



Even though you may want to ride a bike to school, the store, a friend's house, or your job, your parents may not think it's safe. So, schools all over Sonoma County are asking Safe Routes to Schools to train their students to be certified in bike safety. Completing this course is like driver's ed for bikes. By the end you'll be an expert on traffic law, avoiding accidents, and choosing safe routes for biking wherever you decide to go. In fact, by the end you'll probably know more about bike safety than your parents do. If you get a chance, quiz them on what we're about to cover.

Lesson Calendar

- Day 1: Bike Safety Skills Talk Part 1
- Day 2: Bike Safety Skills Talk Part 2
- Day 3: Helmets and Know Your Bike

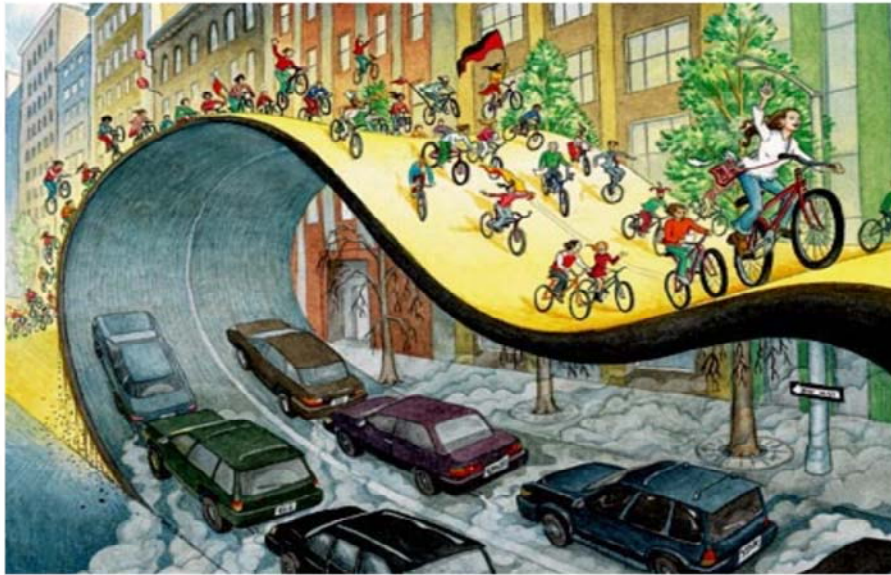
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Bike Safety Part 1: Today We Discuss

- Fears and Greats → What do you think?
- Bicycle Commuting → Who rides to school?
- Bike Safety → What is the reality?
- Accidents & Hazards → Keeping it safe.
- Shoulder Check → How and Why?

By the time you are 10 years old you have the size and ability to ride in the street. We want to make sure you have the knowledge to ride safely. A big part of what we want you to remember is to be predictable. If the drivers can make a good guess about what you are going to do then they will do their best to avoid you. When you are visible and following the rules of the road you are being predictable. This unit will teach you the skills you need to be a predictable rider. It will help you to make smart choices as a rider. Those decisions will help keep you safe on the road. Our unit today is going to begin covering the basics of street riding. That includes: fears and greats, bicycle commuting, the reality of bike safety, accidents and hazards, and the over the shoulder check.

FEARS AND GREATS



What makes people scared when they think about riding a bike in the street?
(Take about 5 minutes and get students to give a few examples of their fears. If possible, keep a list on the white board, some examples are: being hit by a car, being chased by a dog, crashing, losing control, getting a flat tire)

Why Biking is Great !!!



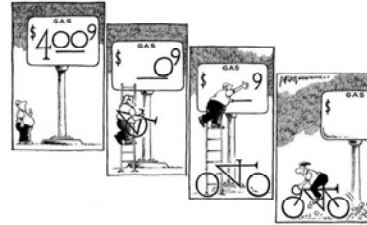
What's great about bikes? (See if the students can guess what each "M" is for.)

These are the five M's: Mind – biking makes you proud, happy, alert, see new things, exercise your mind, you have freedom. Mother Earth- - no air pollution, no water pollution, noise pollution, no global warming, doesn't cause road kill (Raise your hand if you've seen dead animals on the road). Mobility – you can go where you like with out a license, easy to park, can you take your car on the bus? Muscle – you get exercise, keeps u healthy & strong & looking good! don't have to go to the gym or worry about your weight if you ride your bike to school/work. Money –no gas, no bus fare, no parking tickets, no insurance/ registration, cost of bike vs. car, repair cost

Bicycle Commuting Statistics

Saves Money

--Every time you ride a bike, you save \$ on gas...plus 40% of all trips are under 2 miles, a very bikeable distance (saferoutesinfo.org)

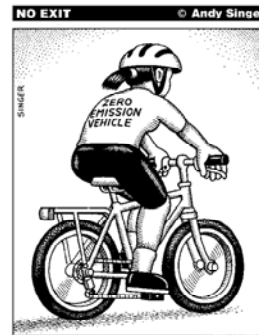


Good for Your Health

--Dept of Health and Human services recommends 60 min of physical activity per day for children (saferoutesinfo.org)

Good for The Environment

--60% of Sonoma County's Total carbon emissions are due to transportation (Sonoma County Community Climate Action Plan)



Read bicycle commuting statistics, then discuss: who rides to school and why/why not? Ask who lives under 2 miles to school-do they bike/walk to school, why/why not? Measuring daily bicycle ridership, ask class each day and chart it (contest for classes to have certain percentage ride to school-optional)

For those who ride to school, do you feel safe? Why/Why not?

How can we make our school a better place to bike to? Write their ideas down (some examples are: safe bike parking, cutting down on traffic)

-talk about route selection-lower traffic streets/street conditions/Safer Routes map-)

-does learning about bikes in school get more students to ride to school?



Safety Reality

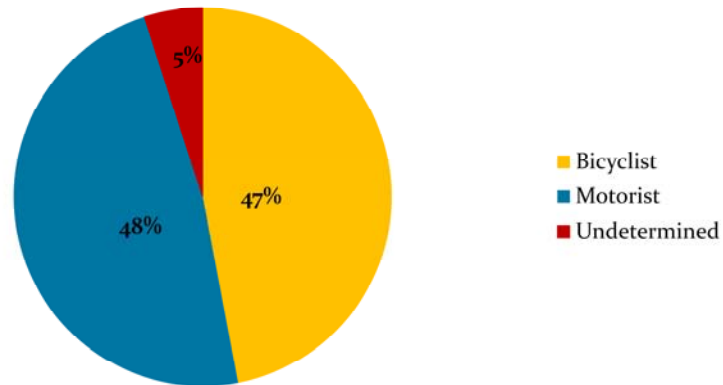


- Hit and killed by lightning: 1:500,000
- Child is overweight or obese 1:3
- Child has asthma 1:7
- Death from heart disease 1:5
- Killed next year in car accident 1:7,700
- Killed next year while walking 1:92,000
- Abducted by stranger 1:610,000
- Killed next year while riding bicycle 1:720,000

The fact is that the risk of chronic illness and disease is far greater than any of the other risks facing you. In fact, the things we can control pose more of a threat to our health and well being than the things we cannot control. This is great news! It means we can make choices for ourselves about exercise and food that can give us a healthier, happier and longer life. When we look at facts, we can deescalate our fears and start supporting each other in building the community we want.

Crash Statistics

Who is at fault?

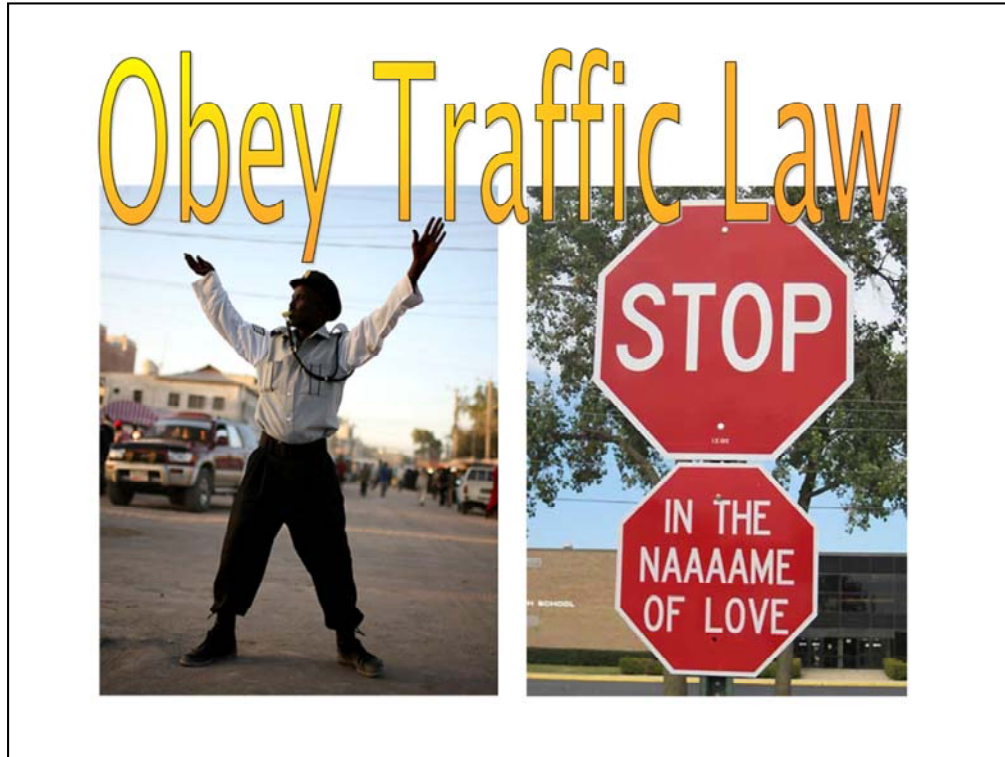


This graph shows that about 50% of all crashes are under your control as a cyclist. And even though half appear to be the fault of the motorist, there is still a lot you can do to prevent yourself from being in a situation where a conflict occurs between you and a motorist. What do you think are some things you could do to lower your risk of being in a crash? (take a couple of examples before segueing into the next section).

Accidents and Hazards



Now we're going to look at some of the most common ways young people get in bike accidents...discuss this slide, how could the rider be safer? (wear bright clothing, both hands on handlebars and brakes, wear appropriate rain gear, wear helmet)



Not stopping at STOP SIGNS,

You need to put your foot down, wait for your turn and look both ways before you cross. Bikes have to follow all the same rules of the road that drivers do. That means you have to follow all the same rules including stopping at all Stop lights and signs. In the eyes of the law a bike is a moving vehicle. Not only is it dangerous but you can get a ticket for running a stop sign or a light just like a car driver.

Ride On the Right



Riding on the wrong side of the road is the most common cause of bike accidents.

It is important to go the same direction as traffic. Drivers are not looking for vehicles going the wrong way they are not looking for you so they have a hard time seeing you. You may not have time or space to jump out of the way. Always ride on the right side of the road, the same direction as traffic. You are 14x more likely to be in an accident riding on the wrong side of the road. You are 7x more likely to be in an accident riding on the sidewalk facing traffic and 5x more likely to be in an accident riding on the sidewalk going in the same direction as traffic. You are the very safest riding in the road going the same direction as traffic.

Stop Before Exiting Driveways



Not looking to see if it's clear when exiting a drive way is the cause of many accidents.

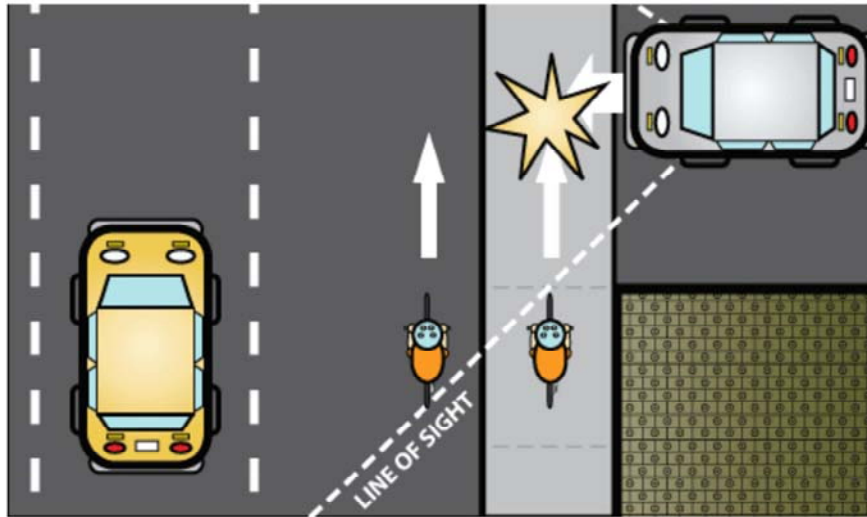
Just like when you cross the street as a pedestrian you need to look left, look right and left again before entering the road. This way you are taking charge of your safety. Don't count on drivers seeing you or stopping. Wait to go until you know it is safe.

Avoid Sidewalks



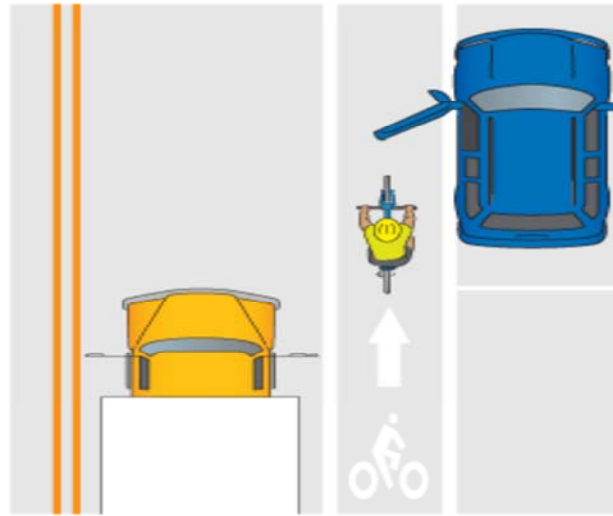
And believe it or not riding on the sidewalk is one of most common causes for bike accidents. Old people, garbage cans, children in strollers, skateboards, scooters and pets can all be found on the sidewalk. There is a lot of trouble you can cause by riding on the sidewalk.

Avoid Sidewalks



Drivers coming in and out of driveways have a hard time seeing bikes. Also, when bicyclists who are riding on the sidewalk, cross the street, it is very common for them to ride right into the street without looking or stopping first at the corner. Can you imagine what could happen if someone did this?

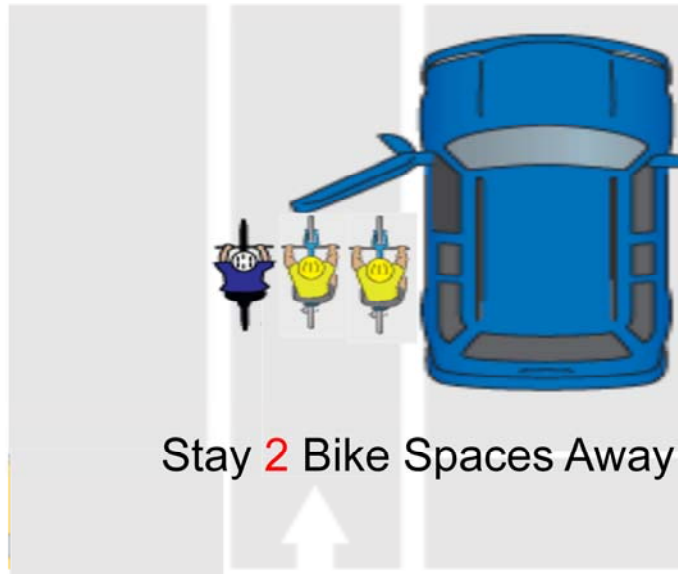
The Door Zone



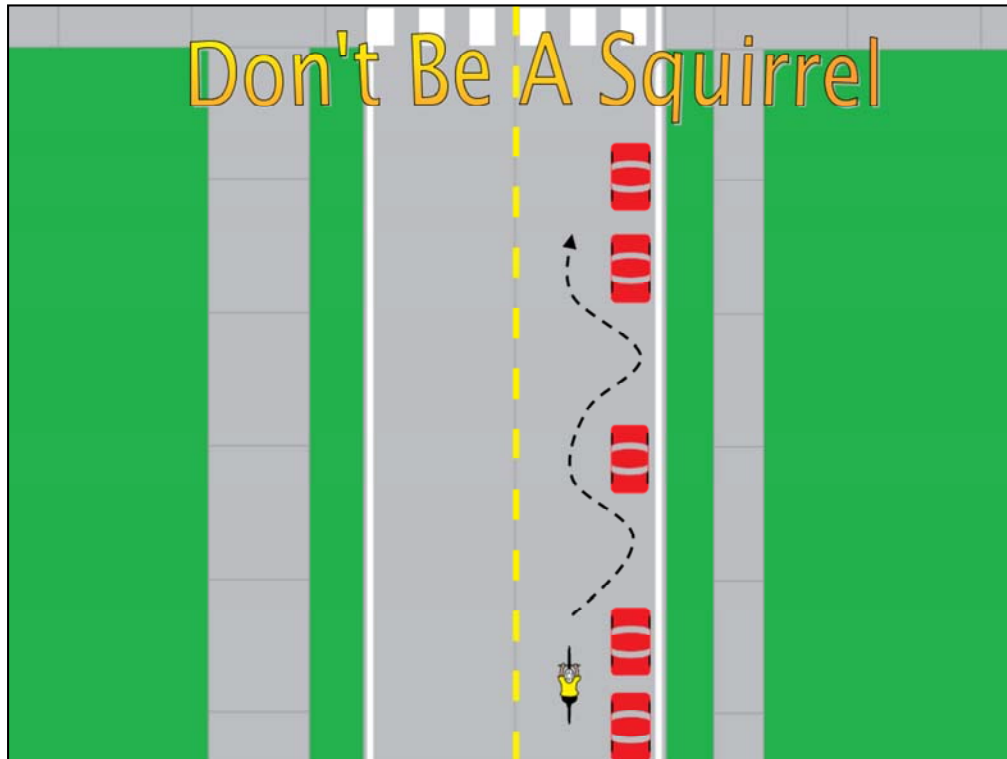
When you are riding in the street, there are other hazards you need to watch out for.

Does anyone have a guess as to what the door zone is?

The Door Zone



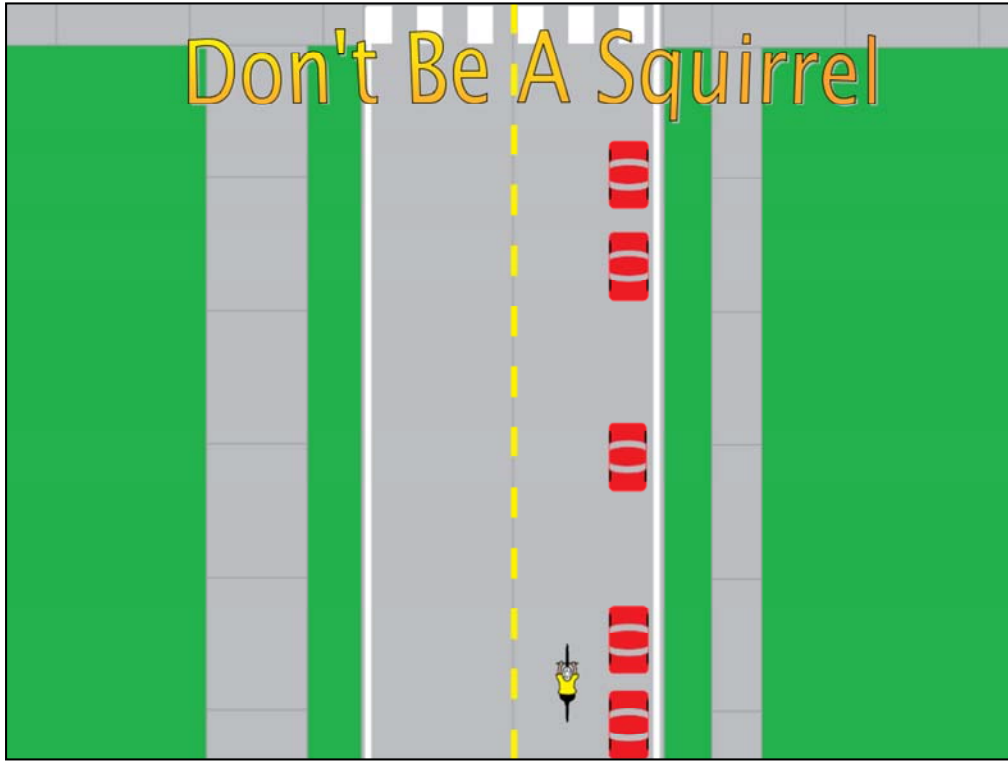
The door zone is the space just to the left of parked cars where a car door can open. Parked drivers do not always look before they open the door to step out. Even if it is their mistake you are the one who gets hurt. It is important to ride out of the 'door zone' You want to ride where there is enough space so you don't get hit, out where the third bicyclist out is riding. Keep an eye out for people sitting in parked cars so you can avoid them if they step out or pull away from the curb without looking.



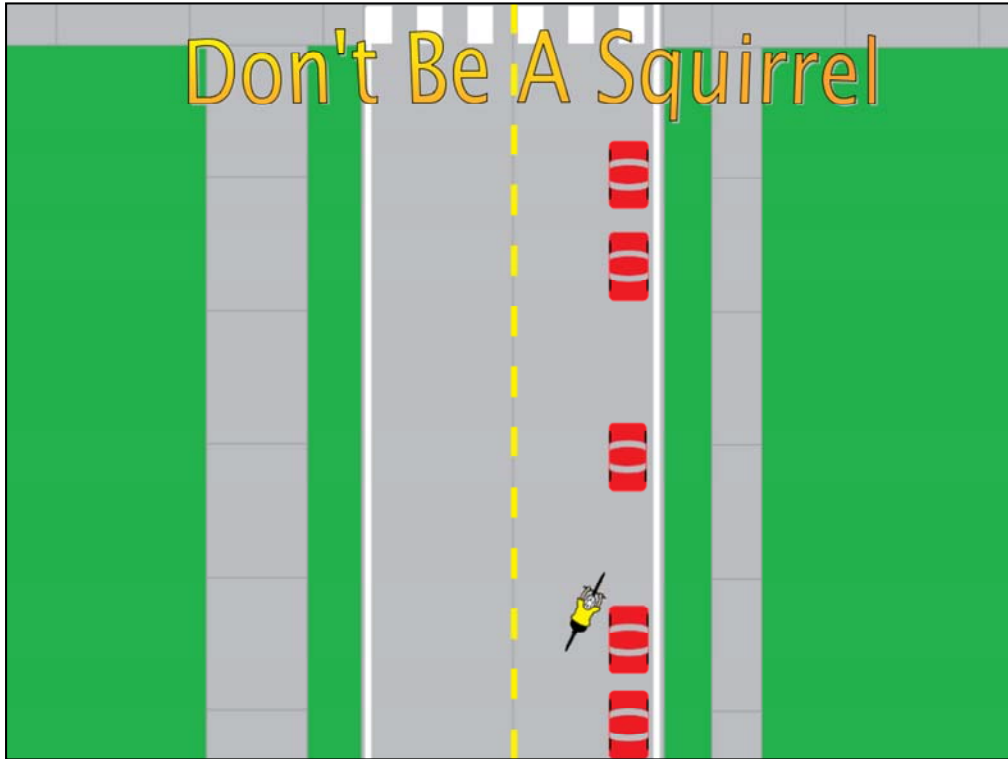
Squirrel riding.

Has anyone ever ridden a bike like this? – this is called squirrel riding and its totally dangerous.

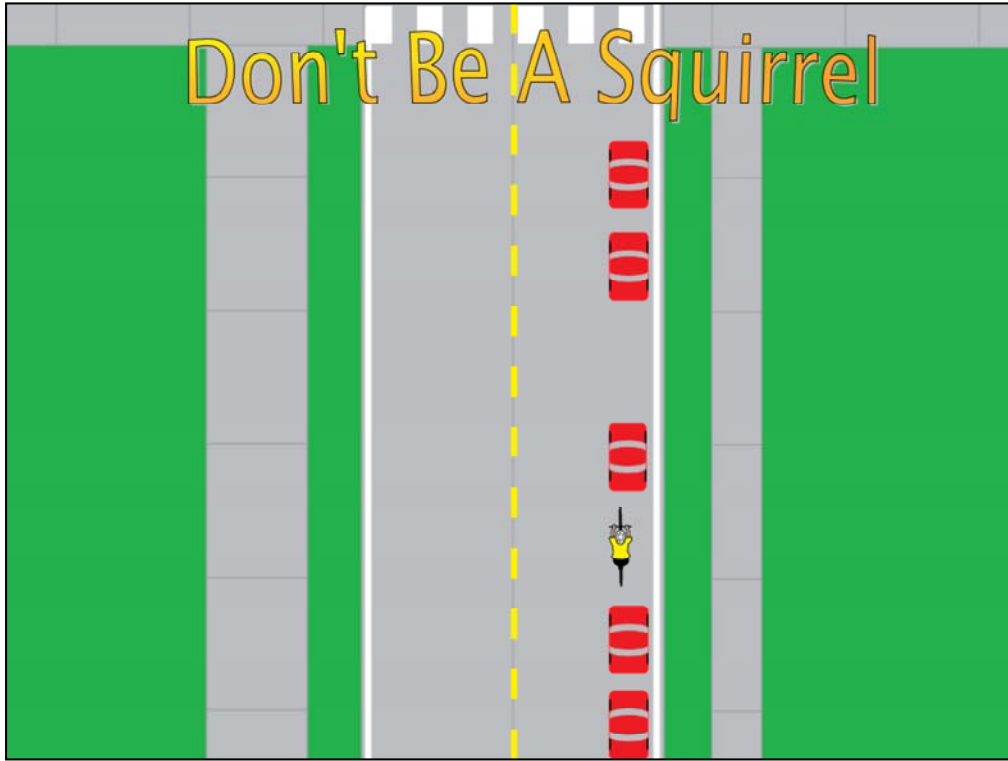
Watch what happens.....



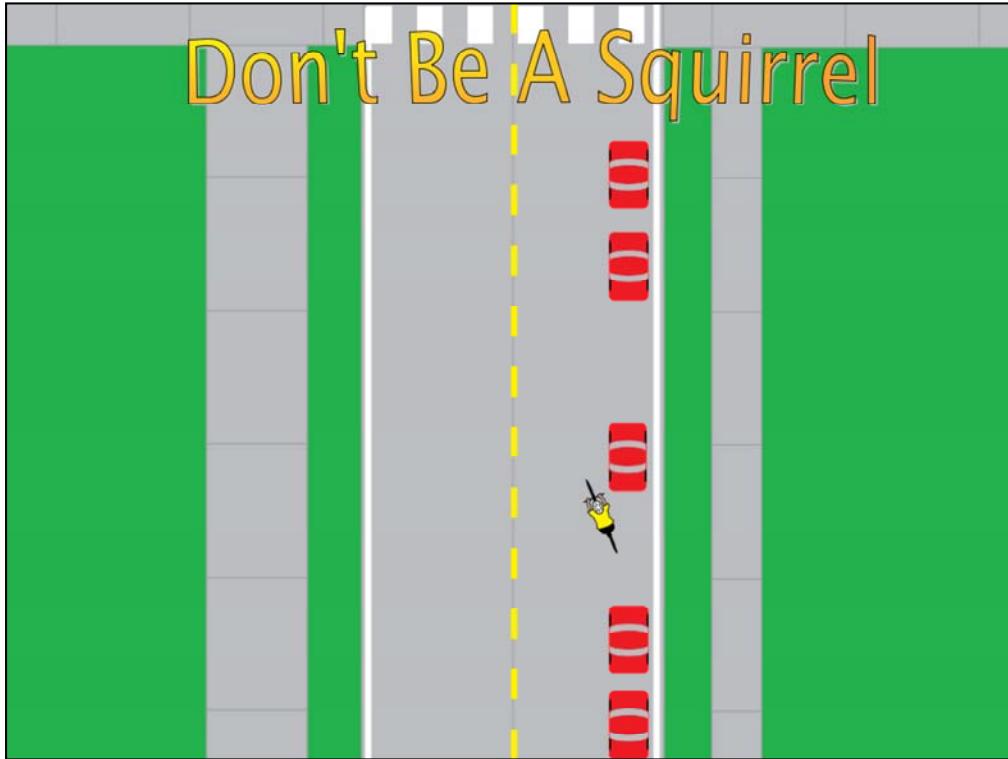
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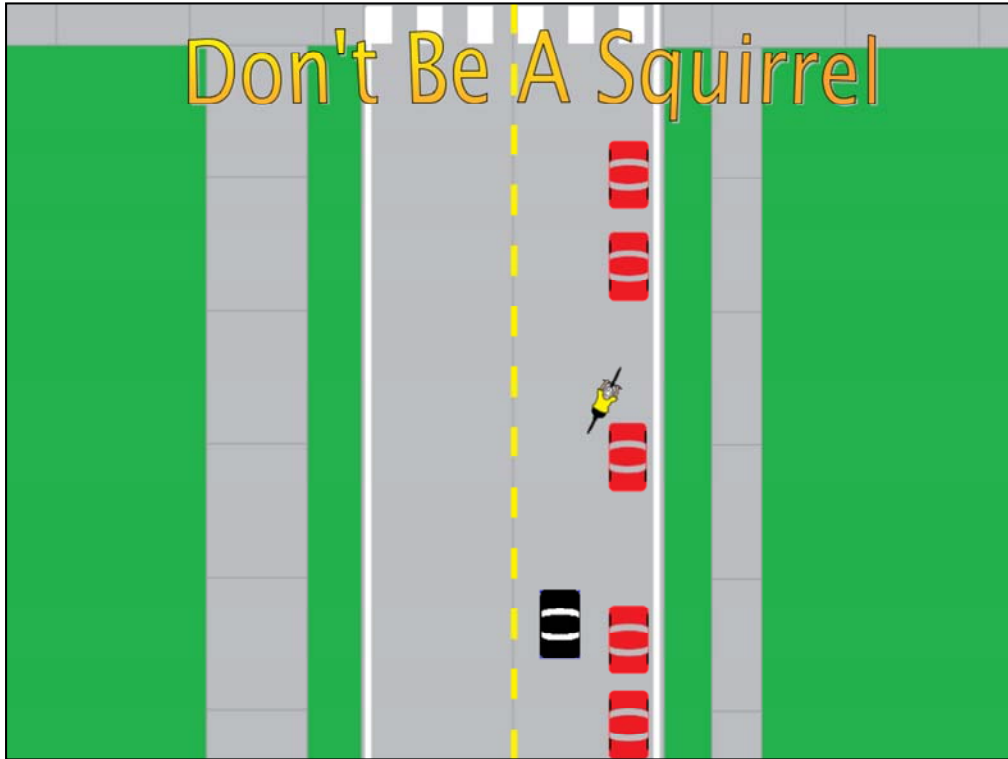
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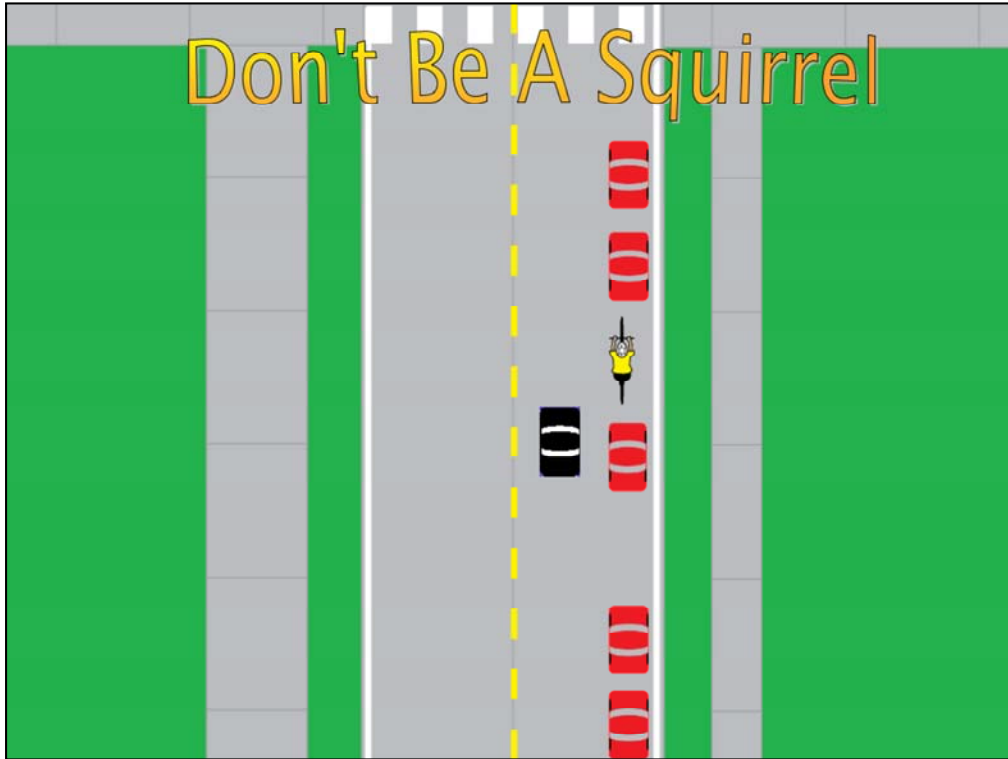
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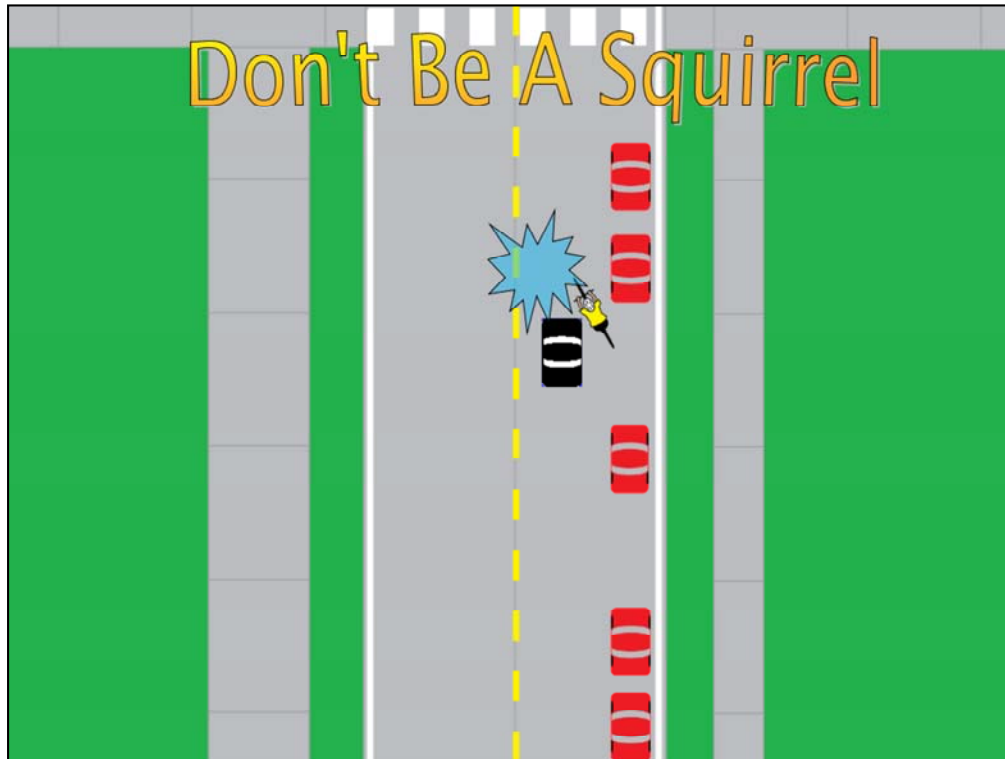
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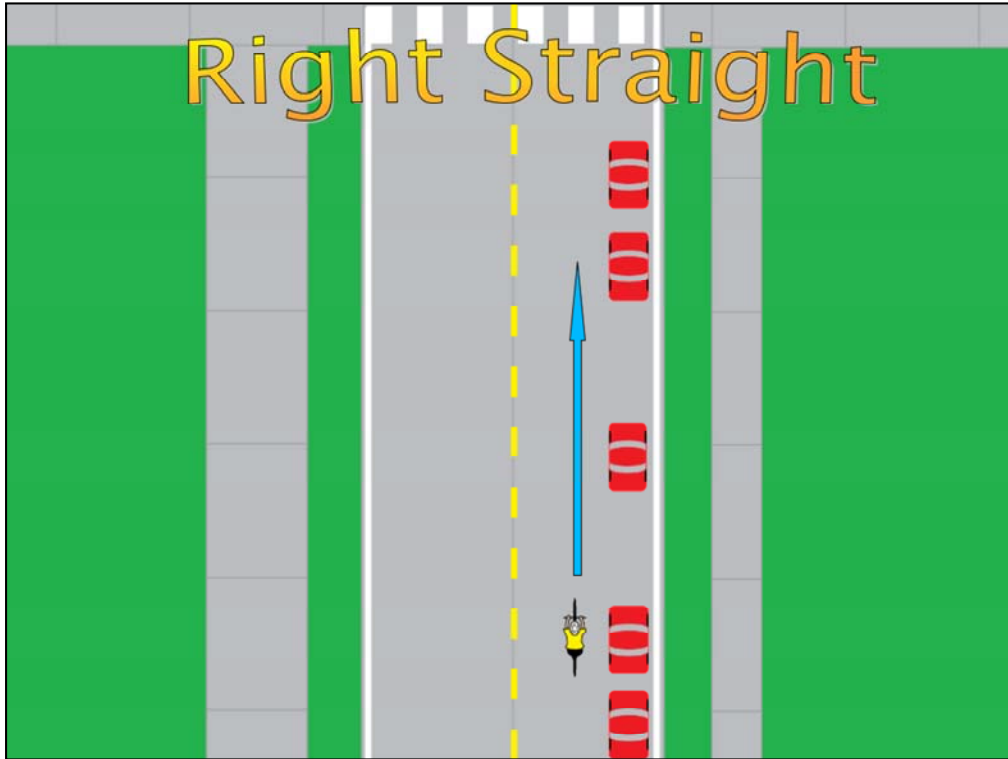
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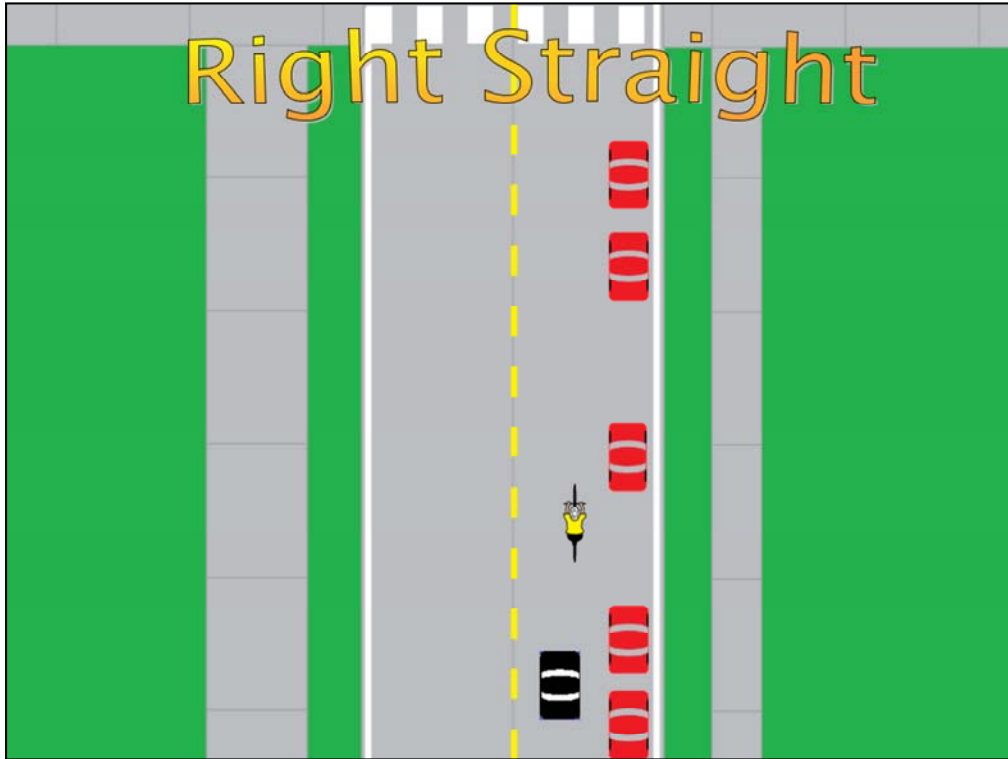
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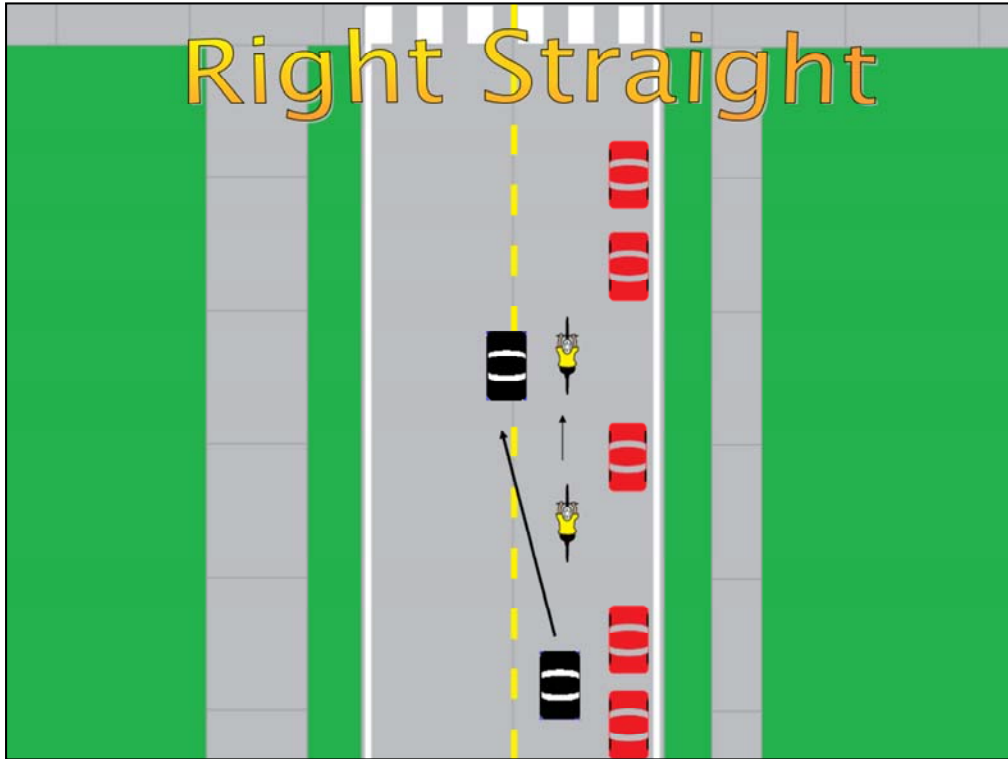
Ouch! Drivers can't always see you between parked cars. Riding like a squirrel is unpredictable. Drivers cannot keep you in clear view. They cannot make good guesses about what you are going to do. They might think you are turning into a driveway or parking. They will not expect you to move out into traffic.



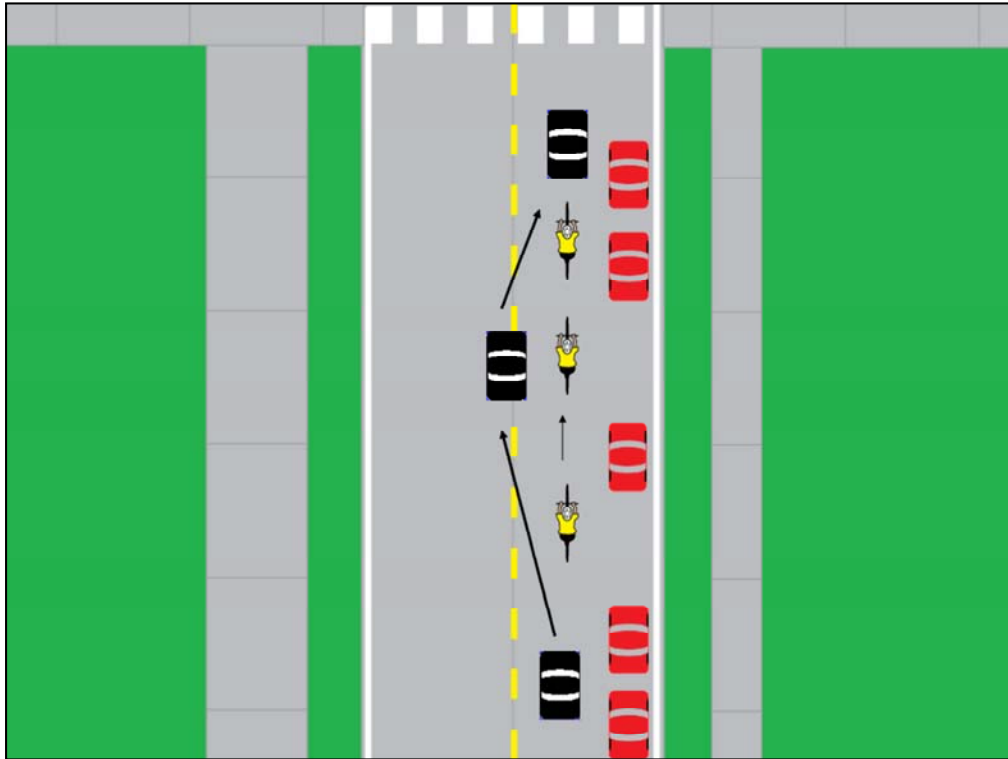
Bike in a straight line. If the street is busy, you can pull over and let cars pass, otherwise go with the flow, of traffic that is.



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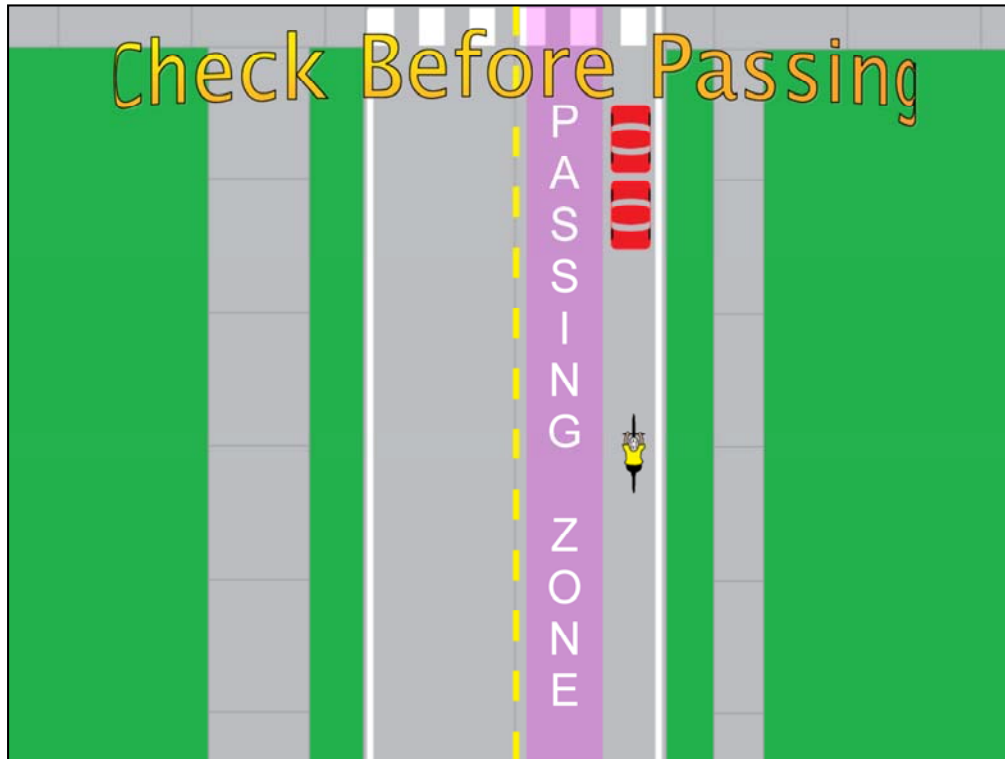


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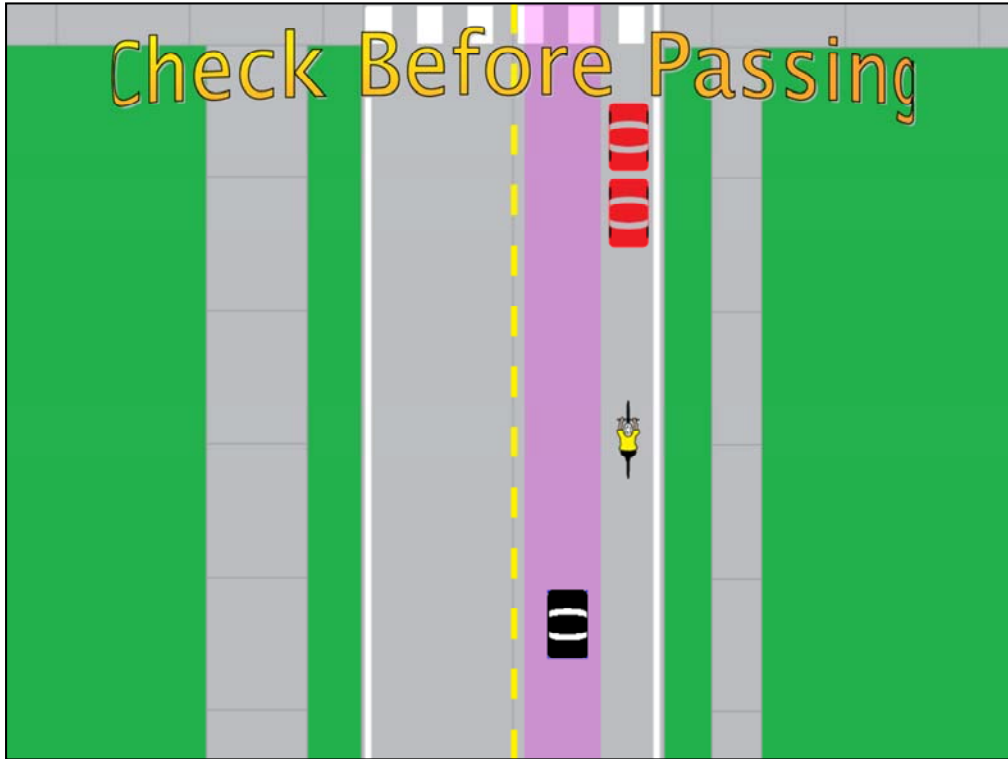
Here, the car sees you because you're riding predictably straight and clear of the door zone. Its better to make a car go around you than to surprise it like a squirrel.

This is one of the skills we are going to practice on our bikes.

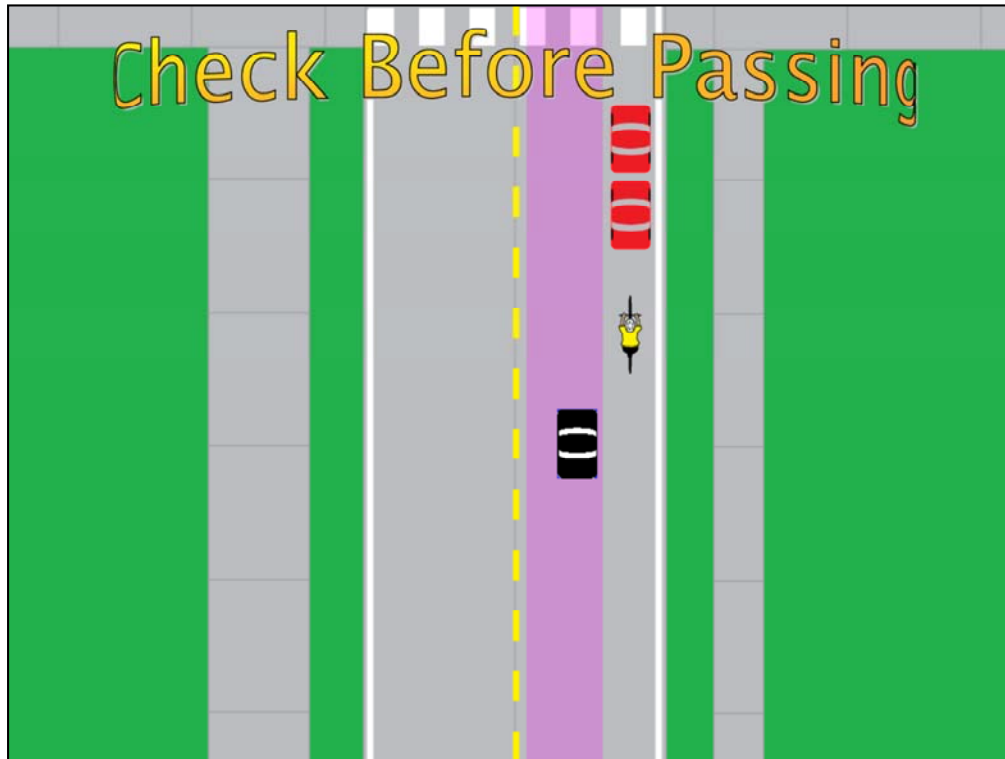


Q: If this bicyclist sees cars ahead, why would they need to look back?

Anytime you need to merge toward the left where drivers may be about to pass you from behind, you always want to look back first! The Passing Zone is always on your left. It is used by faster traffic to pass you and it is used by bicyclists like you to pass around obstacles in the road. A parked car is one of the most common obstacles but you also might need to bike around road debris like broken glass, pot holes or rain drains. These are not as visible to drivers as parked cars.

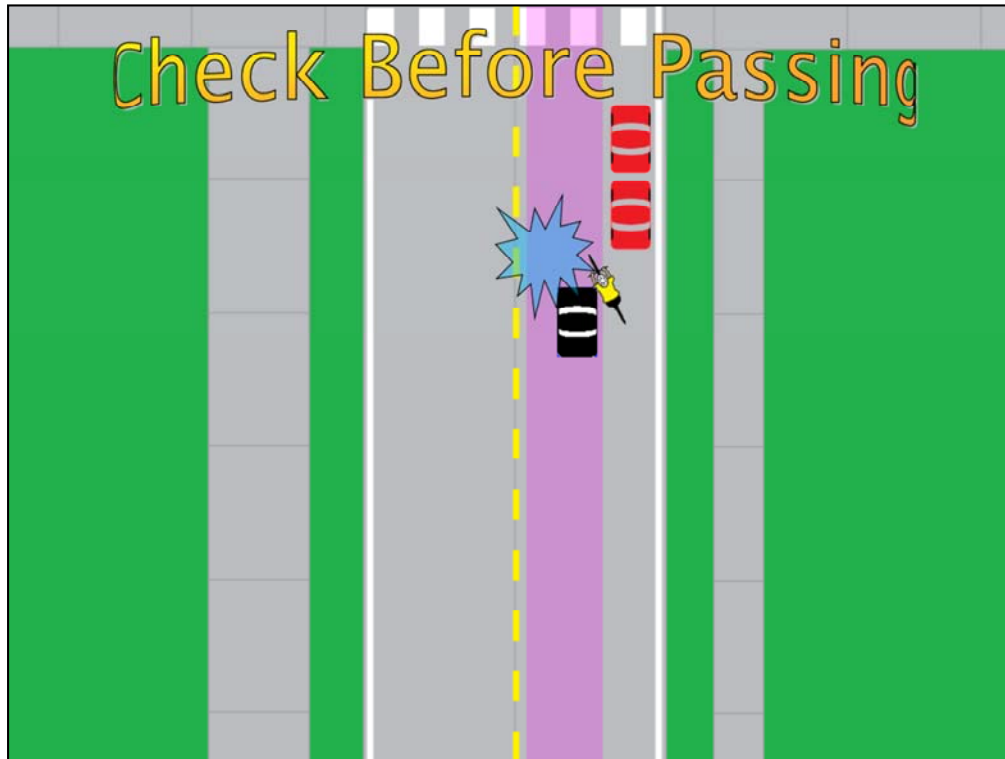


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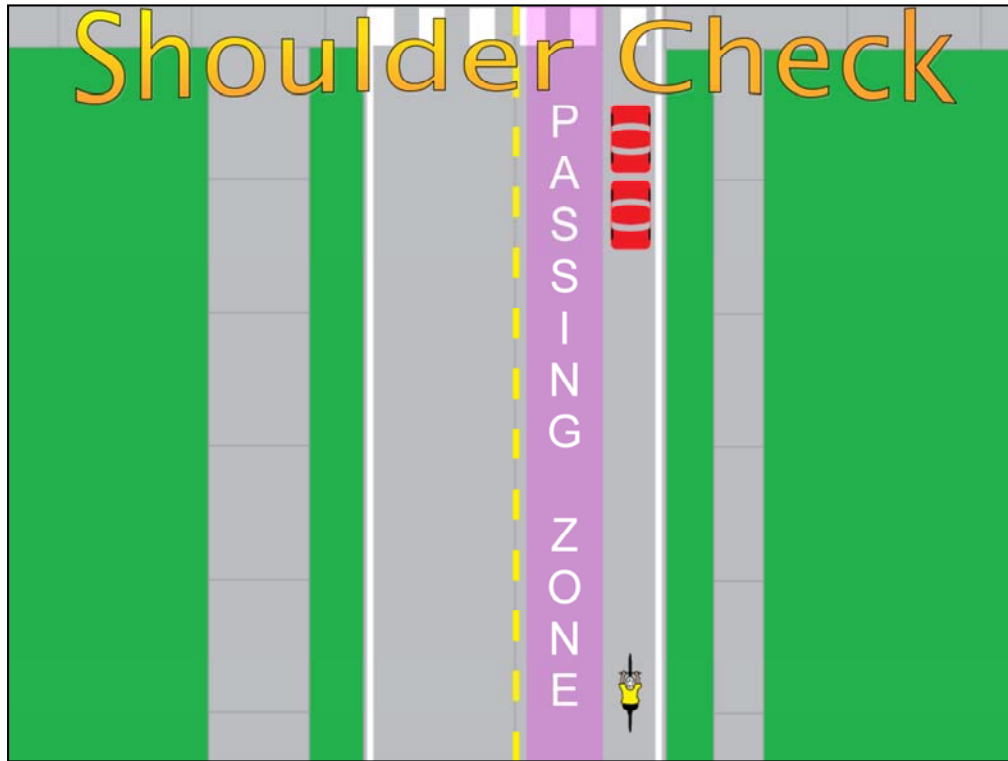


Q: What do you think would happen to this cyclist if they did not check for traffic before passing the parked car?

The car driver would continue driving straight ahead, right?

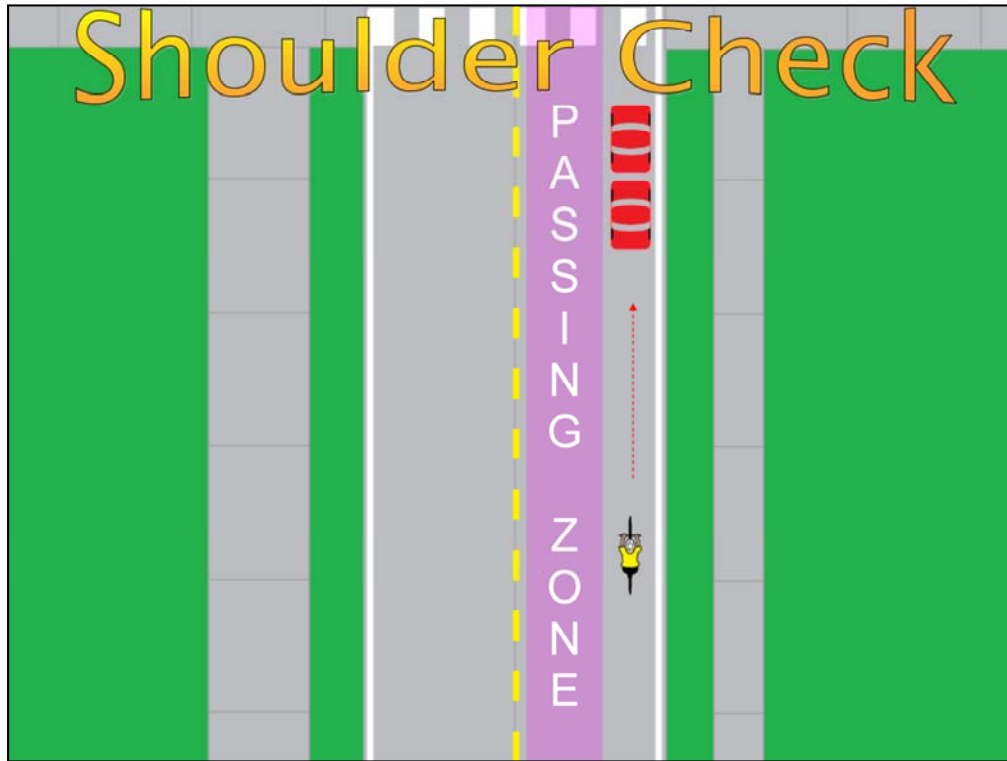


If the bicyclist decided to pass the parked car, but didn't check back to see if anyone was about to pass by her/him, s/he would get hurt. Not only that, the accident would be the bicyclist's fault and s/he would have to pay for the damage to the car!

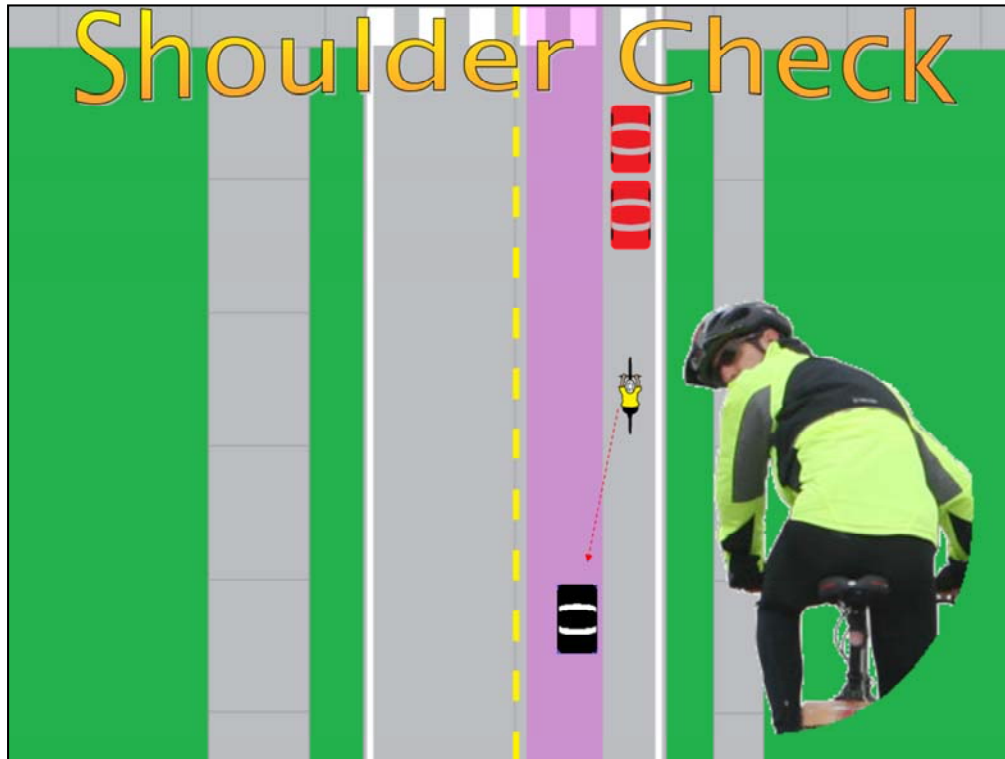


Q: So what do you do if you need to move over to pass something on your right.

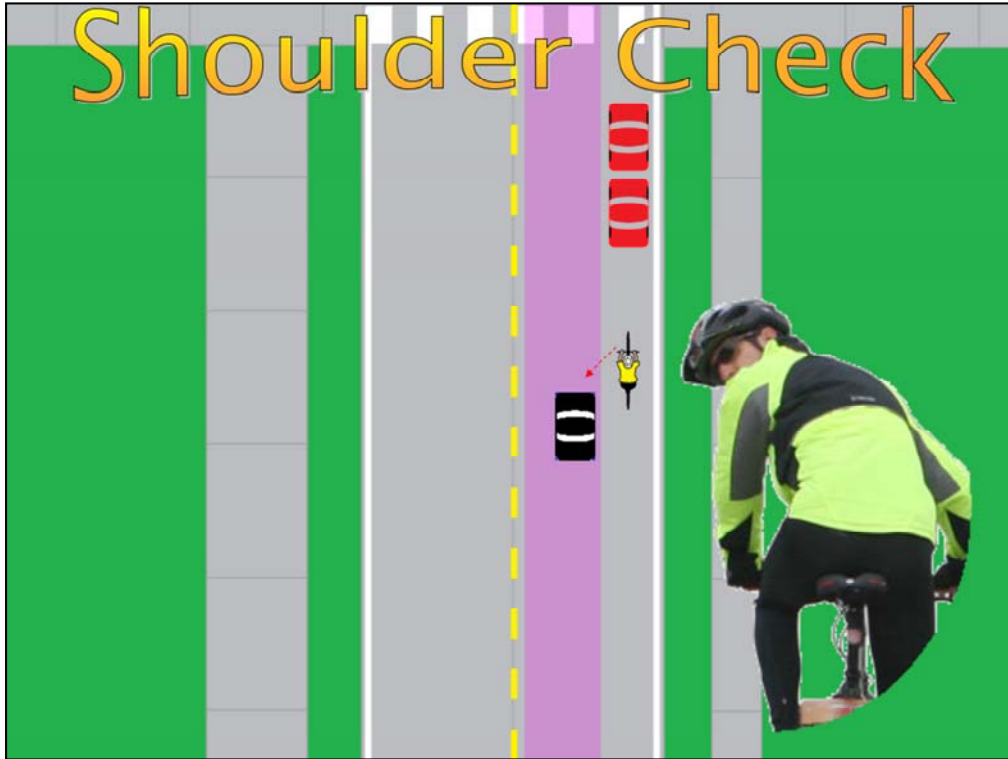
A: Shoulder Check



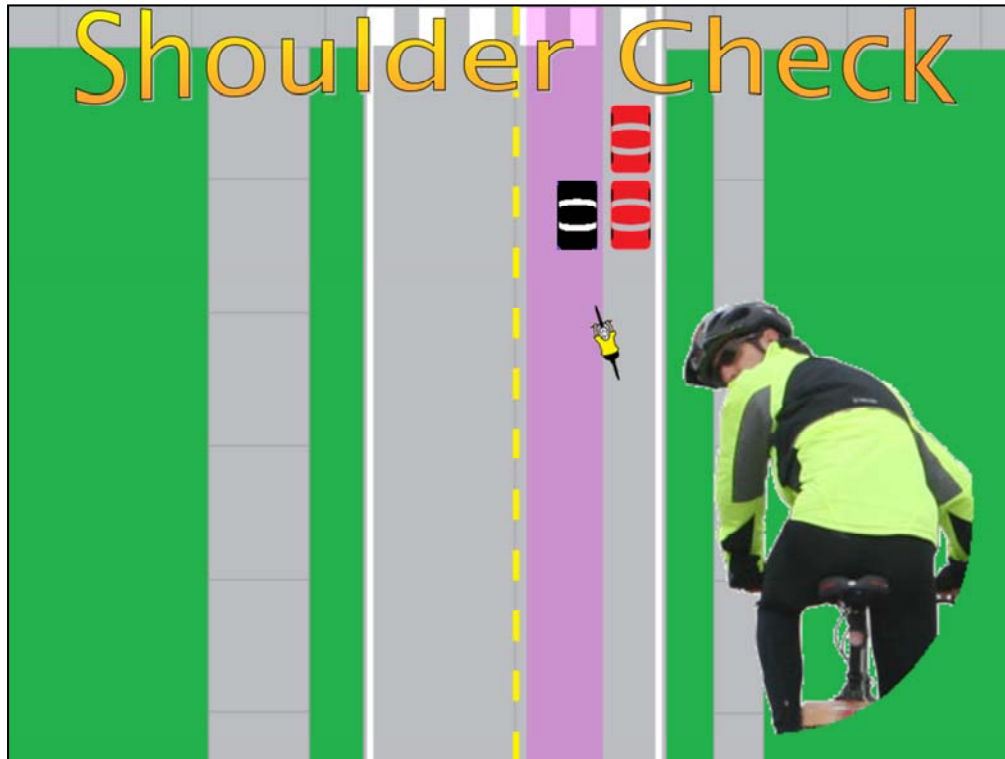
The bicyclist scans ahead and sees an obstacle.



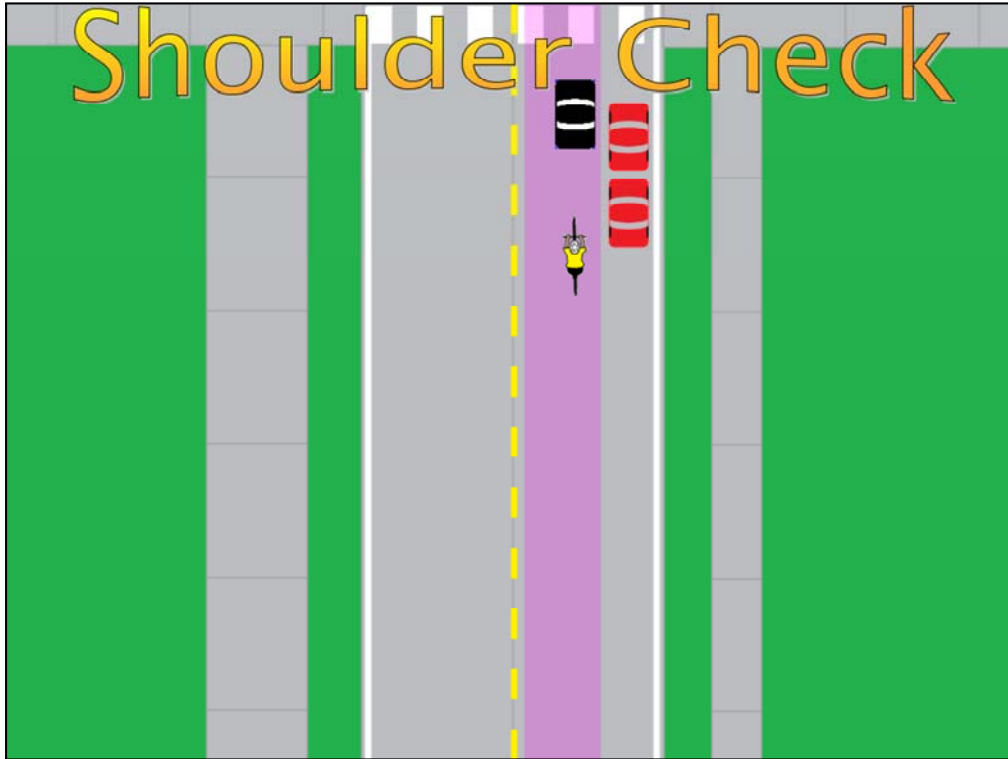
Next the bicyclist looks over his/her left shoulder to check for oncoming traffic. If you can, make eye contact to let drivers know you're about to move left into the passing zone.



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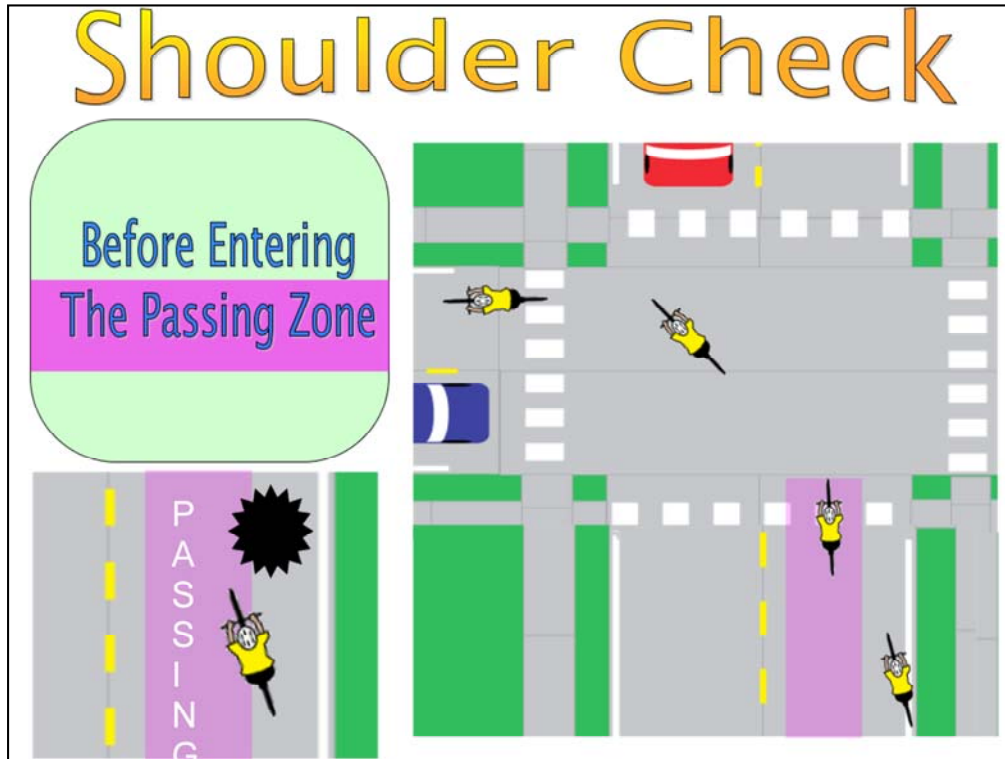


If the car driver is going really fast, it is best to slow down and let him/her pass before moving left. The shoulder check is the bicyclist's rear view mirror.



next

Shoulder Check



There are a few reasons why you may need to merge left into the passing zone. What are they?

- 1) Going around a parked car
- 2) Making a left turn
- 3) Avoiding a pothole, broken glass or other obstacle in the road
- 4) Passing another bicyclist

Bike Safety Part 2: Today We Discuss

- Intersections → Are they all alike?
- Turns → Where do I ride?
- Bike Path Etiquette → How do I communicate?
- Bike Communication → How do I talk to traffic?

But first, let's measure our daily bicycle ridership...
Who rode their bikes to school today?

Today we are going to continue discussing bicycle safety. We will talk about how to best navigate intersections, how to make turns, how to use multi-use and bike paths, and how to communicate with traffic. Remember that a big part of being safe on a bike is being predictable. If the drivers can make a good guess about what you are going to do then they will do their best to avoid you. When you are visible and following the rules of the road you are being predictable. What you learn today will give you the skills you need to be a predictable rider. It will help you to make smart choices as a rider. Those decisions will help keep you safe on the road. Now, let's measure our daily bicycle ridership, who rode their bikes to school today? Discuss why/why not.



Safely navigating intersections is another thing we are going to practice on our bikes.

At a two way stop, who has to stop, the car driver or the bike? The car driver has no stop sign, so s/he has the right of way. The car driver does not have to stop or even slow down or look.



At a four way stop everybody stops, even if you are behind another driver and there is no one else at the intersection, you must stop when you pull up to the stop sign. What happens if the bicyclist doesn't stop? We'll talk about right of way in just a minute...Then there are intersections with traffic lights, most you can travel through safely without walking your bike. When you arrive at a stop light on your bicycle you obey the same rules as drivers. Wait for the light to turn green and then take your turn to go.

MEGA INTERSECTION



WALK OR BIKE?

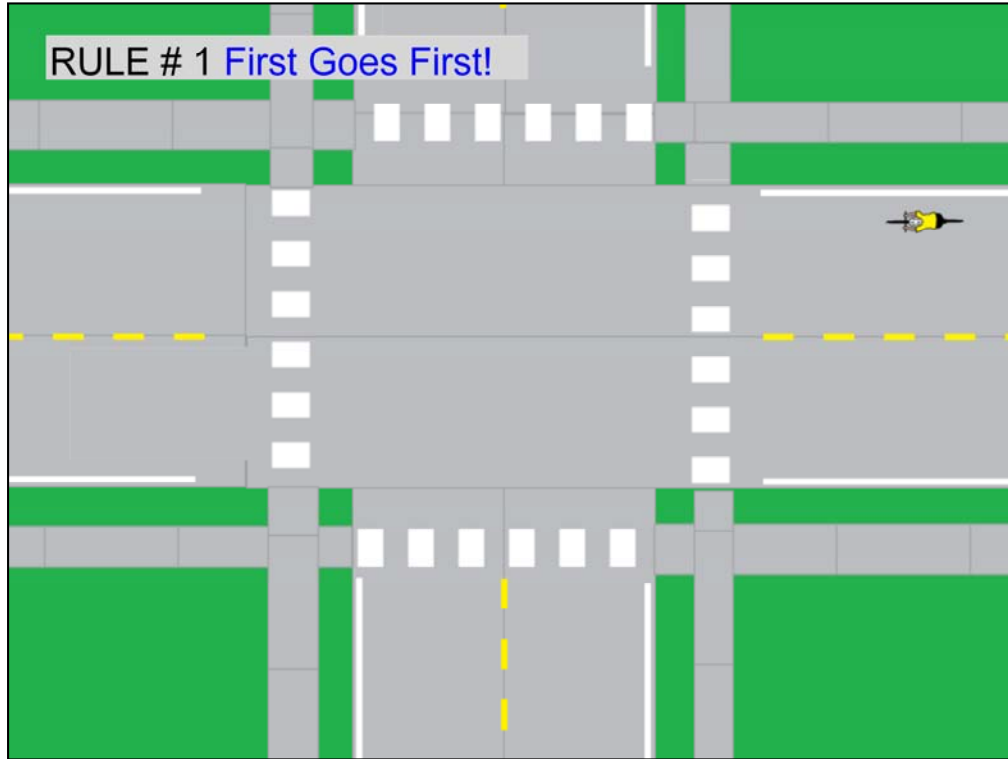
Some intersections are crazy busy. What would be a safe way to cross this intersection? When you come to a very large intersection it is best to walk your bike across using cross walks. Once you are across safely you can get back on your bike and ride.

What's Right Of Way?



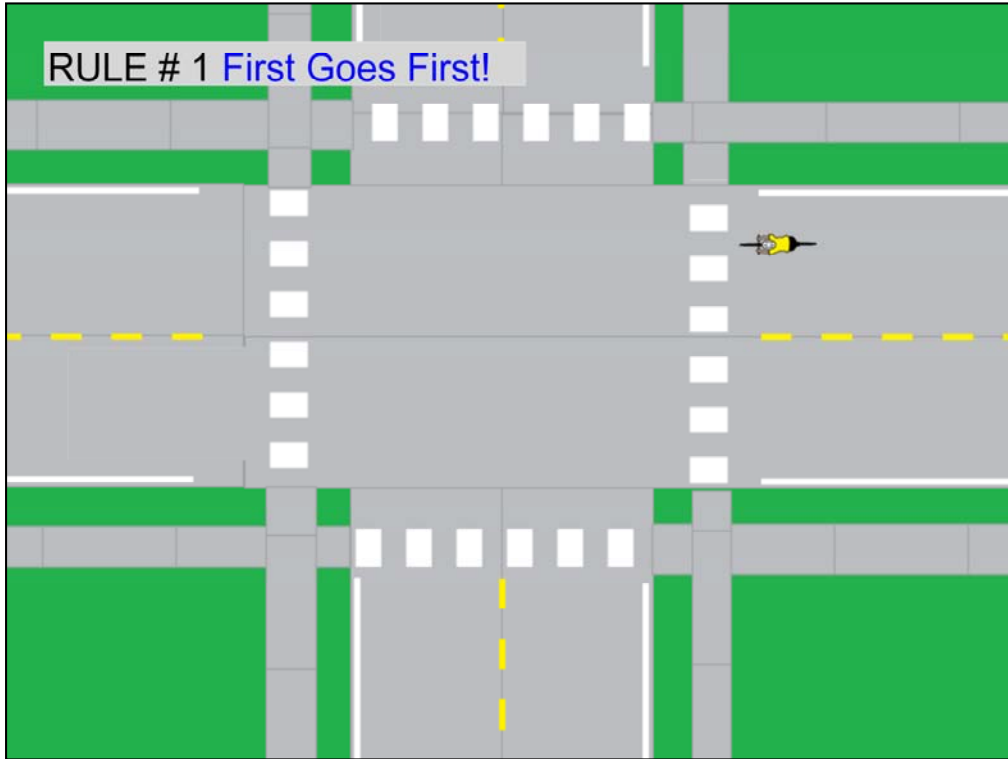
Right of Way is a set of laws to help us figure out who gets to go first...

These are the same laws that you learn in drivers ed.

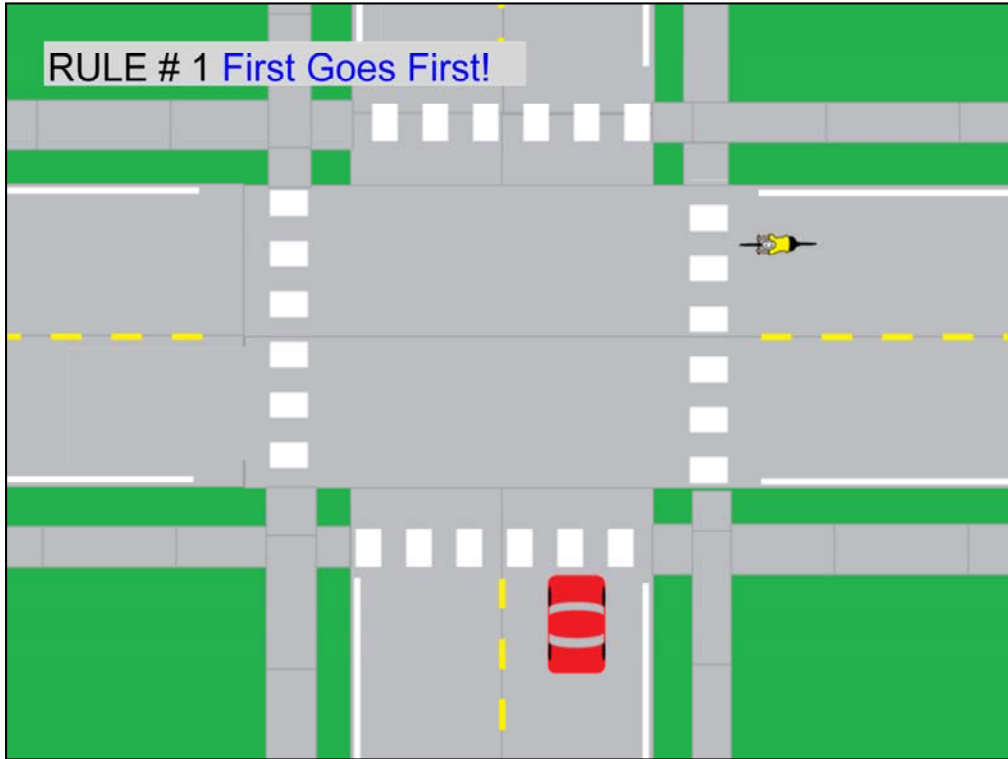


RULE #1 – First goes first

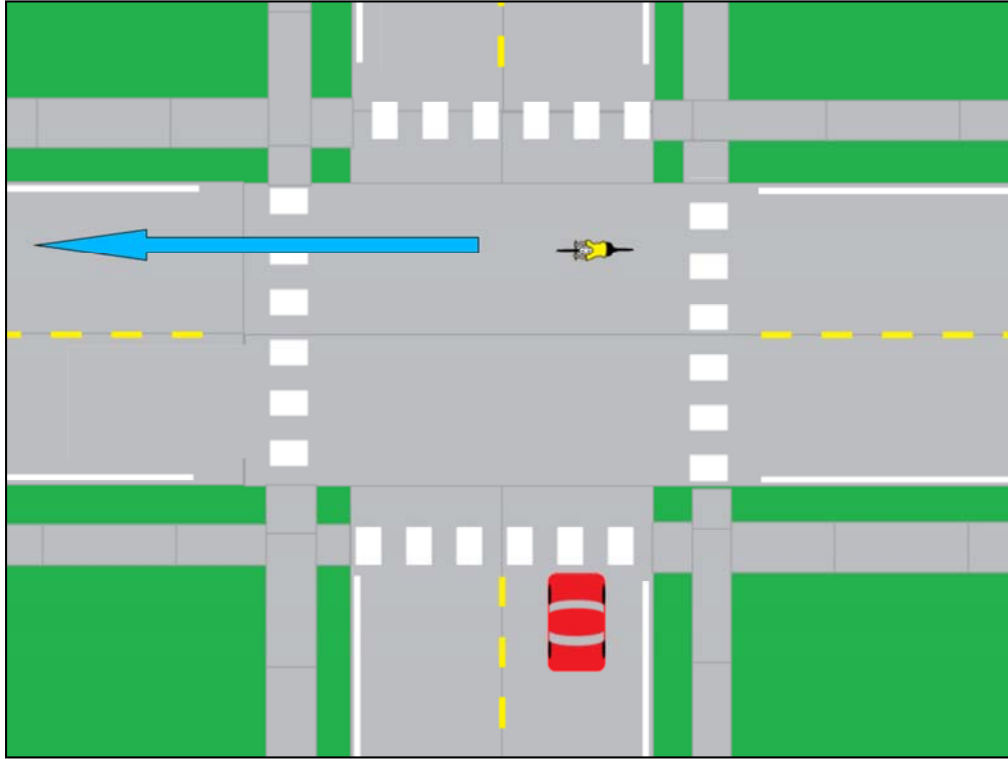
At a four way stop the first person to arrive at an intersection gets to go first. At a two way stop the driver with no stop sign has the right of way even if the driver at the stop sign arrives first. If there are no stop signs it is considered the same as a four way stop.



watch



Who gets to go first?

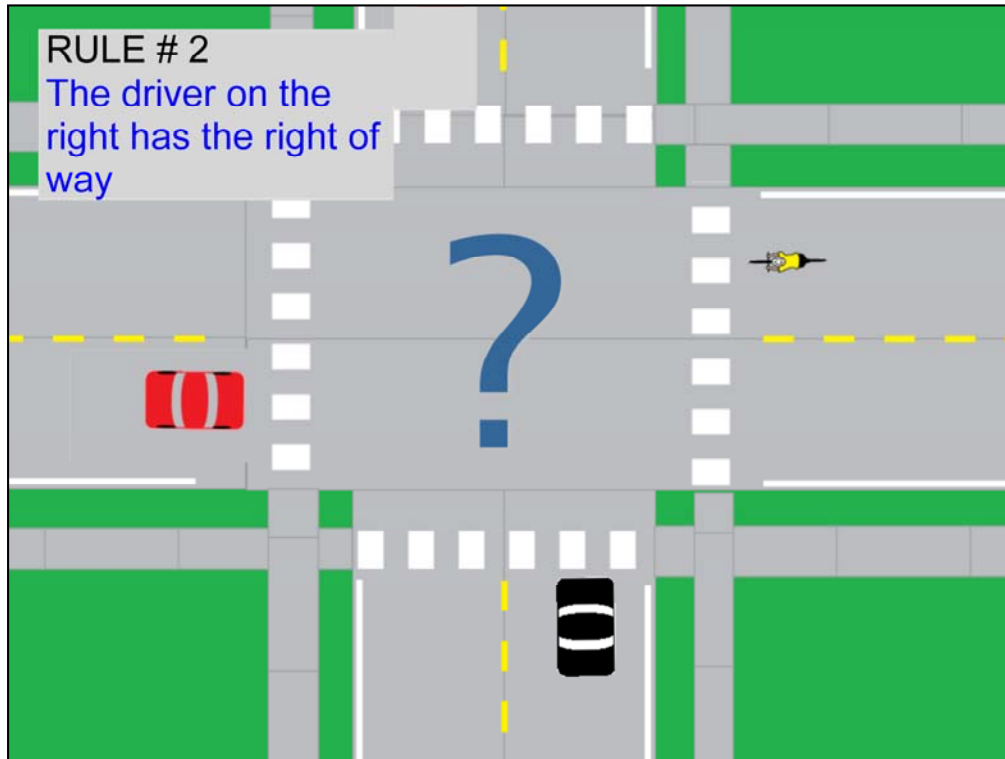


The bike!

What if You Arrive
at the Same Time

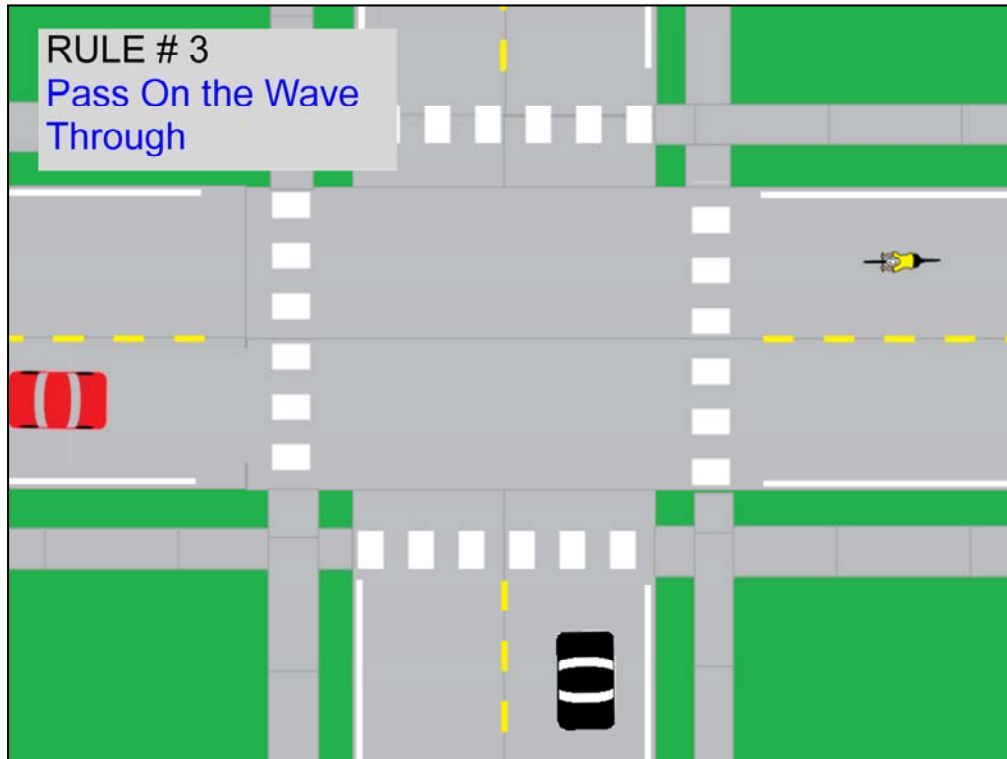


What If two people arrive at the same time?



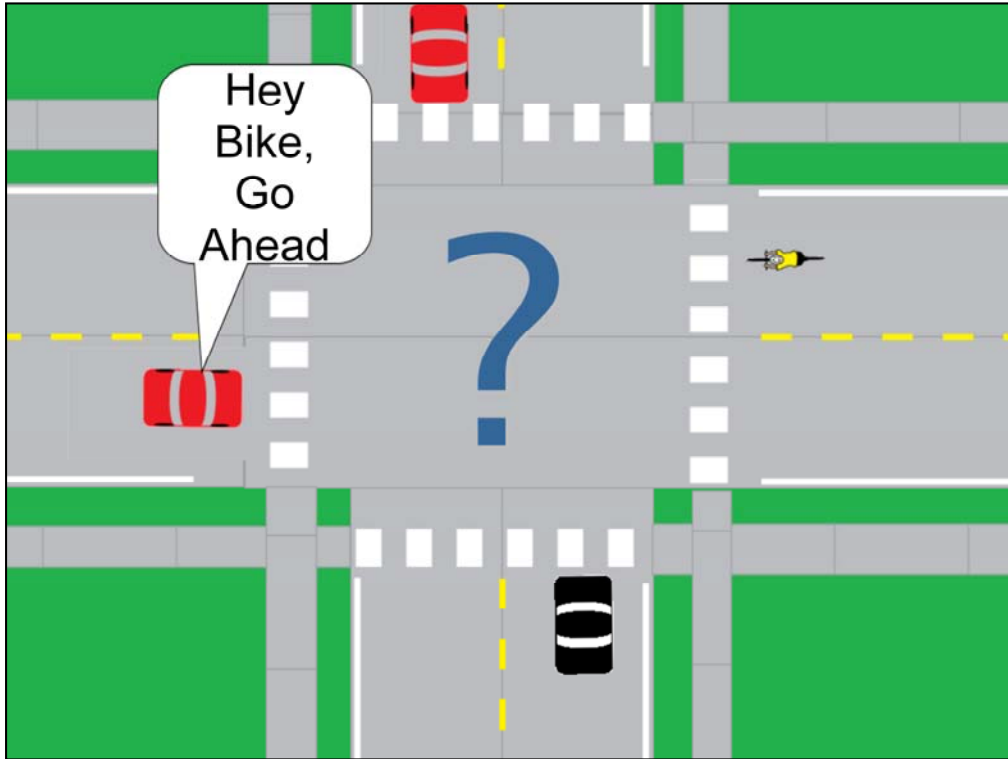
RULE # 2 – The driver on the right has the right of way.

If more than one vehicle arrives at the same time the driver on the right gets to go first. Also, straight goes first—when two people are directly across from each other, and one is going straight and the other is turning left, the one that is going straight goes first. Usually, drivers will make eye contact and signal each other so everyone is being predictable.

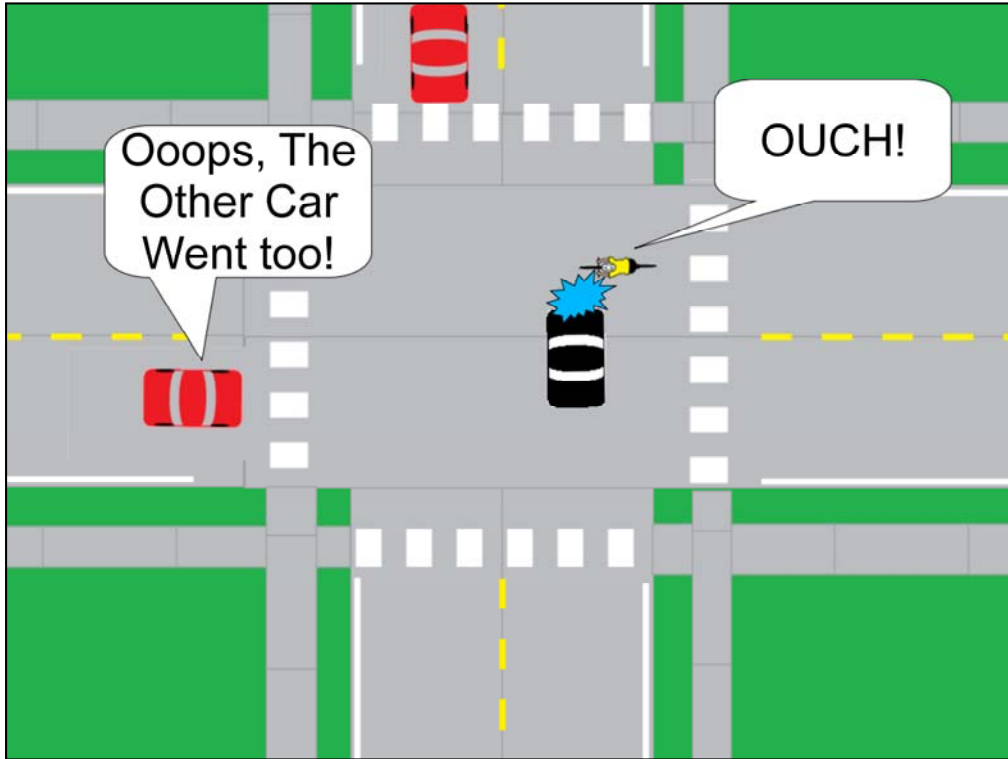


RULE # 3 - Pass on the wave through.

Have you seen people do this? Someone usually waves the other drivers through.



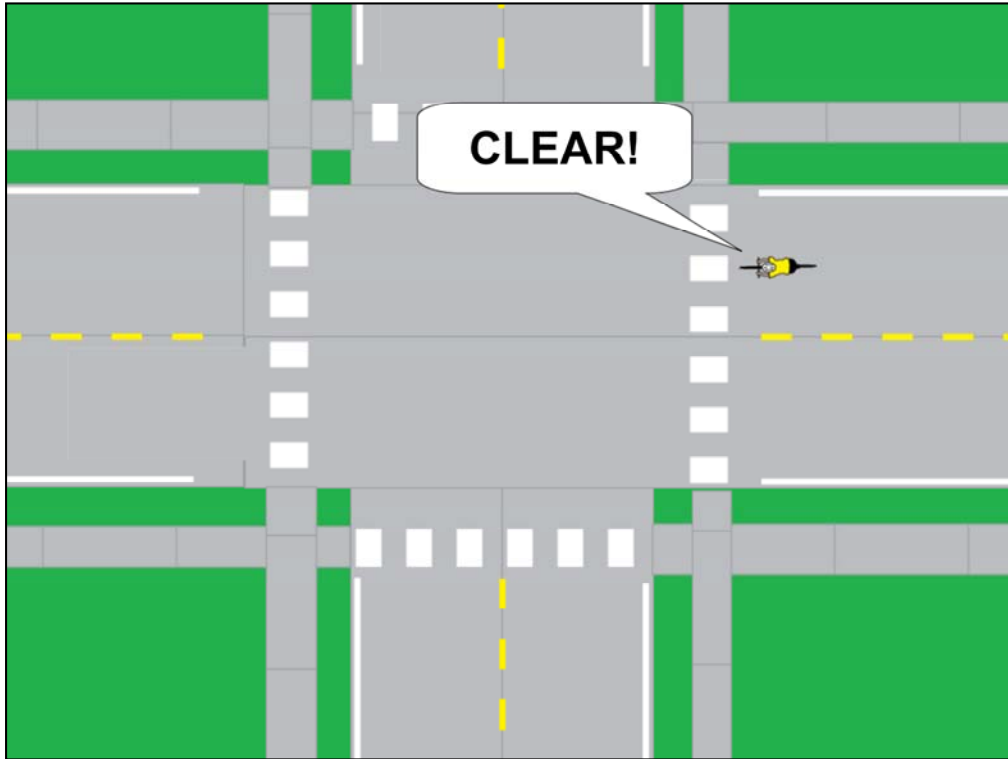
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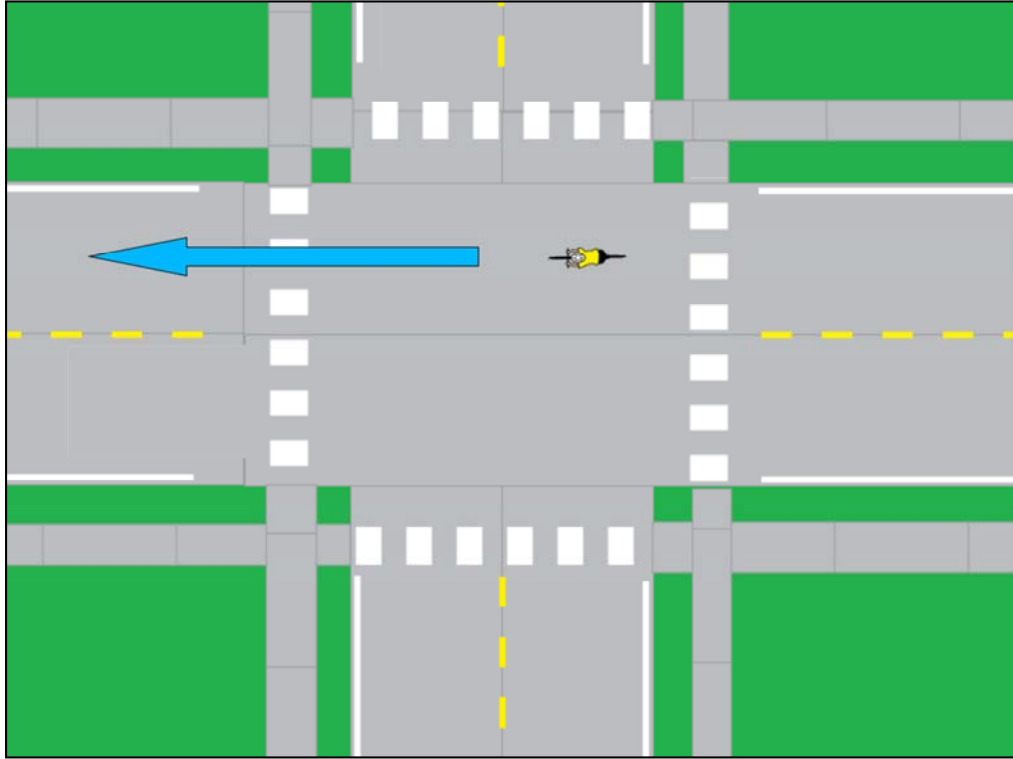
Watch out! Don't listen to just one car driver –there may be other car drivers with different ideas, look around first, follow your instincts.



If you are confused as to who goes first, the safest route for a bicyclist is to wave the drivers through.



Then you know it's clear.

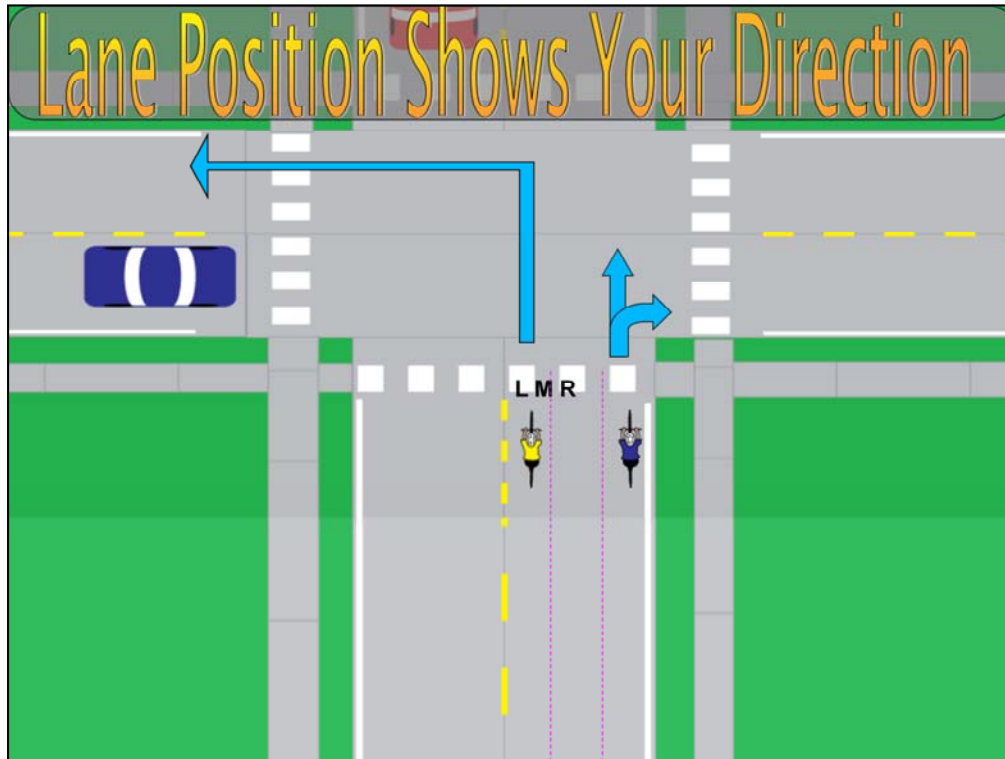


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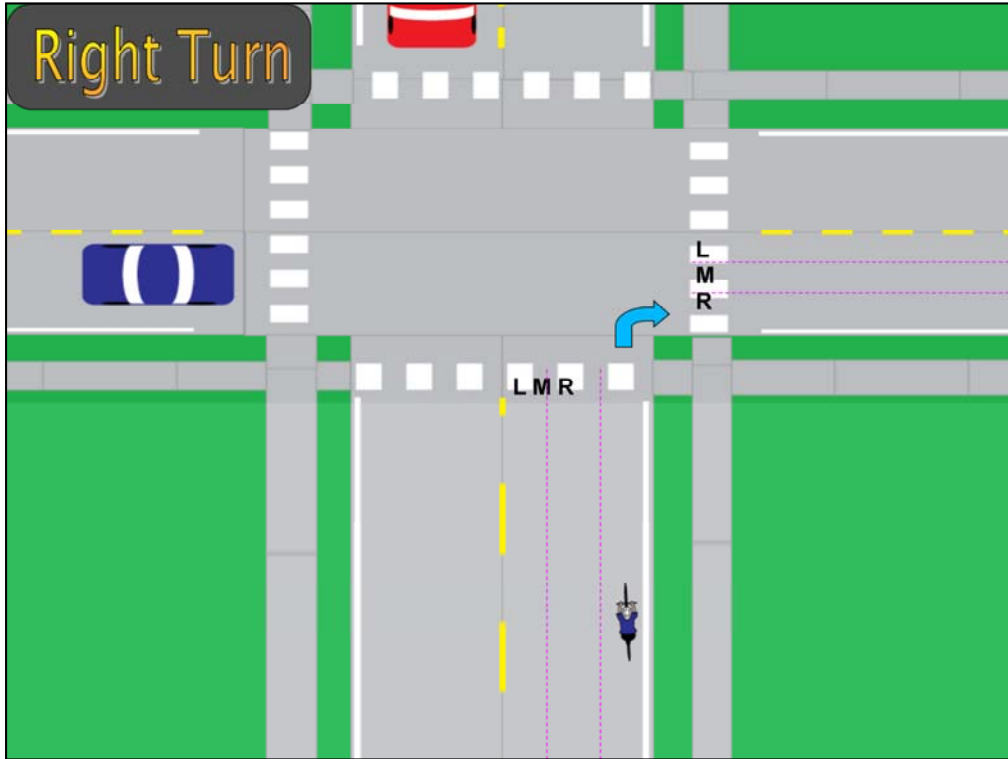
Preparing For A Turn



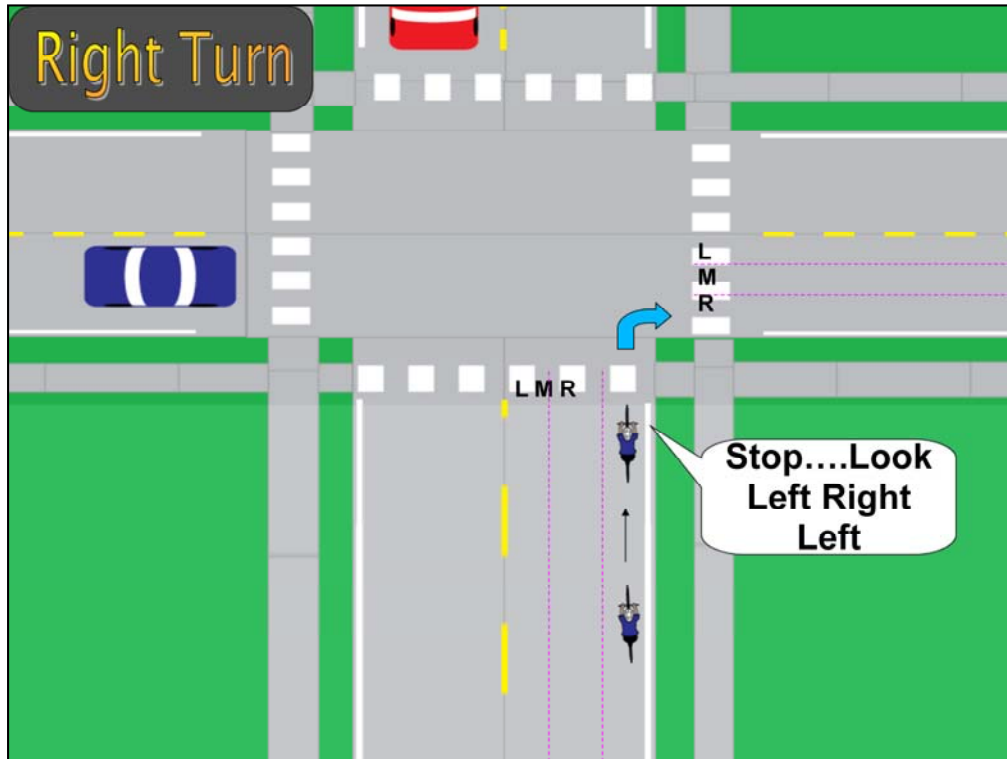
This is one of the scariest and therefore hardest thing for new street riders to learn.



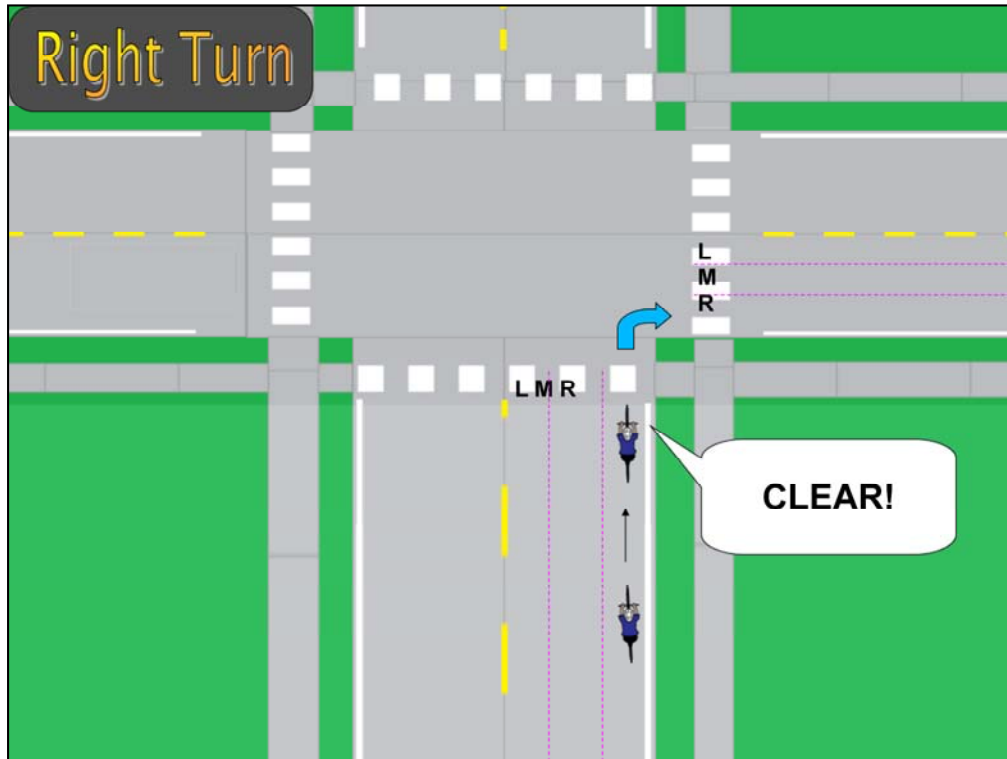
It is about where to ride on the road. LMR stand for left, middle, and right. Normally bicyclists ride as far to the right as is safe. When would you move to the middle? (Hint, this is what we discussed earlier.) Going straight when there is a right turn lane and **when there are obstacles, cracks in the pavement or broken glass on the right, move to the middle.** When would you move to the left? When you are turning left.



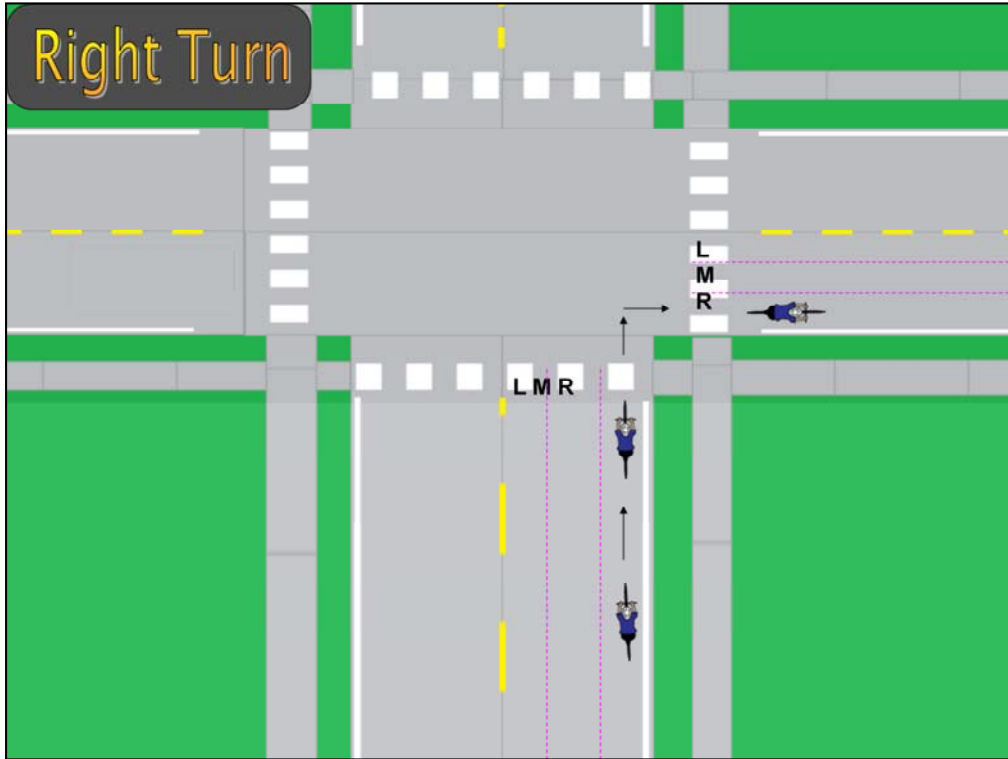
When you make a right turn you stay in the right lane.



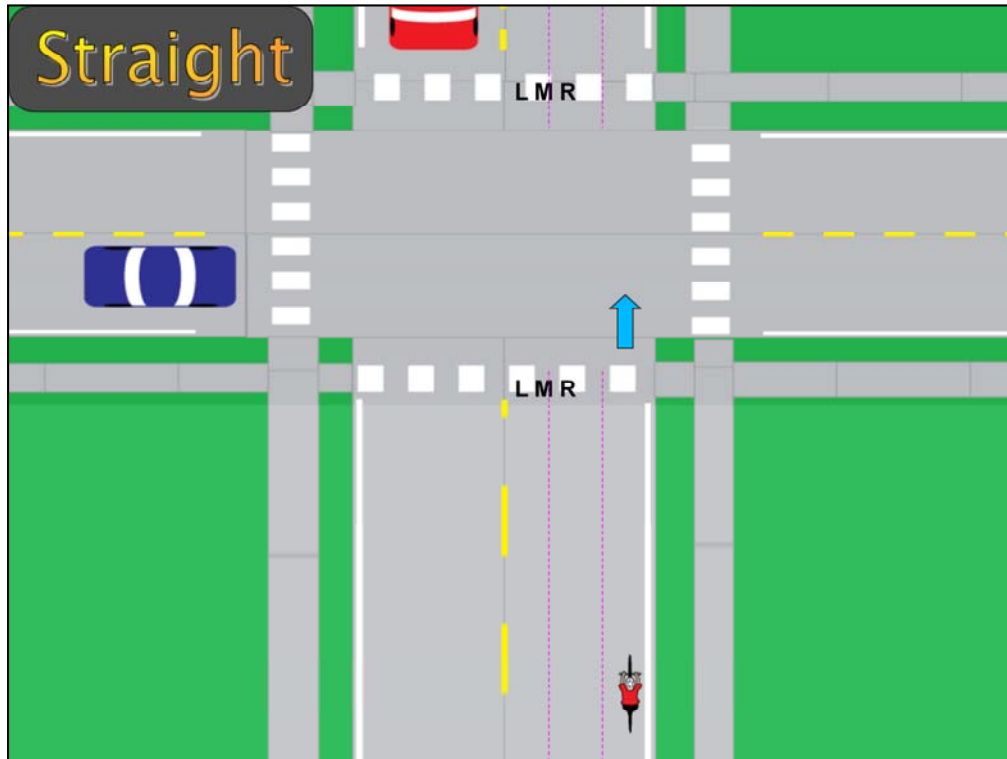
You look left, right, left again to make sure the intersection is clear and you look over your shoulder to make sure it is safe behind you before you turn.



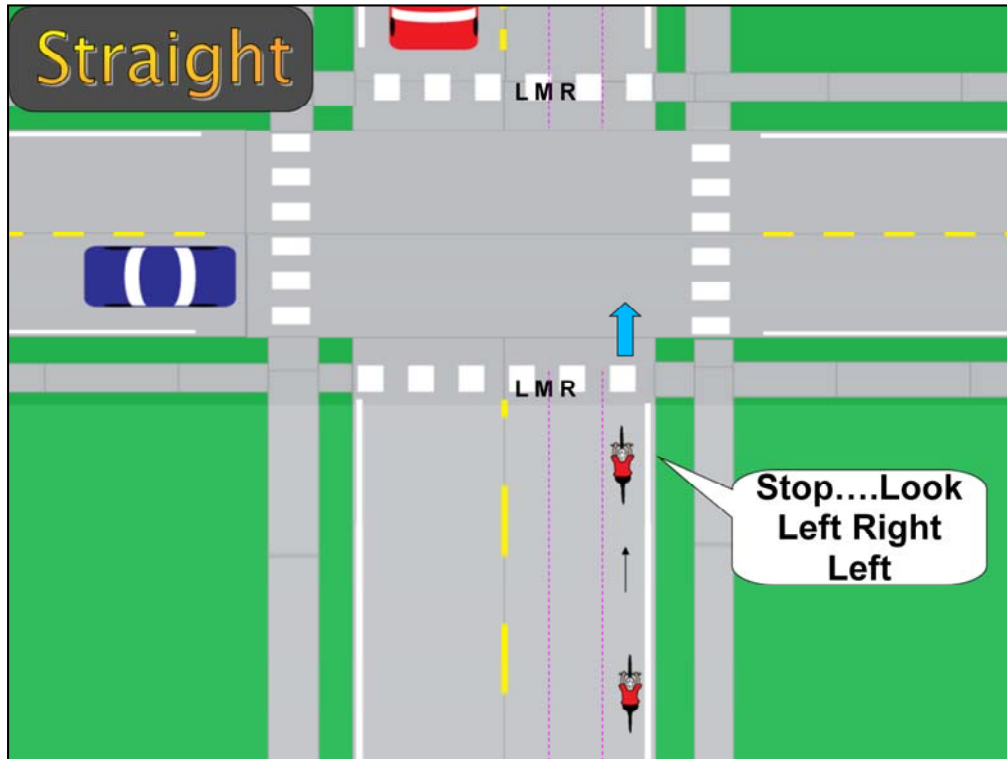
Don't forget to use your hand signal to let the drivers behind you know what you are doing.



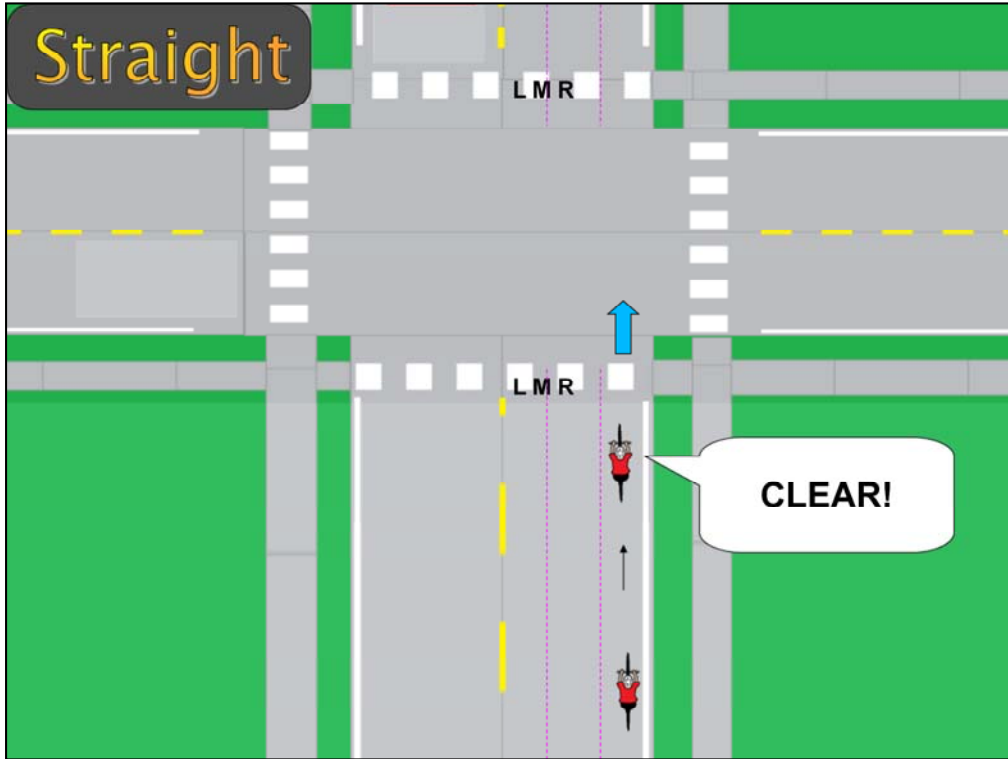
Then turn into the right lane.



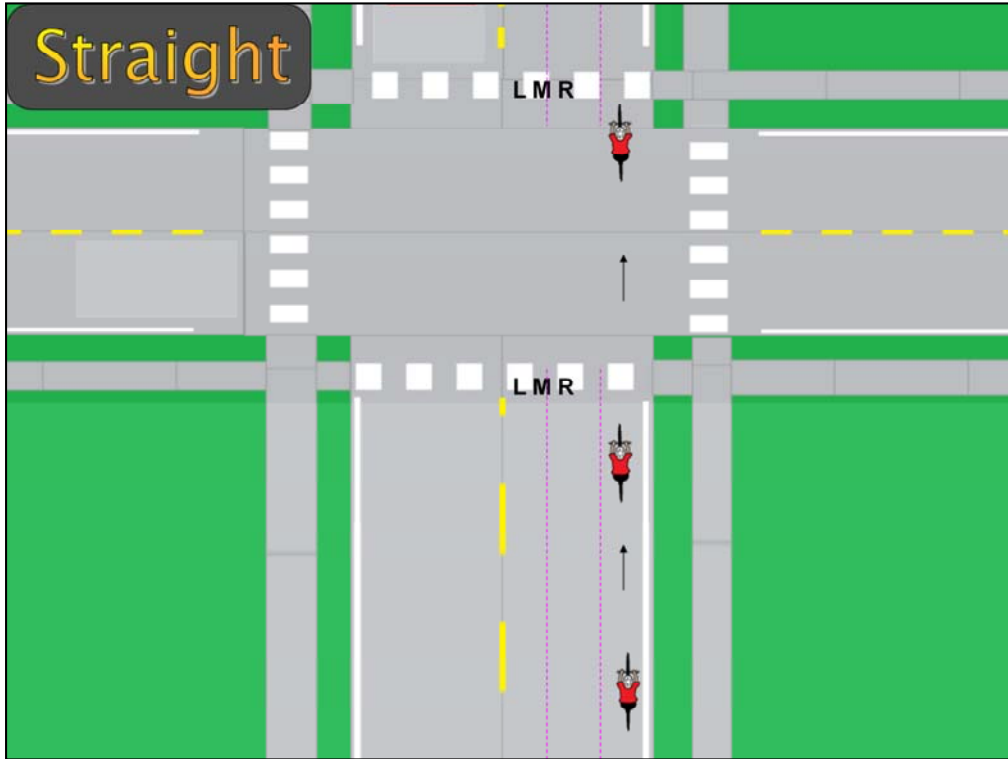
When you go straight you stay in the right lane and continue into the right lane.



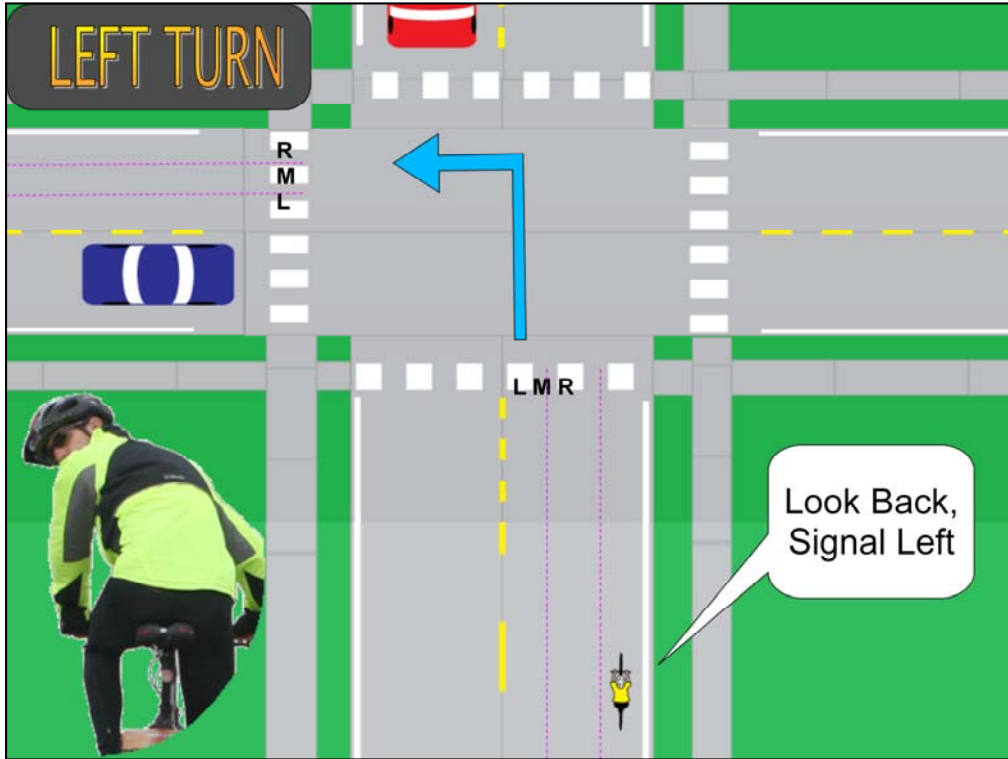
Check over your shoulder to make sure a car driver is not turning right around you and don't forget to scan for traffic coming from the other three directions.



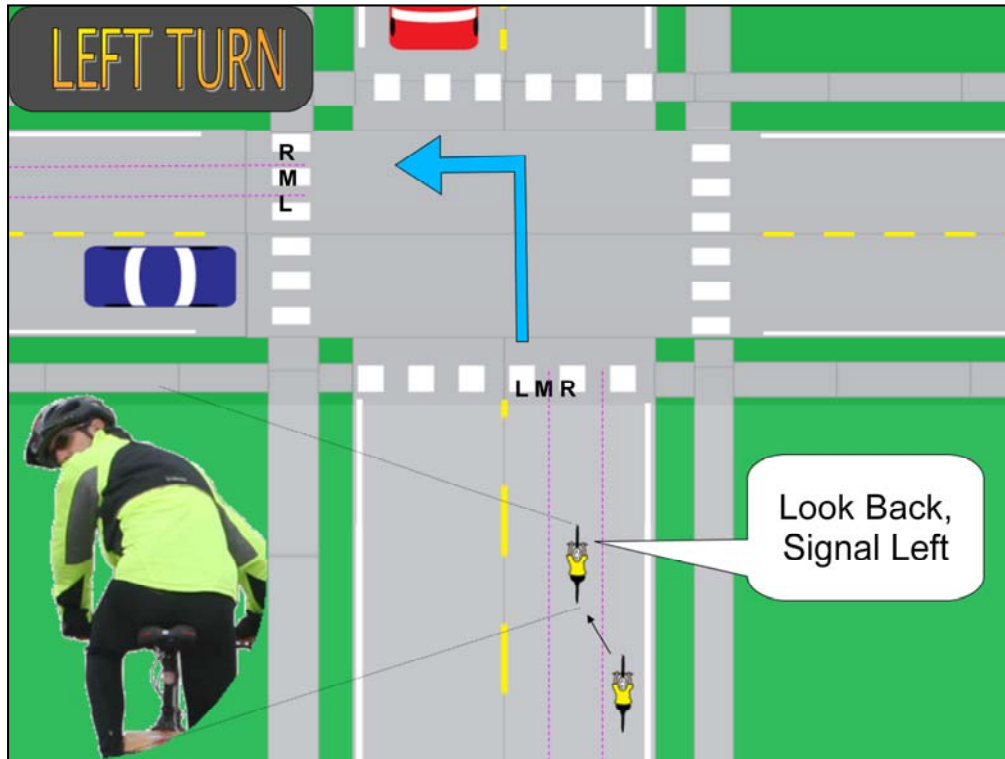
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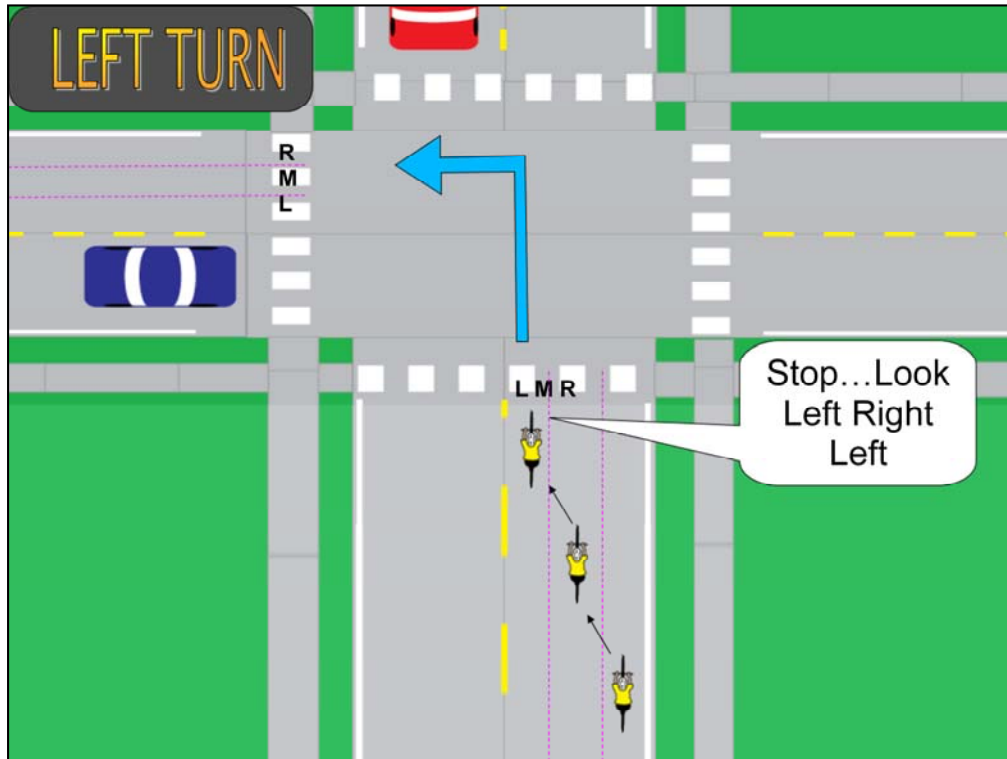
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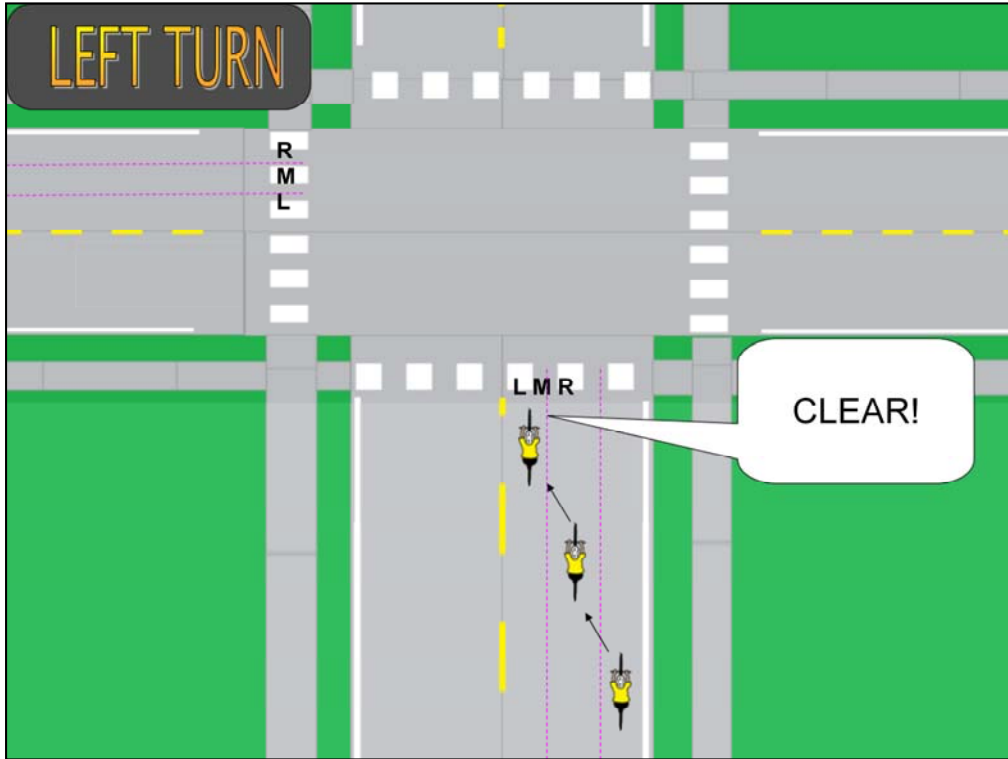
To make a left turn you have to move left twice.



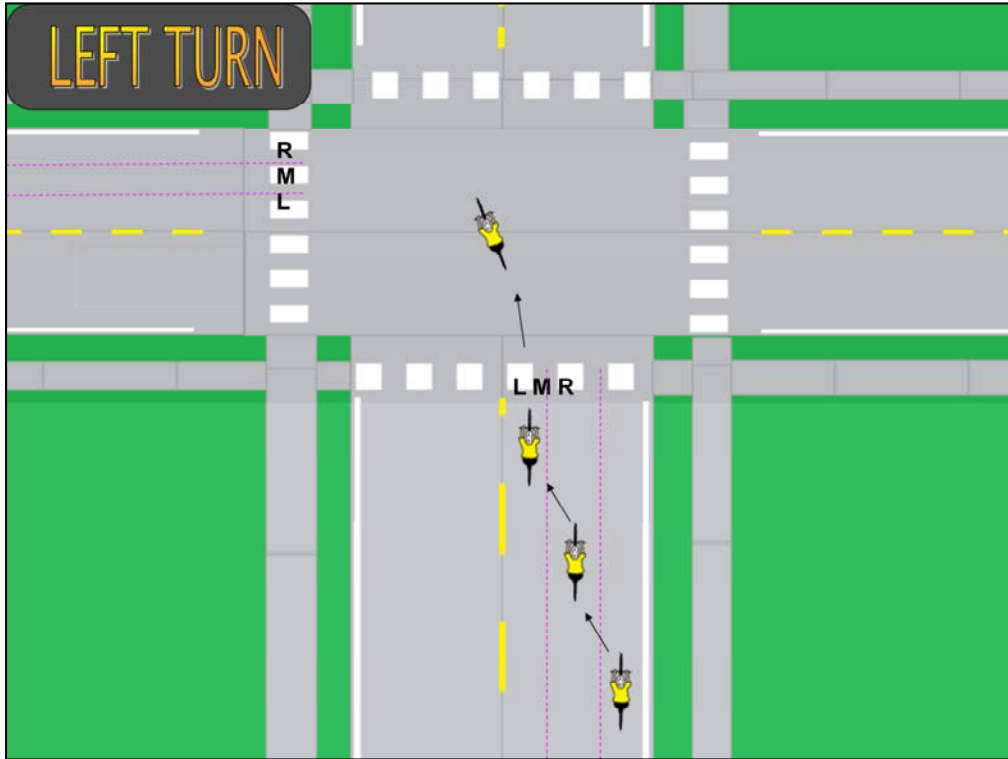
First you have to move into the left lane. Whenever you change lanes you must look over your left shoulder first – if there is no traffic coming – then it is clear and you can go. Signal left. Why not look over your right shoulder? If you look over your right shoulder you will only see trees and buildings. You need to have a view of the traffic coming behind you.



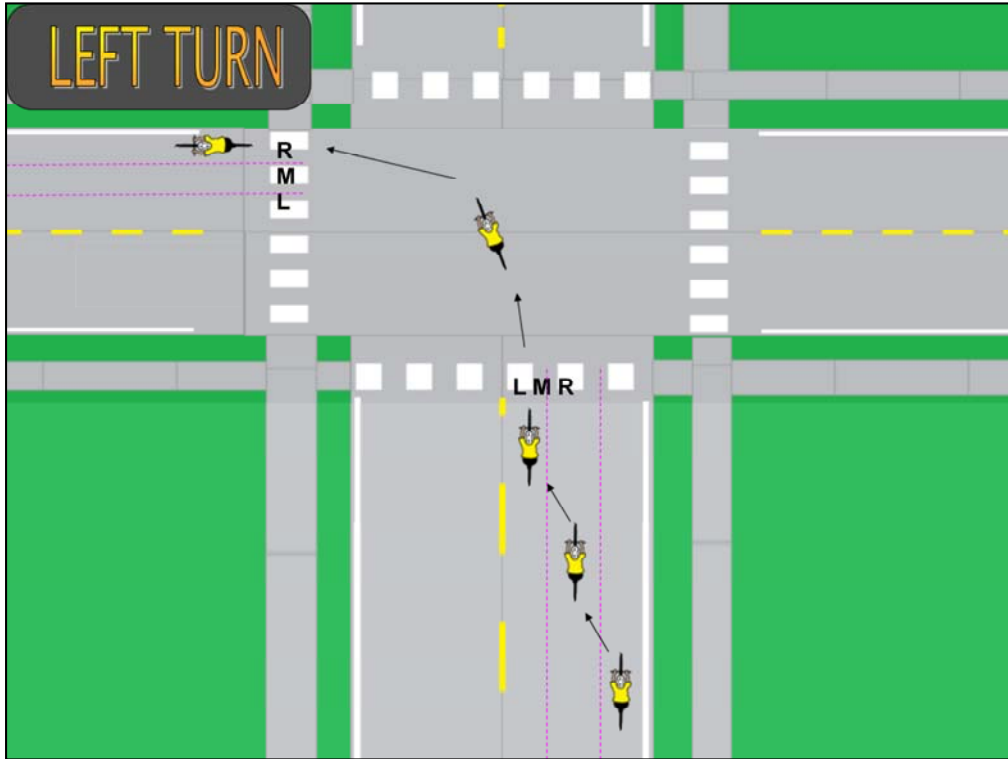
Second you have to make your turn. Don't forget to signal left.



Wait till it's your turn.



Where should the bicyclist land – L, M, or R?

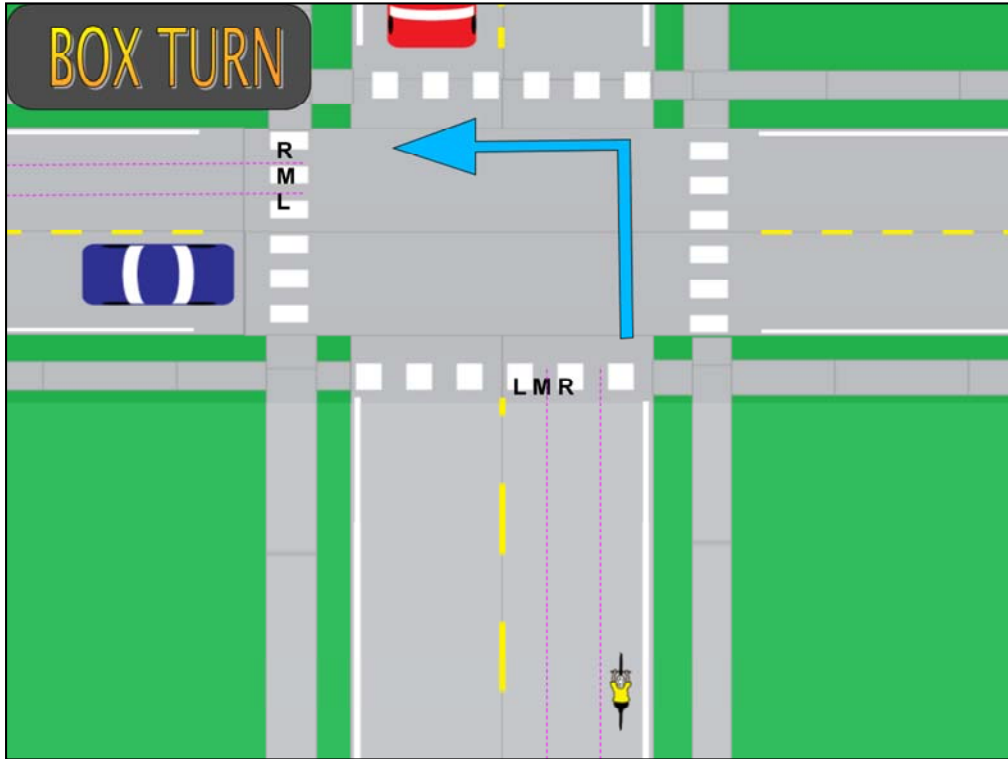


It is important to always land in the right lane when you finish your turn.

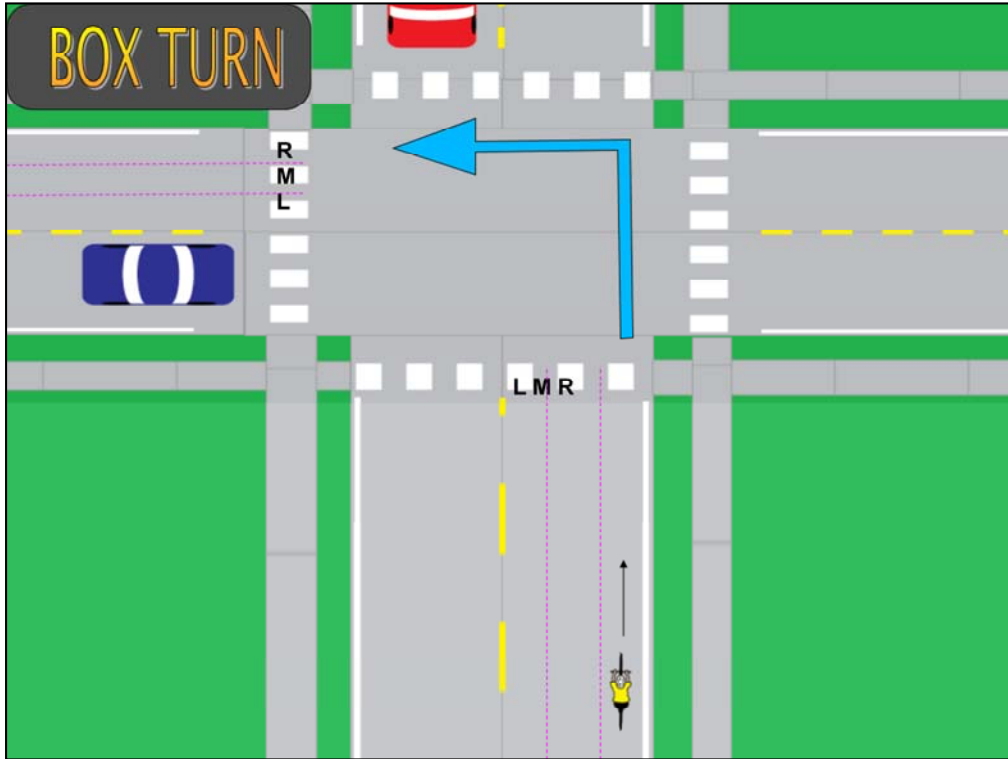
How Do I Turn Left At Busy Intersections?



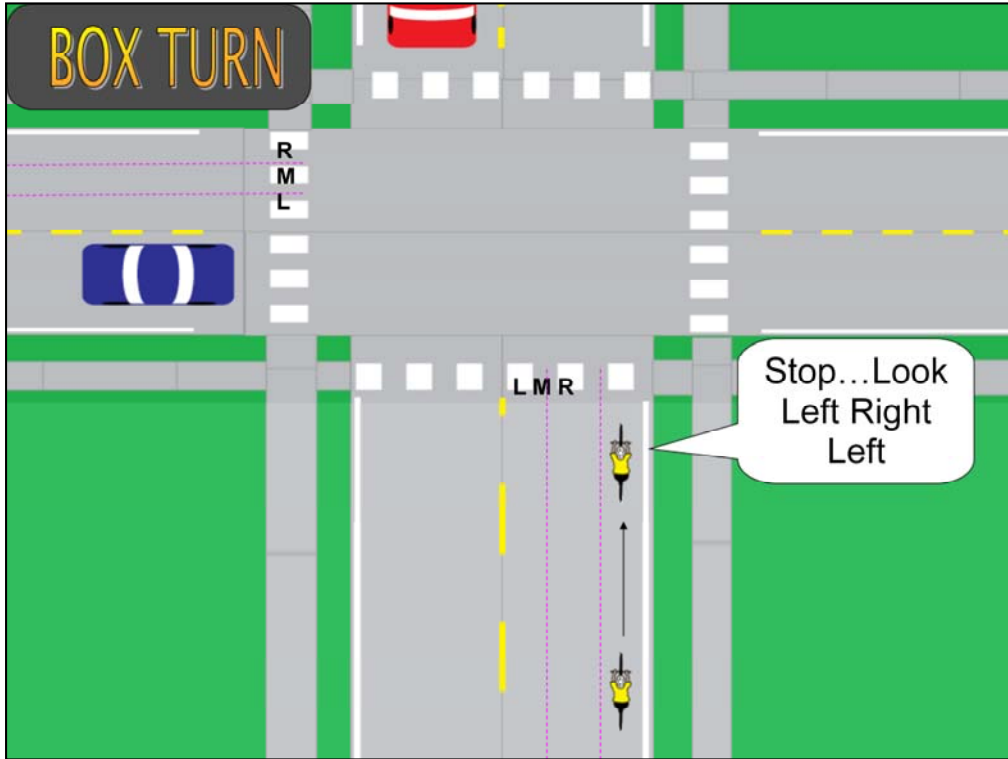
Next



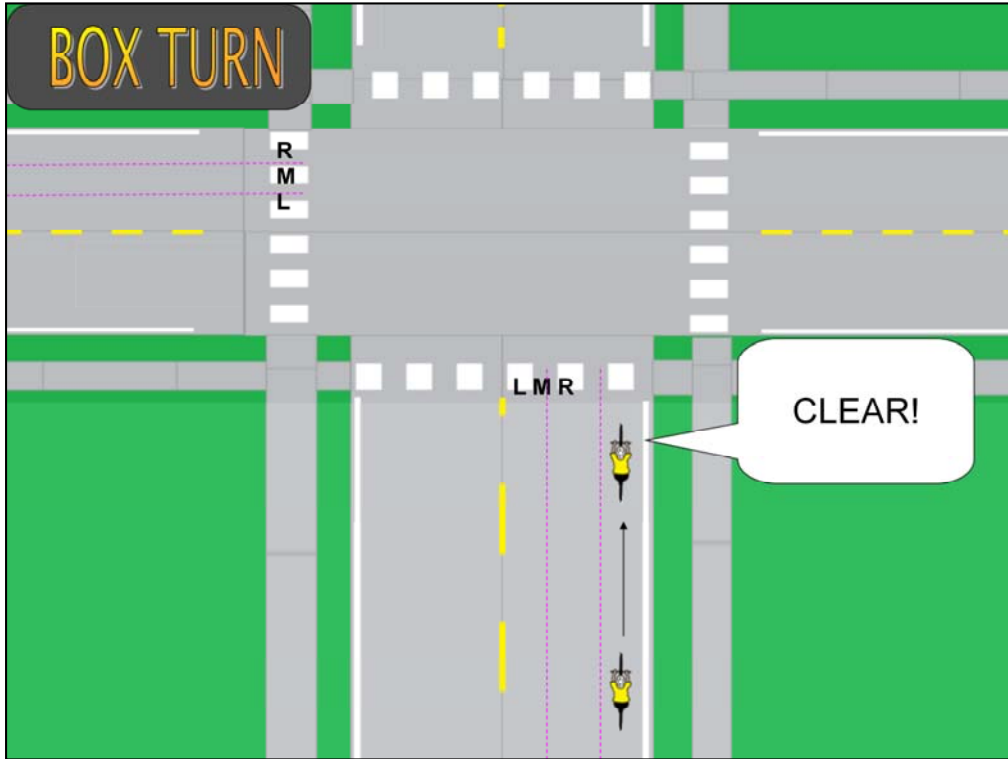
At a busy intersection the safe way to turn left is to do the box turn.



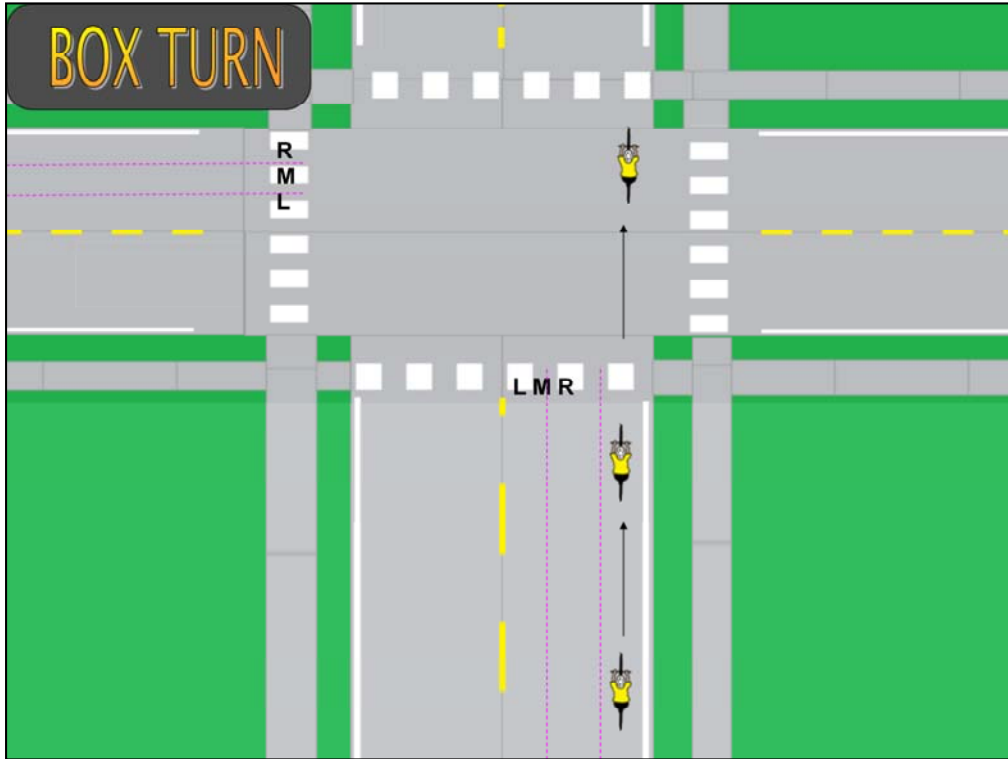
watch



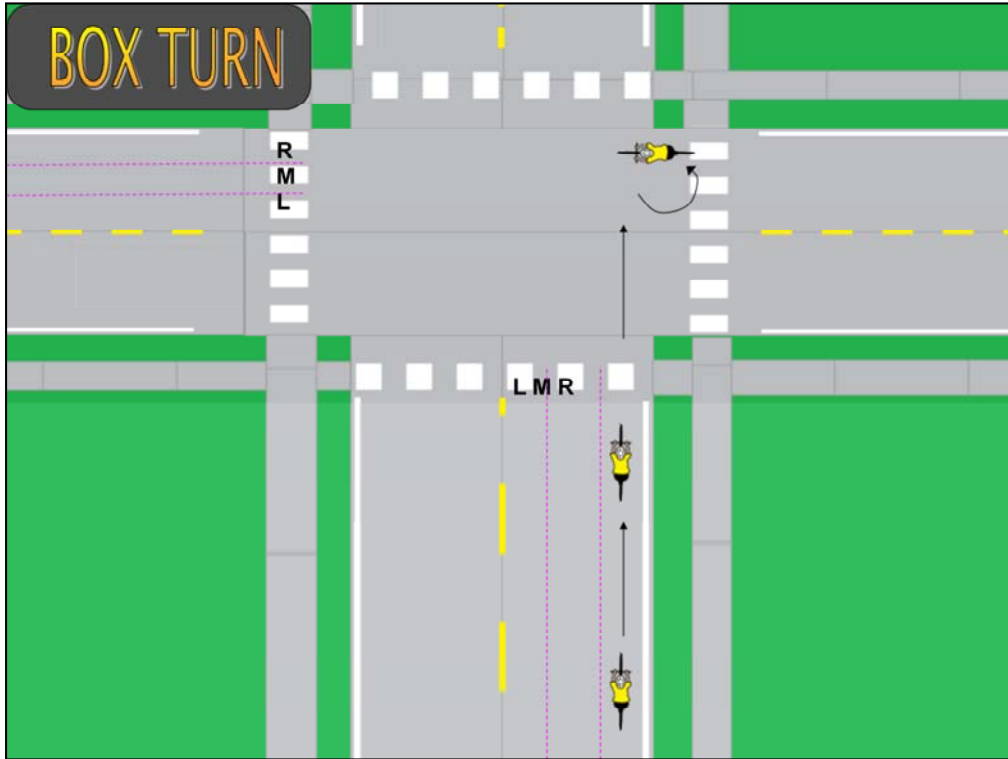
Stay in the right lane, cross in one direction.



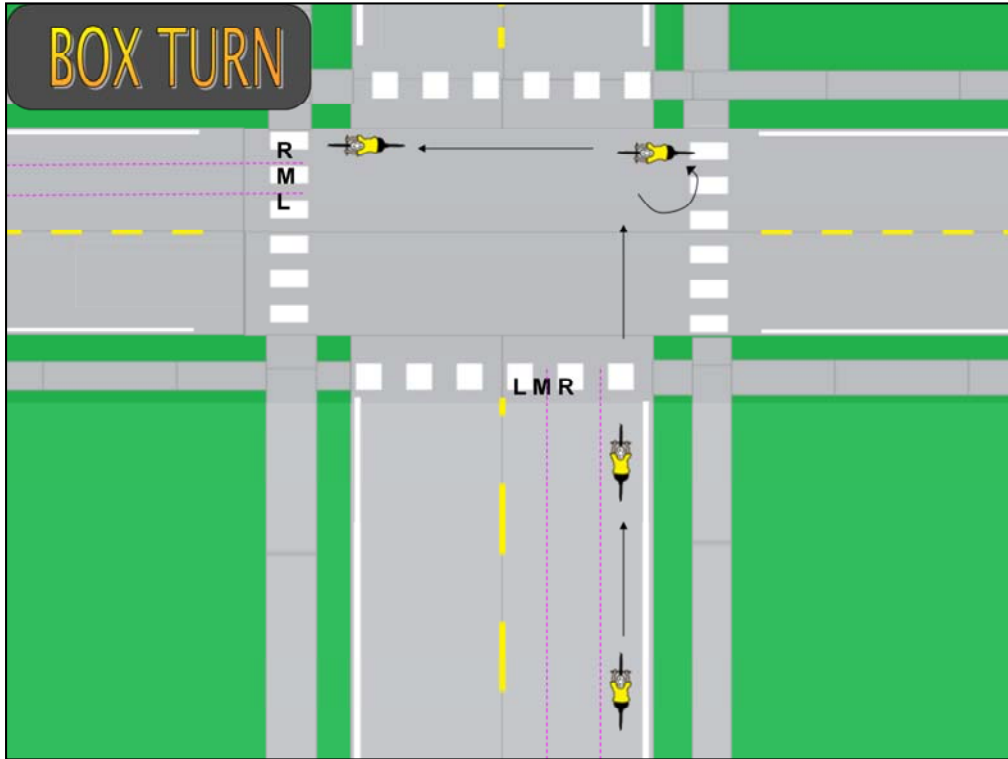
next



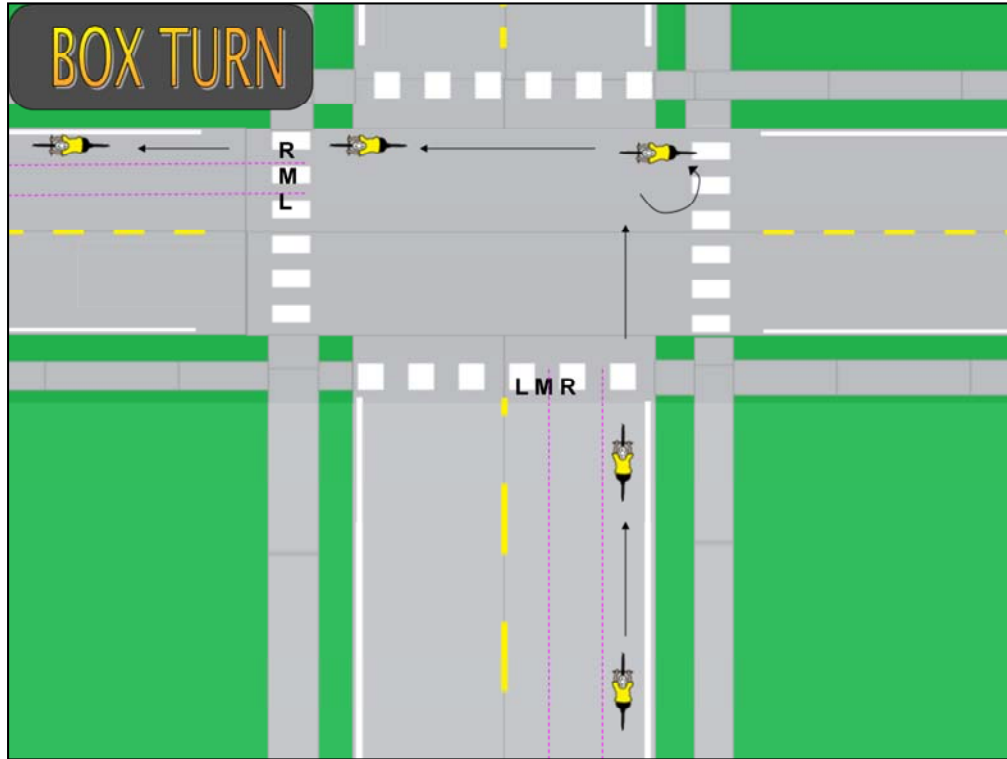
next



Turn your bike and cross in the other direction.



next



OR at a really busy intersection, **wait for the light, and walk your bike in the cross walk**

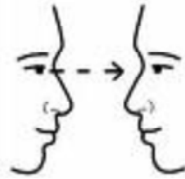
Multi-use/bike path etiquette

- Ride on the right, pass on the left
- Use audible warning (bell or voice) before passing
- Listen up! Headphones prevent you from hearing warnings
- If you have to stop, pull over off the trail
- Ride single file when trails are busy so that others can pass safely
- Watch for the unexpected, especially with kids or dogs
- Slow down when trail is crowded



Go over slide.

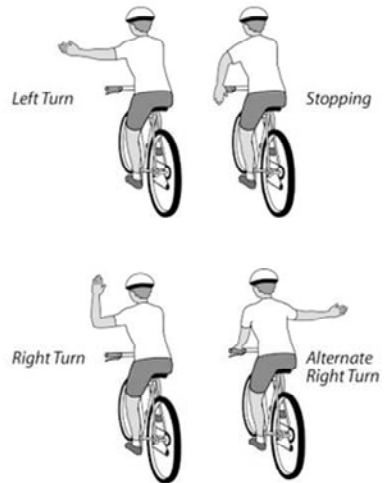
Bicycle Communication



Safe bike riding is really about good communication. Hand signals, eye contact and your voice are all tools you have to let other people know what you are doing. Cars are not the only other things on the road. You also have to communicate with other cyclists and with pedestrians. When you ride in a group use your voice to let others know what is going on call out STOPPING or SLOWING, and use your hand signals. This is especially important to tell the person behind you so that they won't crash into you when you stop suddenly. Always let pedestrians know you're about to pass them by using your voice or a bell.

Sometimes you can't use your hands, for example riding downhill and there's a stop sign at the bottom, you need both hands on your brakes! – so you really need to use your voice.

Bicycle Communication



Hand signals are a great way to communicate with other drivers. A turn signal implies that the rider will probably slow or stop (depending on traffic conditions) before turning, so the separate stopping signal is not essential. The slowing or stopping signal is most useful when it is not obvious the rider will not continue at a steady speed. The stopping signal is also useful when riding with other cyclists, so that they are warned when you are preparing to stop. Remember to use your hand signals before changing position or speed; both braking and turning need both hands on the handlebars!



We have to share the road and be respectful of others but remember to always **WATCH FOR YOURSELF** – no matter what anyone else is doing – watch for yourself, take charge of your safe ride and have fun!

CREDITS

Created By Amy Jolly, For the Sonoma County

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and The Iowa Bicycle Coalition For Use of Images and text

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last