

Bicycle safety



Bicycles are very fast so they can be dangerous unless they are ridden correctly. To be safe on their bicycles cyclists should always:

- wear a helmet
- wear brightly coloured clothes so they can be seen easily
- use lights in the dark
- maintain their bicycle so that the brakes work and all the parts run smoothly
- learn the highway code and obey the rules of the road

Helmets

Cyclists should always wear a safety helmet. A helmet protects a rider's head in an accident. Without a helmet a fall from a bicycle can lead to serious head injuries. A good helmet is very light and has air holes to keep the rider cool.

Clothing

Clothing must keep a cyclist warm and dry without making him or her overheat. Bright colours are easily seen by motorists and help with safety.

Light

Bicycle lights must be used when riding at night. The front light is white and the back light is red.

Maintenance

Regular maintenance keeps a bicycle safe and running smoothly. Brakes should be checked and worn brake blocks replaced. The chain should be cleaned and lubricated. Modern bicycle parts should not be oiled too much. The oil attracts dirt and grit which wears the parts out quickly.



Cycling proficiency

The cycling proficiency test checks children's basic cycling and road user skills. Children are trained to get on and off a bicycle safely, to give the correct signals and to obey the rules of the road. They learn how to check that their brakes are working properly and when they need lights. They must answer questions about road signs and the highway code. When they pass they receive a badge and a certificate.



Answer in sentences.

- 1 Why is it sensible for people to wear brightly coloured clothes when they are riding a bicycle in traffic?
- 2 Why should cyclists wear a safety helmet?
- 3 Would it be good advice or bad advice if someone told you to oil your bicycle every day? Why?
- 4 Give three reasons why it is a good idea to pass your cycling proficiency test before you ride a bicycle in traffic.
- 5 Which bicycle light is red, the front or the back light?
- 6 Which word in the passage means "keeping in good working order"?
- 7 What word could you use instead of "lubricated" in the following sentence?

The chain should be cleaned and lubricated.