



Department of  
**Transport**

# Cycling Rules

Rules affecting cyclists and motorists in WA



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***As riding a bicycle continues to grow in popularity, so does the need to inform bicycle riders about their rights and responsibilities on paths and roads. A bicycle is a legal road vehicle and it is important to know the following rules and regulations to make our roads safer.***

This resource is only a guide to the laws that apply to riding a bike in Western Australia. It does not include every legislative rule and requirement that applies to riding a bike, and is not intended to be used as a legal document.

## **Definition of a bicycle**

A bicycle is a legal vehicle with two or more wheels that is built to be propelled by human power through a belt, chain or gears. Pedicabs, penny farthings and tricycles are considered bicycles. A pedicab is a pedal-operated taxi service vehicle.

Vehicles not considered bicycles are wheelchairs, wheeled recreational devices like Segways, wheeled toys like scooters, skates or skateboards, or any vehicle with an auxiliary motor capable of generating a power output over 250 watts (whether or not the motor is operating).

## **Standard requirements**

There are standard requirements that need to be met before a bicycle can be considered legal for use on the roads and shared paths.

These requirements include:

- a bell (or other effective warning device) that functions correctly and is fixed in a convenient position;
- an effective foot operated or hand operated rear wheel brake. A front brake is optional;
- a red reflector fitted to the rear;
- a yellow side reflector (visible from both sides) on each wheel; and
- yellow reflectors fitted to both side edges of each pedal.

When riding in hazardous weather, dusk, dawn or dark conditions, a bicycle must also have:

- a front light showing an unbroken or a flashing white beam that is clearly visible from 200 metres, and;

- a rear light showing an unbroken or flashing red beam that is clearly visible from 200 metres.

Consult the Australian Standards AS/NZS 1927 – 2010 Pedal Bicycles and Product Safety Australia – Bicycles for further information about standards, safety and roadworthiness.

## **Power-assisted pedal cycles**

A power-assisted pedal cycle (PAPC) is a bicycle with a motor providing assistance when the rider is pedalling.

In Western Australia PAPC can be used by people aged 16 years and older on shared paths with the power engaged. To be compliant, a PAPC can only have a maximum power output of 250 watts.

In Western Australia, two categories of PAPCs can be used:

- those with a maximum power output of 200 watts which are designed to be propelled through a mechanism operated solely by human power, to which is attached one or more auxiliary propulsion motors; and
- pedelecs, which are a form of electric bicycle that comply with EN 15194.

Please note that amendments to the Road Traffic [Administration] Regulations (2014) came into effect from 27 April 2015, making it legal for a pedelec that complies with the European Standard EN 15194 to be ridden on a shared path up to a maximum continuous power output not exceeding 250 watts.

To be compliant, a pedelec must:

- have a maximum continuous power output of the motor which does not exceed 250 watts;

- have an electric motor;
- require the rider to pedal to access the power;
- have the power cut out when the pedelec reaches 25 km/h, or sooner if the rider stops pedalling; and
- be certified by the manufacturer and labelled as complying with EN 15194, i.e. the label must include the manufacturer's name, the motor's cut-off speed in km/h and the electric motor's maximum continuous rated power output in watts.

## The rider, passenger and helmets

A bicycle rider does not have to be licenced in order to use WA public roads.

The WA Police recommend that children under nine years of age do not ride on a road unless closely supervised by a responsible adult.

### Passengers

The number and design of seats on a bicycle governs the number, size and age of passengers it can legally carry.

Children can be carried in an approved child bicycle seat or bicycle trailer, providing the rider is at least 16 years of age. The passengers must be under the age of ten. A bicycle trailer must be designed so that it can safely carry the passenger.

The seats for children must be:

- securely attached to the frame;
- attached in a position that is not directly located on the handlebar;
- fitted with a footrest and guard that prevent the child's feet from coming into contact with moving parts of the bicycle; and
- fitted with a restraining device that cannot be accidentally released.

### Helmets

Bicycle riders travelling on WA roads and paths must wear an approved helmet with the retention straps fastened at all times.

The helmet must comply with AS/NZS 2063:2008—Bicycle helmets. All approved helmets must be sold with a compliance sticker attached.

A child carried in a child carrier seat and the passenger in a trailer being towed by a bicycle must also wear approved helmets. Passengers in a pedicab are not required to wear helmets. A pedicab is a pedal-operated taxi service vehicle.

### Carrying or towing loads

Any load or attachment on a bicycle must not be likely to cause injury to the rider or any other person. The overall width of any load carried on or towed by a bicycle must not exceed 660mm.

## Rules affecting cycling

When using a public road all bicycle riders must obey the same rules as other vehicles such as cars and trucks.

The most common rules include those applying to traffic control lights, stop signs, careless and reckless riding, riding under the influence of alcohol, and keeping left.

Riders can access a full version of the *Road Traffic Act 1974* and the *Road Traffic Code 2000* at their library or on the State Law Publisher's website.

### Bike storage areas

A bike storage area is one designed to allow cyclists to wait in front of the line of motorised traffic at traffic-light intersections.

These storage areas and their connecting sealed shoulders have been painted green and marked with white bicycle symbols (see diagram 1).

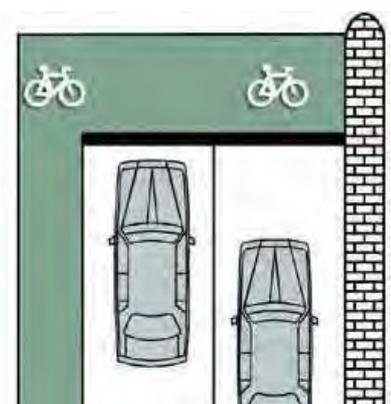


Diagram 1

To utilise these areas a bicycle rider needing to make a right hand turn can do so by approaching the intersection from the sealed shoulder on the left hand side of the road, wait in this area for a red traffic light signal for motorised traffic, then cross in front of the line of stationary cars to the front of the right lane.

When a green light and/or green arrow is displayed bicycle riders can turn right.

Bike storage areas recognise the presence of bicycle riders and trigger a green light/turn arrow when no motorised vehicles are present. The triggers are indicated by six diamonds marked in white on the road. To activate the loop, bicycle riders need to place their bikes over the diamonds.

### Optional hook turns at intersections

A hook turn is an alternative method of turning right at an intersection for cyclists.

The hook turn may be performed at any intersection unless there is a “no hook turn by bicycles” sign.

To perform a hook turn, approach the intersection on the far left then travel through to the far left of the road you wish to enter.



Diagram 2

Turn your bicycle in the direction of the crossroad. Wait until all traffic has cleared and then complete your ‘right turn’ by riding straight ahead (see diagram 2).

### Overtaking vehicles

Bicycle riders cannot overtake on the left side of a motor vehicle if that motor vehicle is indicating or appears to be

turning left, except for locations such as traffic lights where motor vehicles are stationary at a red light.

### U-turning

A U-turn is a turn by which a vehicle, facing or travelling on a carriageway in one direction, is turned to face or travel in the opposite direction. Bicycle riders must not commence a U-turn unless it can be performed with safety and without interfering with the movement of other traffic. The U-turn must only be commenced if the rider has a clear view of approaching traffic.

Drivers/bicycle riders are not allowed to make a U-turn at an uncontrolled intersection if there is a “no U-turn” sign. A U-turn at a controlled intersection (i.e. with traffic lights) is illegal unless otherwise stated.

When making a U turn, the same rules apply as for a right hand turn (see diagram 2).

### Roads with bicycle lanes

*The Road Traffic Code 2000, section 213*

*Riding in Bicycle Lane*

states that the use of bicycle lanes has been made compulsory to contribute to making all road users more comfortable by designating a specific space for riders on the road. As well as contributing to a safer road environment, these lanes are designed as part of the road infrastructure to optimise traffic flow and travel of both bicycles and traffic within the carriageway.



Bike lanes are indicated by a special sign and where provided, cyclists must use them whenever practicable. Where there is no designated bicycle lane or the

bicycle lane is not in good working order (i.e. the pavement is not safe to ride on, and is not free of debris) then the rider is permitted to travel within the carriageway.

### Using designated crossing points

The rider of a bicycle must not ride across a road by using a children's crossing, a pedestrian crossing or a marked foot crossing. A rider wishing to cross at these points must dismount and walk the bicycle across.

Some controlled crossing points (where a shared path meets a road) will have special bicycle crossing lights indicating that it is permissible to ride across when lights are green. When lights are red, bicycle riders must stop.

### Causing an obstruction

The rider of a bicycle shall not unreasonably obstruct or prevent free passage of a vehicle or pedestrian upon a path or road. Similarly, vehicles and pedestrians shall not unreasonably obstruct a bicycle. Riding slower than other vehicles is not considered an obstruction.

## Roundabouts

The following relates to the use of multilane roundabouts when turning left, going straight, turning right, performing a U-turn or doing a hook turn.



Diagram 3

### Turning left

Approach in the left lane (see diagram 3).

Signal left on the approach and continue to signal until the roundabout is exited.

### Going straight through

Approach in either lane (see diagram 4). Do not signal on approach. Stay in the same lane all the way through. Signal left just prior to the exit.



Diagram 4



Diagram 5

### Turning right

To turn right, cyclists need to approach in either lane. If choosing to use the right lane, bicycle riders must behave in the same manner as any other vehicle (see diagram 5).

They must signal right on approach, continue this signal until near the required exit and then signal left to exit.

If choosing to use the left lane to turn right, the same rules as performing a hook turn apply. Bicycle riders must give way to traffic exiting the roundabout at any exit that the cyclist needs to cross over to complete the right turn (see diagram 6).



Diagram 6

## Rules applying only to cyclists

In addition to the road rules applying to all vehicles, there are some specific rules that only apply to bicycle riders, who:

- Must have at least one hand on the handlebar while in motion.
- Must wear an approved helmet while in motion (see page 4).
- Must not ride within two metres of the rear of a motor vehicle, over a distance of more than 200 metres.

- Must not hold onto another moving vehicle or be towed by it.
- Must not ride a bicycle on a freeway or other road that has designated restrictions that prohibit bicycle riding.
- Must not be more than two bicycles abreast on a road. When riding abreast, the two bicycles must be no more than 1.5 metres apart. This rule does not prevent another cyclist from overtaking.
- Must not ride recklessly or carelessly.
- Must not ride in a pedestrian mall, square or plaza.
- Must use the correct hand signals to turn left or right, and to stop:



Turning left

**Turning left:** horizontally extend your left arm and hand.



Turning right

**Turning right:** horizontally extend your right arm and hand.



Stopping signal

**Stopping:** extend the right arm and bend upwards at the elbow. Hand should be open with the palm forward.

## Shared paths and footpaths

There are some special rules for the use of shared paths and footpaths in WA.



Shared path sign

Shared paths and footpaths are paths that are designated for shared use by cyclists and pedestrians.

These rules include:

- All cyclists, regardless of their age, may ride on any footpath unless a 'no bicycles sign' has been erected.
- Riders must keep left on shared paths and footpaths unless overtaking.

- Riders must give way to pedestrians at all times (pedestrians include people walking, using motorised and non-motorised wheelchairs, and people on rollerblades and skates).
- At shared path intersections, you must signal your intention to turn and give way to motor vehicles entering or exiting an intersecting road.
- Riders must travel in single file on all paths, though they can travel two abreast on a road.
- Riders must not ride carelessly or recklessly. Riding recklessly includes riding at a speed that places other riders and pedestrians at risk.
- Animals must not be tied to a moving bike.
- Riders 16 years of age and over are permitted to ride a compliant power-assisted pedal cycle (PAPC) on shared paths with the power engaged (see page 3).

For further information about standards, safety and roadworthiness, consult the Australian Standards AS/NZS 1927 – 2010 Pedal Bicycles and Product Safety Australia. AS/NZS 2063:2008 helmet.

Separated paths are a length of footpath that is marked with either a separated footpath sign or road marking. These signs consist of a pedestrian symbol and a bicycle symbol side by side, with or without the word 'only'.

## Reporting crashes, hazards and stolen bicycles

If a bicycle rider is involved in a crash with another rider, a pedestrian, a motor vehicle or an animal, and the other party is injured or there is property damage that exceeds \$3000, the incident must be reported to the police. Incidents involving personal injury that have been reported to police will be automatically reported to the Insurance Commission of WA.

If a bicycle rider or driver is involved in an incident in which property is damaged the rider/driver must stop and, if required to do so by the person whose property was

damaged, provide their name and address.

### Reporting dangerous or threatening behaviour

It is important that all members of the cycling community report behaviour by other road users that could be considered dangerous or overtly threatening in nature. It could help prevent further problems in the future for other riders.

Any troubling incidents should be reported to your local police as soon as possible. If the incident involves a vehicle, it is useful to note the relevant make, model and registration details for ID purposes.

### Reporting a stolen or vandalised bicycle

Any stolen or vandalised bicycle should be reported to the police as soon as possible. It is a good idea to record your bicycle's serial number and keep it somewhere safe.

### Reporting a hazard

For hazards in areas including traffic lights and principal shared paths that are situated alongside the freeway, major highways or railway lines, a report should be submitted to Main Roads WA using their online form or 138 138 hotline.

Hazards on other paths or roads should be reported directly to the local government authority of where the hazard is located.

### Bicycles on public transport

In Perth, you can take your bicycle on a train or a ferry without additional charges to your ticket during non-peak times. You cannot take your bicycle on buses.

During peak-times you may not take your bike when the train is traveling:

- Towards Perth between 7.00am-9.00am.
- Away from Perth between 4.30pm-6.30pm.

To allow for maximum passenger space, during the above times bikes cannot be on trains departing or passing through Perth, Perth Underground or Elizabeth Quay Stations.

There is one exception: fold-up bikes are permitted at any time provided they are contained within a carry bag and fit the size requirements to carry a load.

Cyclists are to walk their bike throughout train stations and use the elevators to transport up or down levels.

For more detailed information on the laws relating to bicycles on trains refer to the *Public Transport Authority Regulations 2003* on the State Law Publisher's website.

You can also find out more information on taking your bicycle on Transperth services, bike parking or reporting a hazard in railway precincts by calling 13 62 13 or visiting [www.transperth.wa.gov.au](http://www.transperth.wa.gov.au)

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