receive demerit points but rather monetary fines when an infraction occurs and a ticket is issued.

Examples of ticket-able offenses under the Highway Traffic Act

Riding with two persons on a bike	\$85 + fees
Disobey stop sign or fail to stop	\$85 + fees
Improper (or no) arm signal to indicate turns or stops	\$85 + fees
Improper bicycling lighting	\$85 + fees
Fail to stop at a red light	\$325 + fees
Careless operation of bicycle or vehicle	\$490 + fees

Highway Traffic Act offenses, fines and demerit points for Drivers*

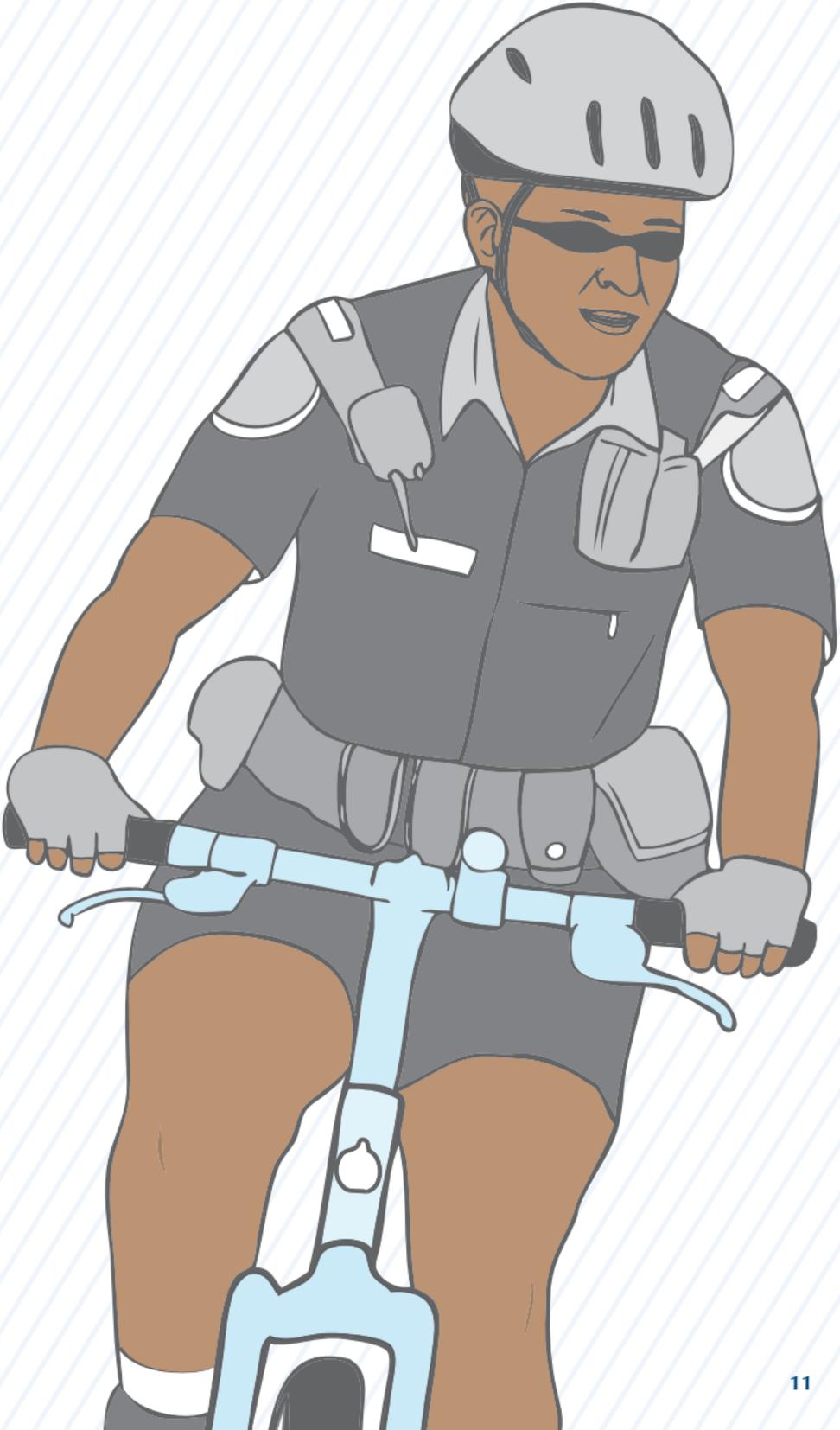
Insufficient passing distance (Drivers must leave 1 meter)	\$110 + 2 points
Opening car door into traffic (Cyclists or vehicles)	\$365 + 3 points
Distracted Driving	\$490.00 + 3 points

** Fine amounts listed are inclusive of provincial set fines and all additional fees, these fees may change.*

**for a complete more comprehensive list please refer to <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/pdfs/cycling-skills.pdf>*

**please review the legal resources for the HTA here at <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/>*

**For more information on the Highway Traffic Act, Statutes and Regulations of Ontario, visit www.e-laws.gov.on.ca .*



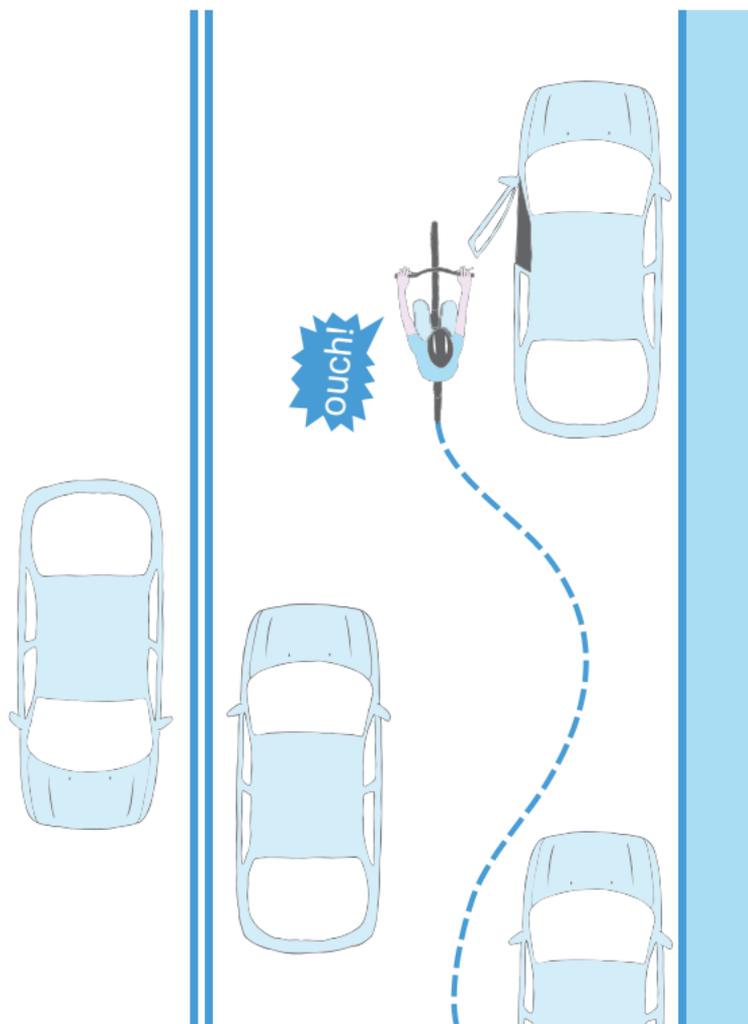
Cycle Safety

Pay Attention

Pay attention to your surroundings when in traffic, as drivers and pedestrians might not see you. Stay alert for hazards like potholes, vehicles changing lanes and parked cars. Do not use headphones while riding your bike, respect other road users.

Watch for Pedestrians

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users. Stop at pedestrian crosswalks and always be respectful.



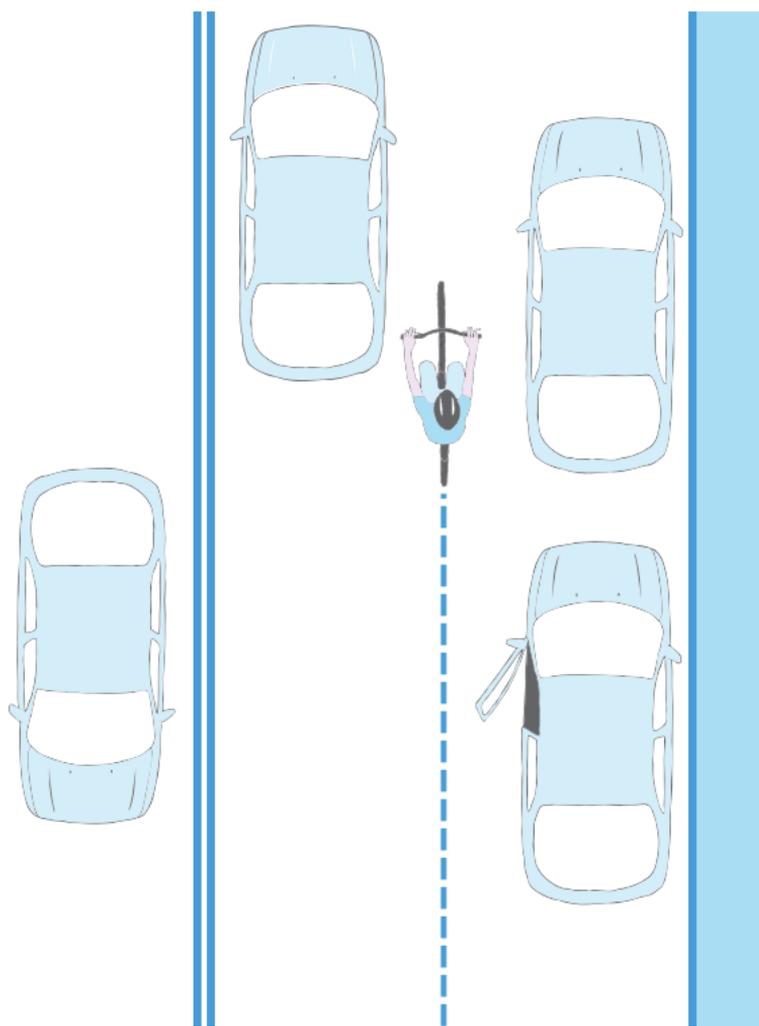
Resist the temptation to ride into gaps.

Ride in a straight line

If you ride confidently and predictably in a straight line, other road users will be able to recognize your behaviour and will be able to give you room to ride.

Do not swerve in and out of traffic or construction zone as this constricts the road user's ability to see you.

It is your right to take up as much space as you need. Ride a metre away from parked cars to avoid riding into a car door, if someone opens it without looking first. Always check over your shoulder before changing lanes.



Keep a good distance from parked cars.

Signal your stop and turns

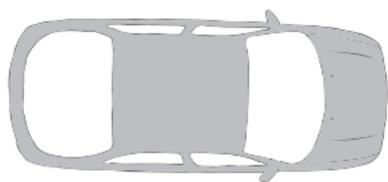
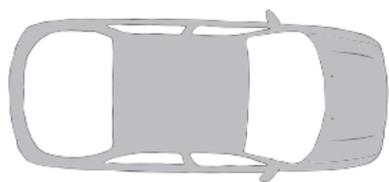
Signal your stops and turns before you reach an intersection by using proper hand signals. Reducing your speed on turns, especially when wet or in inclement weather.

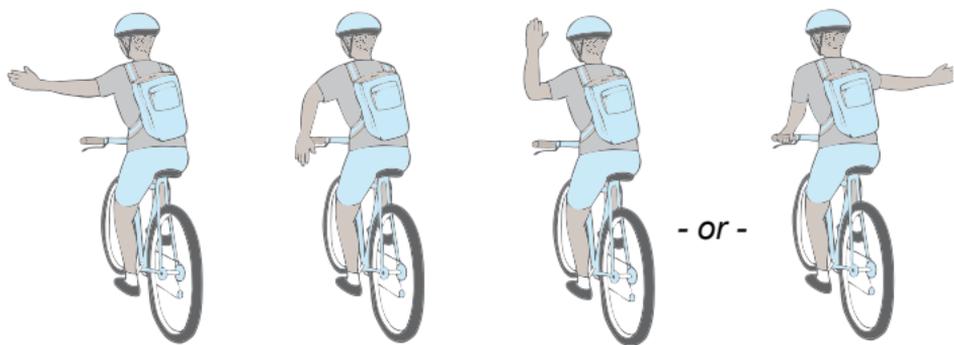
Riding next to a friend

You may ride next to another cyclist and take up an entire traffic lane, however if a faster vehicle approached and wishes to pass on the left, you must move into a single file.

Intersections

- 1 You can turn left with traffic using the far left lane or turning lane if you are comfortable.
- 2a You can turn left by riding along the crosswalk, and make a two part left turn.
- 2b
- 3 Only enter the right-turn lane if you are turning right. Do not enter it if you are going straight through the intersection.
- 4 Do not pass right-turning drivers on the right if you are going straight. Unless you are in a bike lane and the driver has given you the right of way.
- 5 If you turn right, wait your turn behind a right-turning car.

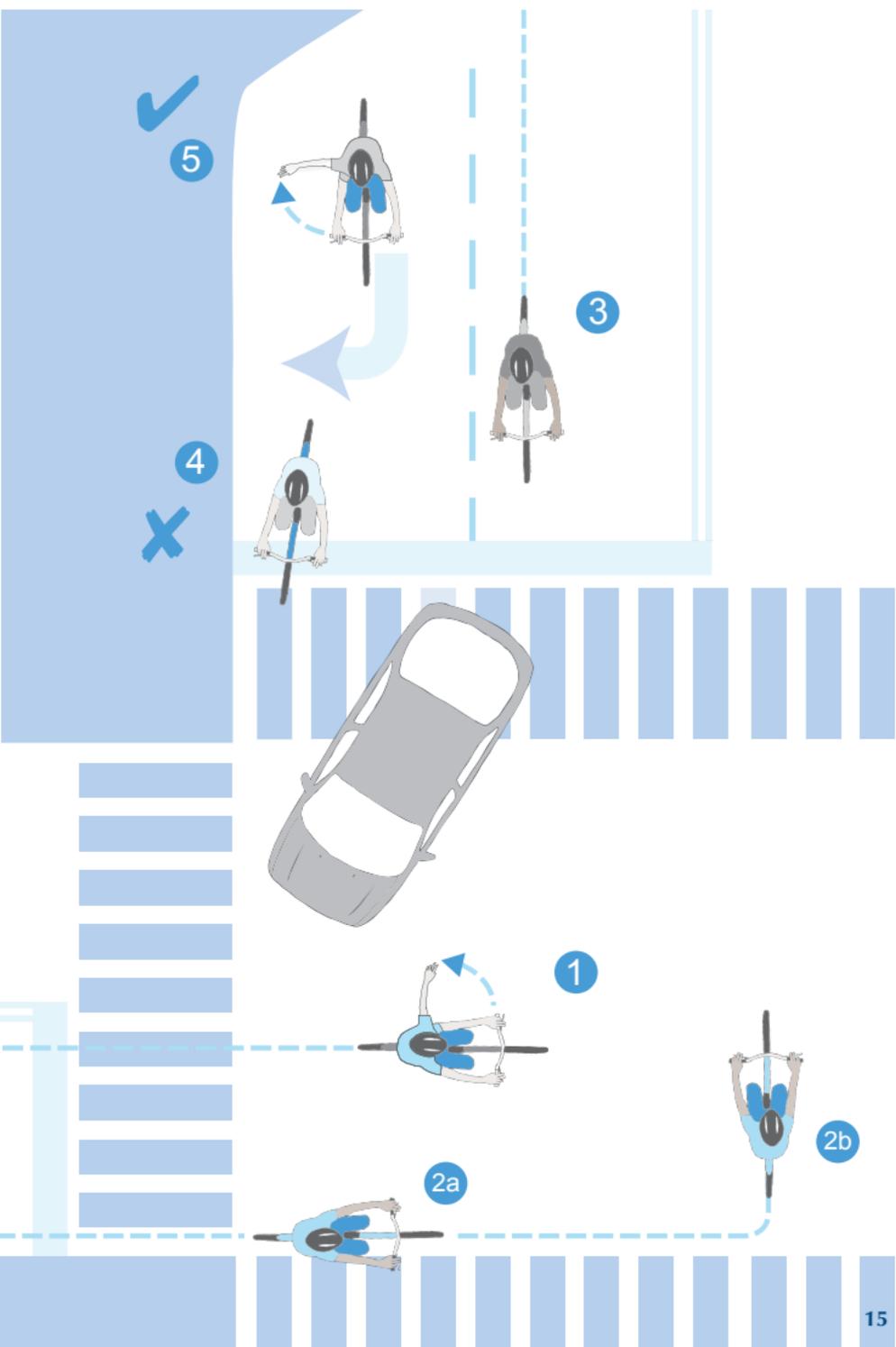




left-hand turn

stop

right-hand turn



Share the Road

Large Vehicles

Be cautious when driving near trucks and other large vehicles. Do not pass them in an intersection unless certain they are proceeding straight.

Never pass them on the right if they are turning right, only on the left. Large vehicles can make wide turns. Note that they may not be able to see you.

School Buses

When passengers are getting on and off school buses, cyclists must stop a reasonable distance from the door and allow them to safely cross the road before continuing to ride.

Electric Scooters

E-Scooters are not allowed to use protected bike lanes or multi-use trails. They are allowed to use painted bicycle lanes.

Collisions

If you are involved in a collision, you are entitled to compensation- including money to replace you bicycle or to pay for any medical expenses, even if the cyclist caused the collision.

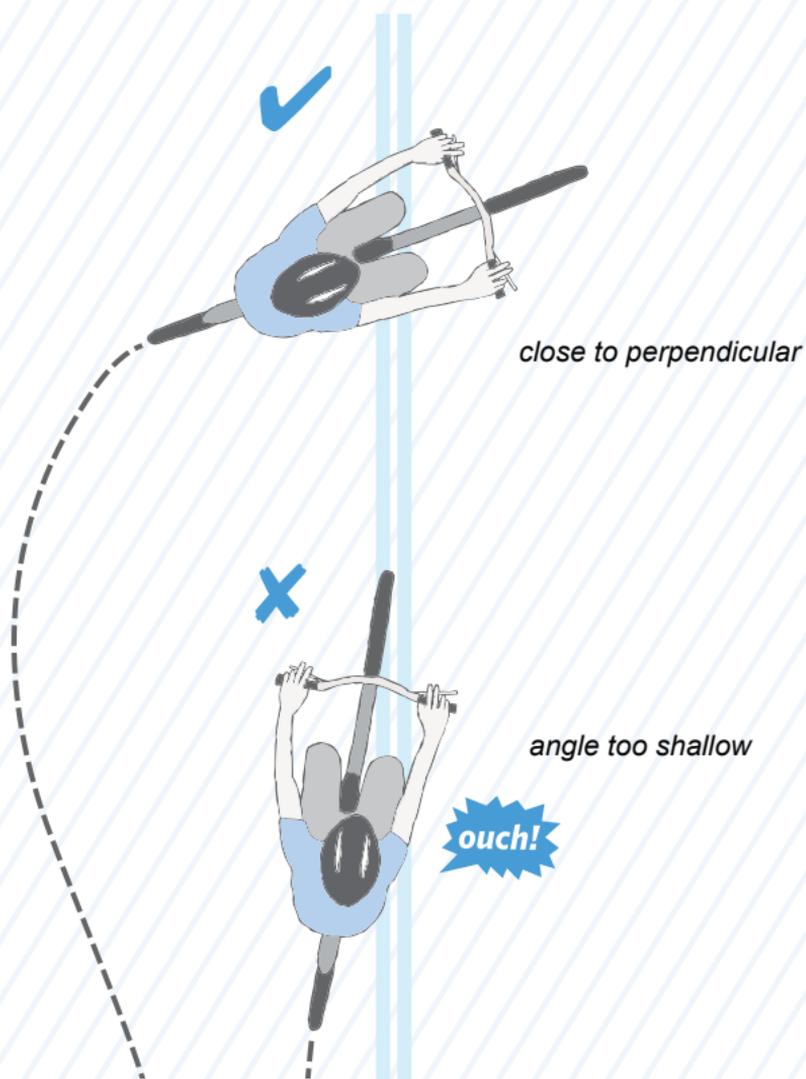
Be sure someone calls the police, exchange contact information with the driver, write down the license plate number and collect insurance information.

Call 911, or (519) 352-1234 your Chatham-Kent Police for a non-emergency situation.

Hazards

Be alert at all times and look out for hazards on the roadway or bike lanes. Hazards can include potholes, gravel, broken glass or other debris.

Be extra careful when crossing train tracks, especially when wet. Always cross tracks with your wheel at a right angle to the tracks.



Cycling Within the Communities and Beyond

Getting around your Community

Most households with the Municipality of Chatham-Kent have bicycles. Usually they start coming out early spring and are present until late fall, many people cycle to shopping locations, to meet up with friends and to travel to school or work. Try cycling within your community, start with short trips such as to the corner store, the gym or to a local restaurant.

Ride with an experience cyclist

If you are just beginning to cycling, try partnering with a more experienced rider to learn how to cycle safety in traffic and to discover the best routes within your community.

Commuting to work

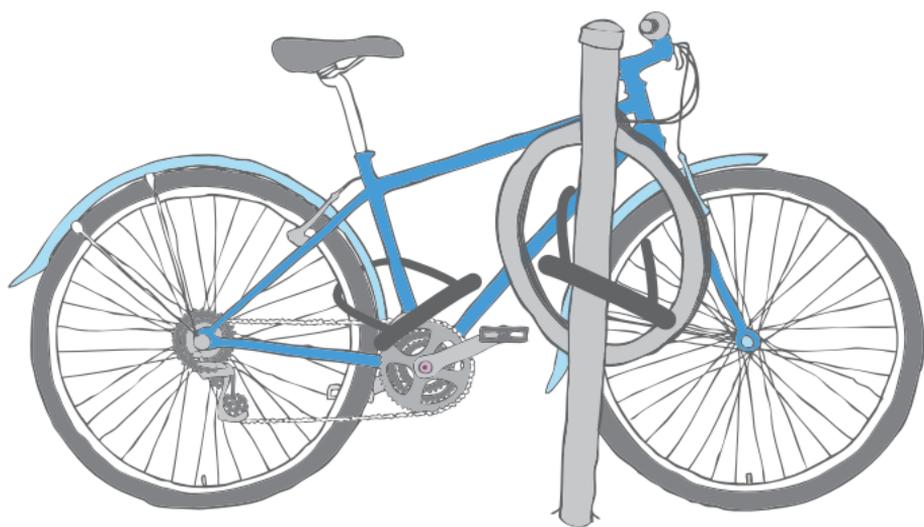
Many people are choosing to commute to work or school by bicycle. Cycling is considered a smart and affordable means of transportation.

Lock up your bike to avoid bike theft!

Residents within the Municipality of Chatham-Kent can register their bike with the Chatham-Kent Police on-line. You will need to provide your bikes serial number, usually found on the underside of your bike.

Always lock your bike frame and both wheels to prevent theft. A U-Lock fixed to a city ring and post works best.

Otherwise, try to secure to a post or pole, use a second lock for extra security. Lock your front wheel & frame to the post not the ring. A second lock can lock the rear wheel to the bike frame. <http://ckpolice.com/bicycle-registry/>



Plan your route

Pick up a local map and or go on-line to view cycling routes that will help you choose a safe route using bike lanes, parks, pathways, and trails. This is a safe and enjoyable option.

Bike Lanes, Trails and Pathways

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent has a wide variety and network of trails, paved pathways, parks and cycling routes. Visit the links below to view, and plan your route.

<https://www.chatham-kent.ca/parks-recreation/communityparks/trails>

<https://www.chatham-kent.ca/community-services/transportation/BicycleRoutes>

<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/>



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<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/bicycle-safety.shtml>