

CYCLE

Safety Tips

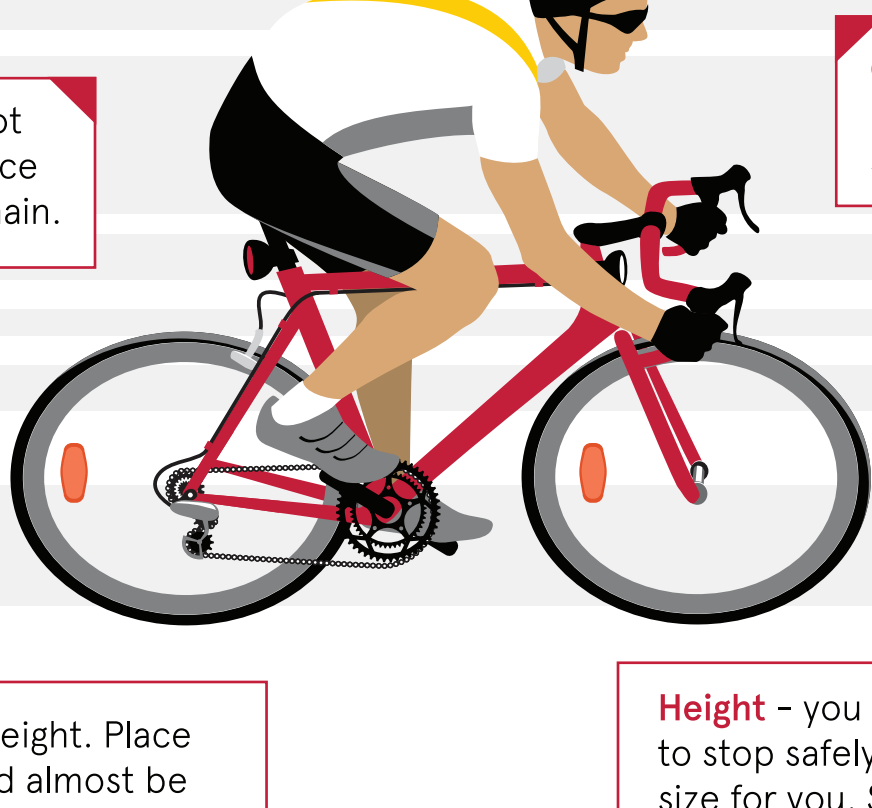
There are a number of techniques cyclists can follow to greatly improve their safety on the road. We've covered the important ones here. We've also covered the importance of bike lights, as well as correct bike setup for safe cycling. We hope that you find these techniques useful and please do share this infographic around with fellow cyclists.

White front light and rear red light - You are required, by law, to have both of these fixed and switched on whilst you ride at night. Flashing lights are permitted but it is strongly recommended that you use a steady front lamp.



A cycle helmet - conforming to current regulations, correct size and securely fastened.

Take caution carrying items - do not carry anything that can affect balance or get tangled up in the wheels / chain.



Cycling gloves - a good pair can improve grip and control, protect your skin, absorb shock, and give warmth.

Saddle (seat) - set at a comfortable height. Place one heel on the pedal; your leg should almost be straight when pedal is at lowest point. Height limit mark on the seat post should not be visible. Check that you can't move it up and down or side to side.

Height - you need to be comfortable and able to stop safely. Make sure your bike is the right size for you. Stand over the frame of the bike and check you can:

- Stand with both feet flat on the ground
- Get on and off the bike easily
- Comfortably lift the front wheel at least 5cm off the ground

Cyclist Casualties

Source: rospa.com

Every year in this country around 19,000 cyclists are killed or injured in reported road accidents, including around 3,000 who are killed or seriously injured.



Fatality
107



Serious Injury
3,085



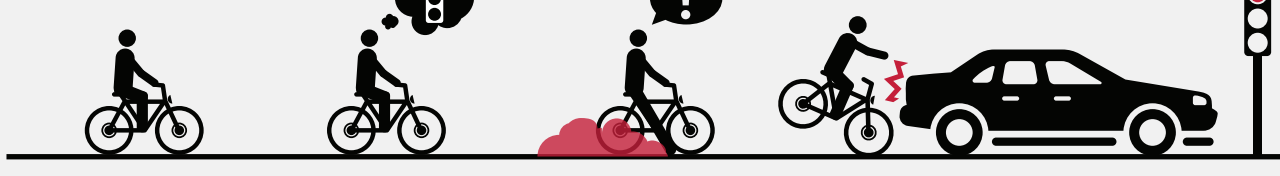
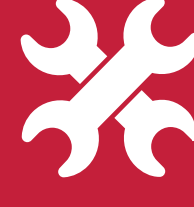
Slight Injury
16,023



Total
19,215

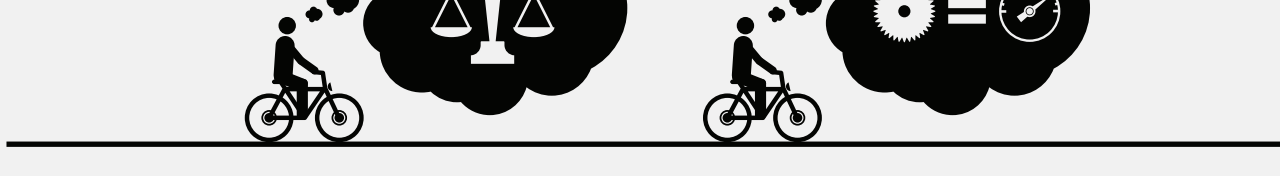
These only include the number of cyclist road accidents reported to the police. Many cyclist casualties are not reported, even serious accidents. In reality, many more cyclists than this are unfortunately injured each year.

If you are just starting to cycle or have been doing so for years, it is worth taking these tips into consideration as many of them are often over-looked, ignored or unknown, especially when it comes to positioning...



Make sure your bike is safe and roadworthy
Regularly check your brakes. Don't ignore any strange noises, vibrations, or jumping gears as they usually indicate problems.

Check your tyres regularly
This helps you ride faster and safer. Soft tyres makes for poor cornering, which is bad news when cars are whizzing past you just feet away. Keep a pump and puncture repair kit with you.



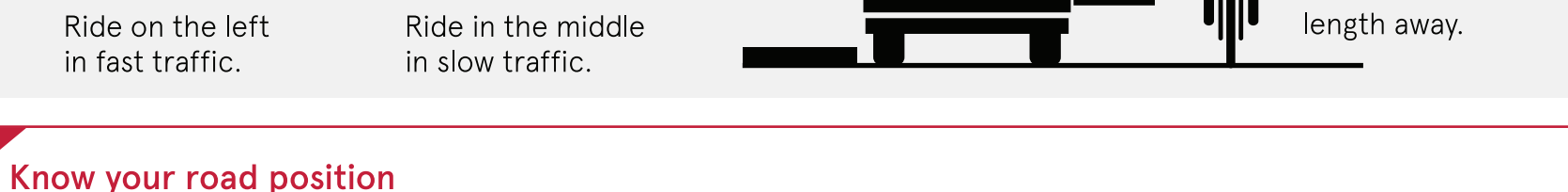
Practise your bike control
Learn how to use your gears properly, control the bike while looking directly behind, ride confidently with one hand, shift your body weight when making an emergency stop and swerve safely. Ride with at least two of your fingers on your brake levers.

Need more confidence?
Go on a training course. Check with your local authority for any subsidised or even free training opportunities they might offer.



Avoid the pavement
Cycling on the pavement is against the law. If you feel uncomfortable, practise on early weekend mornings; traffic tends to be quieter.

Learn the roads
Familiarise yourself with local roads to gain a better understanding of the way the traffic flows; when peak hours are, what to expect, where one way systems are, what roads are safest. If you are trying new roads, use google maps to help plan your journey and reduce the risk of unexpected problems or unclear road layouts.

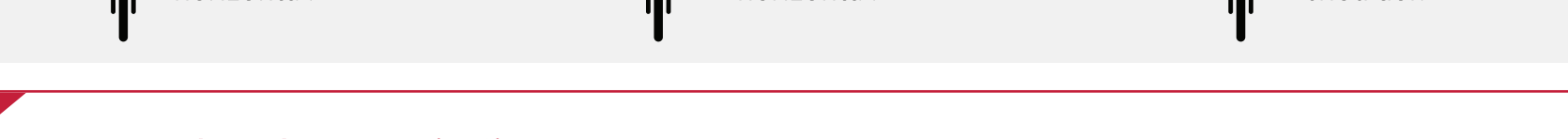


Ride on the left in fast traffic.

Ride in the middle in slow traffic.

When riding past parked cars, always distance yourself at least a door's length away.

Know your road position
Ride away from the kerb, not in the gutter, and stay at least a car-door's width away from parked vehicles. Ride in the stream of traffic when you can match its speed. Ride slowly when close to slow moving traffic / parked cars so you have time to react to hazards (such as an opening door or person stepping out into the road).



Turning left
Hold left arm horizontal.

Turning right
Hold right arm horizontal.

Safety check
Look over right shoulder.

Ensure good road communication
Communicate where you want to go with hand signals and correct road positioning. Don't signal without looking behind first - it may be unsafe. It comes in handy to have a bell to let people know where you are, especially when sharing a path with pedestrians.

Safety checks
Check behind you frequently and especially before changing position on the road. Always look over your right shoulder.



Staying left:
Enables vehicles to dangerously overtake on the right.

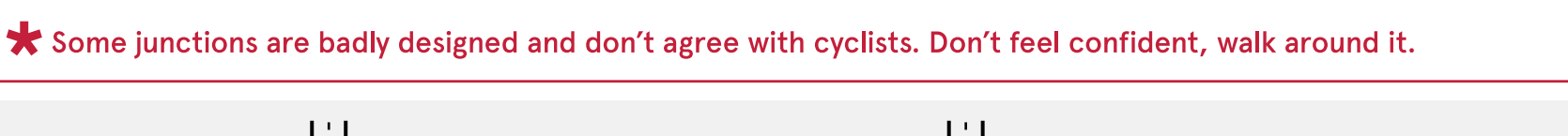
Staying centre:
Blocks vehicles from dangerously overtaking.

2/3 cyclists killed or seriously injured happen at a junction; T junctions being the most common.

Approaching Junctions
Arrive at junctions in the middle of your lane, whether you are turning left, right or going straight on. This prevents traffic behind from dangerously overtaking.

Traffic Lights
The least safe option is to undertake on the left; wait your turn or consider overtaking on the right to get to the front before pulling in to the stream of traffic.

Some junctions are badly designed and don't agree with cyclists. Don't feel confident, walk around it.



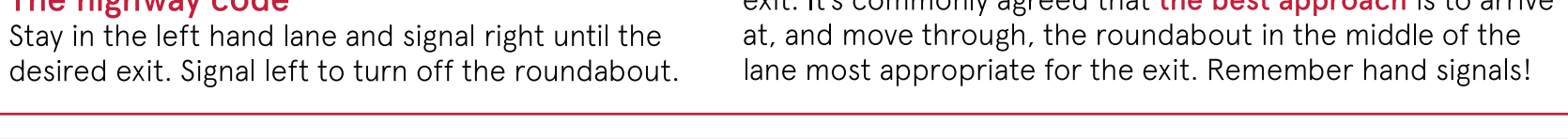
The highway code:
Stay on the left at all times.

Recommended:
Stay in the middle of appropriate lane.

Roundabouts
These are particularly dangerous for cyclists as other traffic does not always know what they're doing.

The highway code
Stay in the left hand lane and signal right until the desired exit. Signal left to turn off the roundabout.

Many drivers do not know the highway code cycling routine, causing situations where the cyclist is cut up whilst passing an exit. It's commonly agreed that the **best approach** is to arrive at, and move through, the roundabout in the middle of the lane most appropriate for the exit. Remember hand signals!



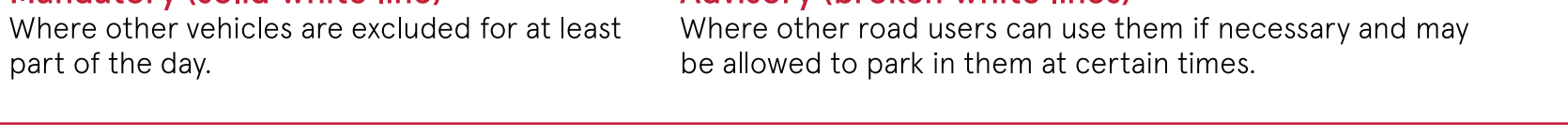
Solid line
Cyclists only.

Broken line
Be wary of other traffic.

Cycle lanes
There are many different types of cycle lanes; it's advised that you use these, but only when safe.

Mandatory (solid white line)
Where other vehicles are excluded for at least part of the day.

Advisory (broken white lines)
Where other road users can use them if necessary and may be allowed to park in them at certain times.



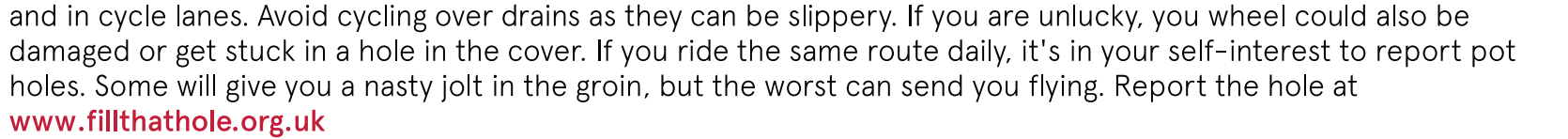
Hidden dangers
Be cautious when cycling on the roads; there are many potholes, drains, puddles and dirt, especially near the side and in cycle lanes. Avoid cycling over drains as they can be slippery. If you are unlucky, you're wheel could also be damaged or get stuck in a hole in the cover. If you ride the same route daily, it's in your self-interest to report potholes. Some will give you a nasty jolt in the groin, but the worst can send you flying. Report the hole at www.fillthathole.org.uk



Do not ride beside large vehicles.

Slow down or overtake (on the right) when safe to do so.

Be cautious around large vehicles
Never cycle on the kerb side of any large vehicle at a junction. If you're in the driver's "blind spot", they won't see you if they turn left. Always keep enough distance in front / behind of any large vehicle so the driver can see you, if you're behind overtake on the right. If you can't see the mirrors, the driver can't see you. Many cycling fatalities are from HGVs turning left without seeing them.

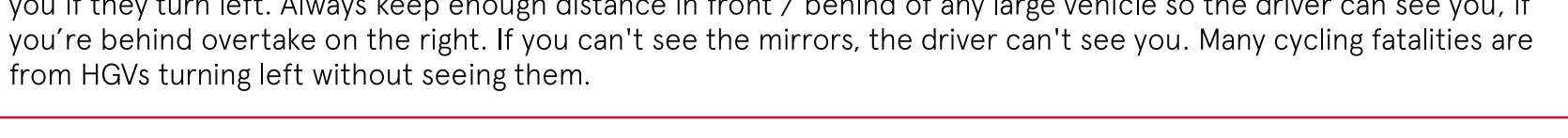


Always be on your guard
If someone is overtaking you or waiting at a junction is ready if they turn without warning or try to pull out in front of you.

Assume the worst
Always ride with the assumption that motorists will turn or change position without indicating, as this does happen more frequently than people would like to admit. The result could be from a small nuisance to a collision and a fatality. The classic scenario is when the car accelerates fast past you and then turns left without warning. Always be aware, and suspicious, of your surroundings.



Bad habits with technology
As people get comfortable with cycling, they tend to pick up bad habits. With traffic always being unpredictable, even the smallest of bad habits could lead to a serious injury or worse, fatality. Do not cycle whilst listening to music, you might not hear other traffic around you. Using your phone can be dangerous too, speaking on the phone can distract you from your surroundings and texting might mean you miss seeing a vehicle pull out in front of you.



Bad habits with patience and behaviour
Road safety depends heavily on predictability of traffic. Simple behaviour such as skipping a red light, cycling across a pavement, cutting across a roundabout or not indicating is incredibly dangerous. If a driver is not expecting a cyclist to ride in front of them, then they may not be able to react quick enough if a cyclist does. Be patient, abide the laws, and signal. Failure to do so could cost you more than a £30 fine.

Cyclist Accidents

It's an unfortunate experience to have been through, or even witness, but it is best to be prepared for when it happens...

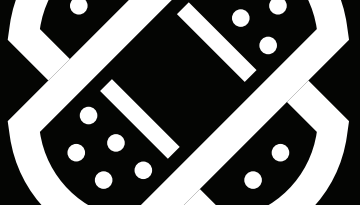


Note the registration number / details of any offending vehicle.

Take the drivers details.

Note the time, date and location.

Report the incident to the police either at a police station, or by ringing them up. Note when you spoke to them and who to.



If you're on the ground and still mobile, get out of the path of other traffic. Don't ride off straight away, even if you think you're uninjured.

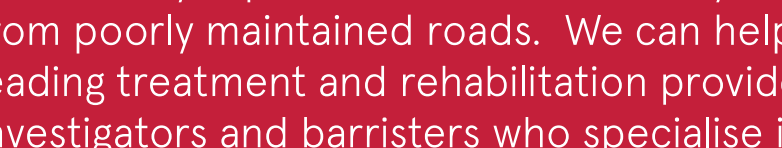
Never admit fault or discuss what happened with the driver. What you say could be used to your disadvantage later in proceedings.

Get help and enlist sympathetic passers-by. They might have seen what happened and could provide valuable witness evidence. Take notes of the driver / vehicle and other factors.

Alert the police - and ambulance if necessary. Say that you've been run down. The incident should then be logged.

When you have left the scene of the accident, and depending on the severity of what happens next, it might be a good idea to talk to a solicitor:

You'll want to be confident that the people you speak to understand cyclists and know the issues you face. We've successfully represented hundreds of cyclists who have suffered injury due to the carelessness of other road users or from poorly maintained roads. We can help to get you the compensation you deserve. We have partnerships with leading treatment and rehabilitation providers, together with specialist practitioners, cycle specialist accident investigators and barristers who specialise in this work.



Members of our team are not only personal injury experts, they're also cyclists themselves.

Access Legal from Shoosmiths
Call us on 0808 256 5548
www.access-legal.co.uk