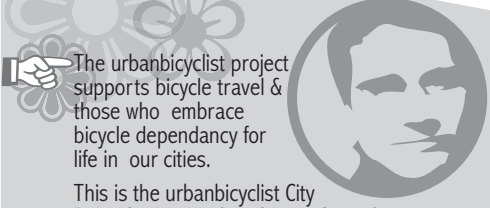


city rider guide



The urbanbicyclist project supports bicycle travel & those who embrace bicycle dependency for life in our cities.

This is the urbanbicyclist City Rider Guide. It's full of hints & tips for urban cyclists who use bicycles for transport on the streets in traffic.

We've learnt this from experience to help you ride more confidently & freely.

Urbanbicycling is more than just "commuting". You can get around the city like no other vehicle. Now let cycling become an integral part of the way you live.

You don't need expensive gear or training to ride in the city, all you need is a bicycle & an open mind.

Learning to beat traffic & get around is empowering, experience it for yourself.

urbanbicyclist e-newsletter
Monthly city bike info, tips & news.
news@urbanbicyclist.org "subscribe"

critical mass monthly rides
The core of the inner city bike scene.
5:30pm Last Friday Every Month
State Library, cnr LaTrobe St & Swanston St
www.criticalmass.org.au

the urbanbicyclist project
urbanbicyclist@urbanbicyclist.org
gpo box 986 melbourne 3001

Source www.epa.vic.gov.au

rubber tyre fragments
methane
benzene
particulate matter
volatile organic compounds
carbon monoxide
carbon dioxide

air pollution

volatile organic compounds
Benzene & methane; carcinogenic to humans as well as powerful greenhouse gases.

gases
Carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide can replace oxygen on your haemoglobin molecules, decreasing cellular respiration and release of energy.

particles
Very small pieces of carbon, grit and trees, that clog up your lungs.

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urbanbicyclist city rider guide

tackling roundabouts

bikes are fun



Roundabouts are installed by **traffic engineers** to reduce car crashes. In doing this they put pedestrians and bicyclists at **greater risk!** Be extra cautious at dawn and dusk.

! take the lane!

Before you reach the roundabout, move into the **middle of the lane**.

As you enter, look around, **make eye contact** with other drivers & **prepare for evasive action!**

! single lane roundabouts

Watch out for cars on your left who may not give way to you
Give way to cars on your right.

! turning right

signal to ensure cars don't think you're going straight.

! turning at multi lane roundabouts

be wary of cars going straight from behind or beside you.

Do a **hook turn** or break the turn up into stages if you need to.

If you're with a friend you can legally take **both lanes**.

Consider **avoiding the roundabout** by taking another route.

urbanbicyclist city rider guide

dodging doors in da city

bikes are fun

scoring the door prize

Parked cars can be more dangerous than moving ones. Car doors are da number one cause of bike accidents in da city.

! it's illegal to open doors into traffik

! to avoid doors look:

- through car windows for **heads**
- in **mirrors** of trucks and vans
- at cars that have just **parked**
- at cars' **tail lights**

! riding in the door zone

If you can't see into cars, ride **slower** or move out of the door zone. **be aware of what's behind** you if you have to swerve out.

! take a lane if you're being forced into the door zone

! if a door opens in front of you!

Don't waste your time fiddling with a horn or bell, **go for your brakes & scream!**

Move out but don't swing into **traffik**.

! if you get hit

If you get doored & **injured** or damage results, it is a traffic accident & details must be exchanged.

Report uncooperative motorists to the **police**.



urbanbicyclist city rider guide

dealing with road rage

what is 'road rage'

Cyclists are more vulnerable to assault than other road users. Cars can become weapons. Seemingly benign "road rage", such as driving too close to bicyclists can be life threatening.

! what is road rage

Road Rage is driving-related impulsive violence between strangers. (Victorian Parliament Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee Discussion Paper May 2004)

! it's caused by a range of factors

A manifestation of increased traffic congestion, economic & social **stress** due to uncertainty & insecurity.

Drivers perceive **anonymity** in their cars & behave in a way that they would not normally.

Society as a whole is becoming more **violent**, and people's behaviour in traffic is no exception.

Drivetime talkback **shock jocks** become lone voices of authority in **socially isolated** traffic situations. Their **anti-cyclist** monologues, **brainwash** drivers!

! what you can do

When faced with aggressive drivers: Don't escalate the situation, road ragers are not good listeners.

- Find **escape routes** in traffic

- Seek **witnesses & number plates**

If you are assaulted it is a criminal offence, report it to the **police**.



locking your bike in da city

urbanbicyclist city rider guide

if you want it to be there when you get back

! which lock to use?

get a good d-lock or armoured cable, the more you spend, the better the lock.

check your lock before leaving. can be lifted out of the ground.

remove your lights etc or secure with super glue or cable ties.

disguise the value of your bike with stickers, tape & inner tubes or even a fake DIRT rusty paint job.

replace quick releases with bolts or secure with hose clamps.

engrave your bike your local police can help.

if your bike is stolen! report it immediately to the police

visit with a photo/description of your bike.

traffic accident!

what to do when you have a

in 6 easy to follow steps

! you will go into shock

ensure the scene is safe before taking further action. You must give assistance to any injured person. Call for police & an ambulance if required. Dial 000 on any phone.

write down the number plate and a description of the drivers.

before people leave Collect names & phone numbers of as many witnesses as you can.

exchange names, addresses, vehicle registration & owner details with all involved. Get the name of their insurance company as well.

record all this on paper keep a copy for yourself

what you can do it's legal for bikes to pass on the left & turn.

riding behaviour Steer wide of people. Watch out for drunk people who may lunge at you. Look for car headlights at side streets and from behind.

being reflective Add reflective material, tape and stickers to your helmet, clothing, shoes, bike and bags.

lights Use front beam lights to see and flashing lights to be seen. Lights on your helmet are more visible.

the behaviour of others Don't buy lights that require a screwdriver to change batteries. Keep spare batteries in a puncture kit.

your bike is a vehicle You must wear an approved helmet. You must wear a "warning device" like a bell or horn.

the Victorian road rules Most are similar for bikes 'n cars but there are some exceptions. This is not a full statement of the road rules.

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what you can do it's legal for bikes to pass on the left &



for women!

www.cyclingsisters.org

- ❗ **don't get stranded!**
To **avoid being stuck** out late at night. Learn some basic bike maintenance and carry tools.
- ❗ **the bike shop / bike mechanic**
Don't tolerate patronising treatment, **stand your ground**. Sometimes the best solution is to **find a female** mechanic or assistant.
- ❗ **bike fit**
Most bikes are **made to fit men**. Generally, women have **longer legs & shorter torsos**. Look for women's bikes with **shorter top tubes** or get a **shorter stem**.
- ❗ **anatomically correct seats**
Are made for men & women. **get the one** that's right for you.
- ❗ **biking with kids**
Child seats, trailers & trail-a-bikes (attached to your bike) can be used to **carry kids of varying sizes**.
- ❗ **clothes for riding & work**
Find **crumple tolerant clothes** for transporting to **work**. Find **comfy clothes** to ride & hang out in when you're **not at work**.
- ❗ **start a women's cycling club**
It's encouraging to **ride with other women**. Events can include rides, workshops, races & social events. See www.cyclingsisters.org

whats wrong with 4wd's!



www.nosuv.org

research by monash university
Accident Research Centre has proven 4WD's are safer for owners & **more dangerous** to others.

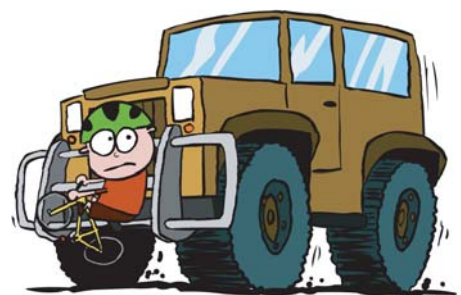
4WD'ers are at a lower risk of **death or serious injury** in a crash by 4 in 1000. Driving a 4WD increases the chance of **killing or hospitalising others** by a factor of 11 in 1000. Monash University Accident Research Centre

❗ **for every death or serious injury that is saved by buying a 4wd nearly three more result.**

4WD'ers are making themselves safer, at greater **expense to others**.

❗ **4wd drivers are dangerous**

To the natural & street environment, making them **more dangerous** to others & you. **watch out!**

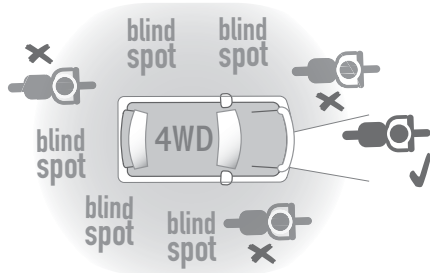


The Ride in from Tourac

dealing with bike shops!

comments please draft draft

- ❗ **develop a relationship** with your **local** bike shop
- ❗ **do they make you feel happy?** Are you **happy**? Do you know what they've done to **your bike**?
- ❗ **can you see the workshop?** Do you know **who worked on your bike**?
- ❗ **you and your bike guru**
Find a **bike shop or mechanic** you trust. Ask for practical help or **spiritual advice** from explaining your gearing, fitting your bike. Remember that wherever you ride, there you are!
- ❗ **the bike shop / bike mechanic**
It's okay not to be an expert in every tiny detail. There are **no stupid questions**, only stupid answers.



tips for bike messengers

www.messengers.org

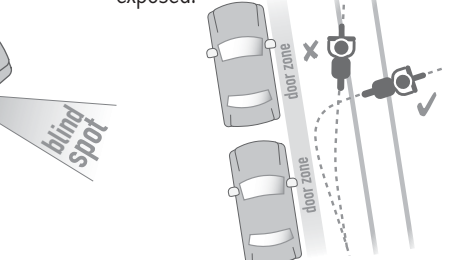
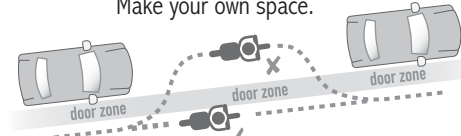
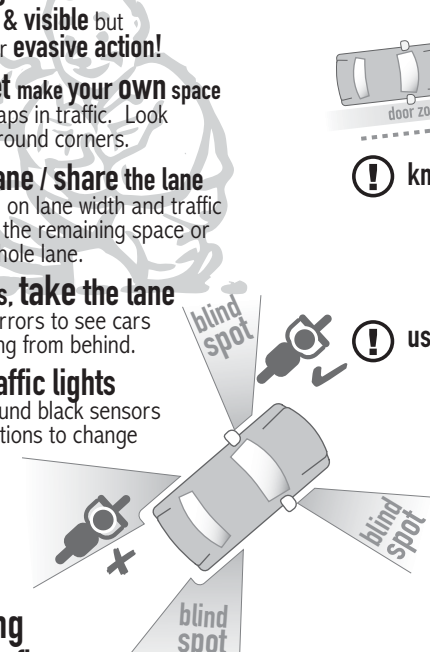
- messengers automatically adjust speed & trajectory** in reaction to obstacles. Only problem is when some obstacles start to **accelerate** or move **backwards**. When it comes to obeying the **laws of physics**, there's no question, **everything else is secondary**.
- ❗ **smiling is a useful tool**
A **good attitude** will help face a daily onslaught of cops, taxi drivers & receptionists who've been **media programmed** to make your job as difficult as possible.
- ❗ **don't call in jobs early**
You'll look like a **twat** if you can't drop a job & you need to call back.
- ❗ **catch closing lifts with your feet**
your feet are more protected & wider than your hands. Then use your hands to deal with unresponsive doors.
- ❗ **when lifts are slow**
Press higher floors on your way up & **call the lift** before you drop/collect jobs to meet the lifts on your way down.
- ❗ **organise!**
join or start your own bma to protect & fight for better pay & conditions. See www.sfbma.org



riding in da traffick

just like spike bike

- ❗ **urbanbicyclists** quickly learn to beat traffic to get around safely & quickly. Morons often yell at cyclists from their cars, this is why we have such thick skins.
- ❗ **when riding in traffic be: confident & visible** but prepare for **evasive action!**
- ❗ **use the street** make your **OWN** space
Look for gaps in traffic. Look ahead & around corners.
- ❗ **take the lane / share the lane**
Depending on lane width and traffic speed use the remaining space or take the whole lane.
- ❗ **on fast roads, take the lane**
Use car mirrors to see cars approaching from behind.
- ❗ **changing traffic lights**
Ride on round black sensors at intersections to change the lights.
- ❗ **positioning in the traffic flow**
be aware of drivers' **blind spots** next to their back doors. Use vehicles for cover at intersections.



❗ **if you hug the gutter you'll get squeezed out!**
Don't weave in and out of empty car parking spaces to stay close to the gutter, keep a straight line. Make your own space.

❗ **know whats behind you**
Look for gaps in the traffic pattern & immediate street environment such as spaces between parked cars, kerbs and buildings for a hasty exit from da traffick.

❗ **use hook turns at intersections**
if a normal right hand turn leaves you exposed.

❗ **cross tram tracks at wide angles.**
Good riding helps more than fatter tyres for staying upright over tracks.

get out of the bike lane!

i parked in a bike lane and all i got was this lousy sticker

- ❗ **are they allowed to do that?**
Parking in bike lanes is not illegal per se but if a car is double parked (\$60) or in a no stopping (no standing - \$100) zone then it is illegally parked.
- ❗ **what you can do!**
phone your local council on the 24 hour numbers below. **in dangerous situations call 000** ask for police.
- city of melbourne 9658 9638** 24hr
(CBD, Southbank, Carlton, North Melb, Kensington, Flemington, East Melb)
- city of yarra 9205 5555** 24hr
(Richmond, Fitzroy, Collingwood, Abbotsford, Clifton Hill)
- city of port phillip 9209 6777** 24hr
(St Kilda, South Melb, Port Melb, Albert Park, Middle Park, Elwood)
- city of stonnington 8517 0533** 24hr
(South Yarra, Prahran, Windsor, Toorak, Armadale, Malvern)
- police** can monitor problem areas call 9247 6666 for your station.

❗ **dear driver "can't park 'ere!"**
You are illegally parked in a bike lane. This endangers others by forcing cyclists into traffic. You may receive a fine for \$60 - \$100. Do not park here again!

riding in wet weather

complete series online

- ❗ **preparing your bike**
invest in a good set of mudguards to keep you and your bike clean. **make your own** mudguards using drink bottles or plastic folders. Keep a **plastic bag** stuffed under your seat for waterproofing when parking in the rain. **squeeze your brakes gently** before stopping to clear water off the rims. **clean your brakes & rims** after rain.
- ❗ **what to carry**
Get a good **waterproof jacket**, don't compromise on style! **spray your shoes** & bag with waterproof sealant. **carry spare socks** in a plastic bag or just wear sandals. Keep a **change of clothes** at work/uni.
- ❗ **get a good bag**
Use **plastic bags** for your books etc.
- ❗ **riding in the wet**
watch out for slippery metal like grates & covers, especially if turning. **beware!** Puddles may be deeper than they seem. Remember you & others will have a **longer braking distance**. Getting hairy? Turn your **lights on!**

care for your bicycle

clean your bike and keep your bike clean

❗ **a clean bike is a happy bike**
This is the best way to minimise wear & offset **costly repairs**. **prevention** is better (& cheaper) than **cure!**

❗ **bicycle quick check over**
Do this often & see your mechanic if you find anything needing attention.

❗ **or be your own mechanic**
This **saves money** & ensures your bike is always adjusted well. **take a class**, or buy some tools & get a friend to teach you the basics.

❗ **general checkup**
Your seat & post should be done up **tight & not rattle or shift**. **replace rusty or frayed cables**. **bounce** the bike gently to check for loose parts & rattles. The bottom bracket/pedals shouldn't rattle.

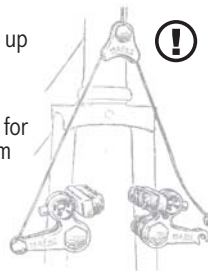
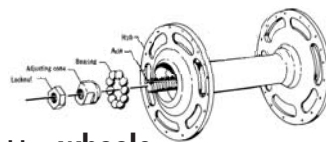
❗ **checking brakes**
clean your rims & brakepads, so they work better & last longer. Are your rims & brakepads **worn down**? Do they **line up** properly? Brake levers **shouldn't touch** your grips when squeezed. Squeeze your brakes and push your bike forward. They should **grab firmly** without squealing.

❗ **checking wheels**
Are your **tyres worn out**? Squeeze **your tyres**, they should be **hard** not squishy. When you **wiggle** your wheel sideways it **shouldn't rattle**. When you **spin** the wheel it **shouldn't wobble** sideways.

❗ **checking gears**
If your chain is squeaking, **oil it!** **too much oil** attracts dirt and makes a greasy mess. Cogs & chainrings shouldn't be **pointy & sharp**. Sharp teeth mean chainrings & cogs need **replacing**.

❗ **clean your chain**
Back pedal it through a rag or chain cleaner. Use **orange citrus degreaser** or **kerosene** from the supermarket. **oil the chain** slightly after cleaning it. Keep your derailleurs, jockey wheels clear of clotted grease & dirt with an **old toothbrush**.

❗ **a well maintained bicycle is fun to ride & can last a long time.**
Like your body, a bit of love & preventative care can make a big difference. At the **first sign of trouble**, take your bike to your **professional guru mechanic**.



top tips for gear phreaks!

www.messengers.org

- ❗ **getting a good bag**
messenger bags are good if you need things out of it often, even **without taking it off**. **backpacks** are better for **heavier loads**. **panniers** are good if you don't like things **on your back**. Does your bag have **reflective** & a place to keep your lock?
- ❗ **getting a good helmet**
Look for a helmet with an **inmoulded shell** not just one that is taped on. A good helmet should **suit your face** like a good pair of glasses. It should make you feel like you **look good & be comfortable**
- ❗ **getting a good jacket**
A good **waterproof & windproof** jacket will help you get everywhere. Does the jacket have **long enough arms** for your riding position? Is it **reflective**?
- ❗ **getting the right shoes**
Get a shoe with a **stiff sole** for easier pedalling. Even if you don't have special bike shoes. **tie your laces** up & tuck them away. Clean your shoes, they'll last longer.

❗ **use hook turns at intersections**
if a normal right hand turn leaves you exposed. Still working on this diagram...



this is a work in progress

We wanna hear what you have to say. If this was left on your bike in the street somewhere, please let us know! So get out your red pen & draw all over this.

Comments, ideas, confusion? Anything missing or needing a picture?

You are the expert, you ride on the street, this guide is for you!

If you send us your corrected copy of the **city rider guide** we'll send you a bunch of updated copies with your changes corrected & some cool stickers for your time and effort! Or just e-mail us some small ideas! lots of love and kisses...

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