

Tips for Safe Cycling

Cycling is great exercise and an easy, low-cost and environmentally-friendly way to get around town, especially a sprawling and generally flat town like Gander. It's also a great way for children to learn responsibility, so parents and caregivers should encourage biking while stressing safety, including use of properly fitted and secured helmets.

Helmet use is now mandatory for ALL cyclists, regardless of age, throughout the Province.

Speed, inexperience and not wearing protective gear are among leading causes of cycling injuries. About a third of hospital emergency visits with cycling injuries involve broken bones, and one in 10 cycling deaths or serious injuries result from collisions with vehicles.

While everyone on the road is responsible for driving safely, cyclists are less visible and far more vulnerable than motorists; safety must be a constant priority when sharing the road.

The following tips will help keep you safe and make your cycling experience more enjoyable:

Always wear properly fitted and secure helmets (studies show children between ages 10 and 14 are the group least likely to wear a helmet).

Know and obey traffic rules when cycling on the road.

Make sure your bicycle is in good working order and equipped with front, side and rear lights or markers, as well as a bell or horn to alert others of your presence.

Use reflective stripes on clothing and bicycles, and use flickering lights (even during daylight hours) to make yourself more visible to motorists.

Keep away from busier streets and parking lots and never ride on sidewalks.

Ride smoothly, avoiding sudden stops or turns. Always look and plan well ahead when approaching intersections or obstacles.

Bike with a buddy – if children or youth are cycling any distance without parental supervision, bike with a buddy, agree in advance on a return time and stick to a route that's familiar, illuminated and avoids secluded areas.

Above all, keep safety in mind at all times. Know what you'll do if the motorist ahead cuts you off, or if the door of that parked car opens in front of you. Be aware of everything going on all around you, not just ahead, and you'll face far fewer close calls and spills.
