

BIKE SMART ATLANTIC BEACH

A GUIDE FOR
SAFELY
GETTING FROM
HERE TO THERE
BY BICYCLE



#BIKESMARTAB

#BikeSmartAB

Bicycling is one of the best ways to get exercise, see the sights and reduce your carbon footprint. However, bicyclists face a host of hazards. They often must share the road with vehicles, and injuries can happen even on a designated path.

The number of deaths from bicycle incidents increased 29% over an eight-year period, from 793 in 2010 to 1,024 in 2017, according to Injury Facts. Of the 1,024 bicyclist deaths in 2017, 679 involved motor vehicles.

With about 80 million bicyclists sharing the road with motorized vehicles, it is vital bicyclists – and drivers – take some safety precautions.



That's why, in June 2020, the City of Atlantic Beach launched a four-part bicycle safety campaign.

1. Basic bicycle safety education for riders

We're calling our bicycle safety campaign in Atlantic Beach "#BikeSmartAB. You'll see us on social media, in classrooms, in the community, in the news media, and online at www.coab.us/bikesmart.

2. Helmet promotion

Here's a comprehensive outline of crucial info on helmets:

<https://helmets.org/workshop.htm>

3. Driver education

We're calling this component of our bicycle safety campaign, "Look Twice, Drive Nice in AB." This is an effort to make drivers more aware of cyclists, and pre-conditioning them to react properly to a cyclist on the roadway.

4. Facilities improvement

With wider sidewalks and flashing crossing lights, the City is making it safer for bicyclists and pedestrians. There's more to do – widen more sidewalks, install more flashing crosswalk signs, traffic calming, etc., from a traffic engineering standpoint to encourage

cars to proceed at reasonable speeds so that pedestrians and bicycles are not threatened.



How Can Drivers Keep Cyclists Safe?

- Drivers MUST give bicyclists a minimum of three feet of clearance when driving alongside or passing them. It's the law.
- When turning, yield to any bicyclist in the bike lane and make your turn behind the cyclist.
- Before opening a car door, check for bicyclists who may be approaching from behind.

The far hand reach, or Dutch reach, is a simple technique that will stop you and your passengers from opening your vehicle door in front of an oncoming vehicle, cyclist or pedestrian. This works for streets, sidewalks and parking lots.

LEARN THE FAR-HAND REACH

Cyclists, Check Your Equipment

Always inspect your bike prior to riding.

- The seat should be adjusted to the proper height and locked in place
- Make certain all parts are secure and working properly
- Check that the tires are inflated properly
- Make sure the bike is equipped with reflectors on the rear, front, pedals and spokes
- A horn or bell, a rear-view mirror and a bright headlight also are recommended

Plan to Be Seen

Make certain drivers can see you.

- Wear neon, fluorescent or other bright clothing
- Whenever possible, ride during the day
- If you must ride at night, wear reflective clothing and use flashing lights

Wear a Helmet

Helmets appropriate for bicycling should be worn by everyone – adults and children – on every bike ride regardless of length of the ride. Make certain the helmet is [certified by the Consumer Product Safety Commission](#).

Follow these [guidelines from NHTSA](#) to properly fit the helmet:

- Adjust sizing pads or fit ring until the helmet is snug
- Position the helmet level on your head, covering the forehead and not tipped backward or forward; this will be about one to two finger widths above the eyebrow
- Adjust the side straps so they form a “V” shape under and slightly in front of your ears
- Center the buckle on the chin strap under your chin
- Buckle and tighten the chin strap until it is snug; no more than one to two fingers should be able to fit between the chin and strap
- When fitted, the helmet should not rock more than 1 inch side to side or front to back on your head
- Watch [Fitting a Bicycle Helmet](#)



Follow These Rules of the Road

Stay safe by following these rules:

- All bicycle riders and passengers under age 16 are required by Florida Law to wear a helmet. Always wear a properly fitted helmet and securely fasten the strap.
- Pay attention. Do not wear headphones so that you can hear the traffic and pedestrians around you. Never text and ride.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic and stay as far to the right as possible. Use bike lanes whenever you can.

- Obey all traffic laws, including signs, signals and lane markings, when riding on the roadway. If crossing a roadway upon or along a crosswalk, abide by pedestrian crossing guidelines.
- If riding between the hours of sunset and sunrise, Florida Law requires that the front of the bike be equipped with a headlight lamp which exhibits a white light visible for 500 feet, and the rear of the bike equipped with a taillight lamp and reflector visible for 600 feet.
- Cross at intersections and never pull out into the roadway from between parked cars.
- If riding on the sidewalk or in a crosswalk, yield to pedestrians and give them an audible signal (such as, "passing on your left") before overtaking and passing them.
- Get acquainted with traffic laws; bicyclists must follow the same rules as motorists
- Ride single-file in the direction of traffic
- Remain alert, keep your head up and look around; watch for opening car doors and other hazards
- Use hand signals when turning and use extra care at intersections
- Never hitch onto cars
- Before entering traffic, stop and look left, right, left again and over your shoulder

Pedestrian Safety Tips

- Always walk on the sidewalk if there is one. If no sidewalks are present, walk against the direction of traffic so that you can see oncoming vehicles.
- Always cross the roadway where pedestrians are expected, at corners or in crosswalks. Always watch for traffic when crossing the street.
- Be seen. Wear bright, reflective colors on clothes, shoes, hats and wristbands. Carry a flashlight when walking at night.
- Pay attention. Avoid wearing headphones so that you can hear the traffic and pedestrians around you. Never text or look at your cell phone when crossing the street.
- Follow pedestrian signs and signals. Pedestrians should yield right of way to vehicles if the crosswalk signal is red or "Don't Walk."

May is National Bike Month

During National Bike Month, cycling enthusiasts across the country celebrate the many benefits of cycling.

[The League of American Bicyclists](#), which advocates for a "Bicycle Friendly America," sponsors Bike Month each year. The 32-page [National Bike Month Guide](#) has everything

you need to plan a Bike Month event in your community. The League's [Ride Smart program](#) also is a great resource for educational videos, classes, tips and other information about bike safety.

Other Resources

- [Bike Riding Safety video \(NHTSA\)](#)
- [How Bikeable is Your Community? \(NHTSA\)](#)