

Be a Safe Bike Driver..



Riding your bicycle can be great fun. But do you know how to "drive" your bike?

Riding your bike is just like driving a car--there are rules for bike driving. Here are a few tips from the Bicycle Coalition of Maine

1 Wear Your Helmet the Right Way

It's the law in Maine to wear a helmet correctly if you are under 16. Do the "Eyes, Ears, Mouth Test™"



- First put on your helmet so it is level and snug--if it slides around, you need to insert thicker pads
- **EYES** - you should see the very edge of your helmet when you look up past your eyebrows
- **EARS** - the straps should meet right under your ear lobes to form a Y
- **MOUTH** - the strap should be loose enough so you can breathe and insert a finger between the buckle and your skin, but tight enough that if you drop your jaw you can feel the helmet pull down on the top of your head

If you need help, go to a bike shop. Never throw your helmet or leave it in a hot place because it will get damaged (even though you cannot tell). Replace your helmet if it is damaged, no longer fits, or if it is over 5 years old.

2 Check Your Bike for Safety

Have your bike checked at least once a year at a bike shop. Check it yourself before biking with the ABC Quick Check:

- **AIR** - pinch the tires, they should be hard
- **BRAKES** - make sure they work and aren't rubbing the tire
- **CRANK/CHAIN** - if there are problems with your gears or if the chain is loose, take your bike to a bike shop
- **QUICK** - check "quick release levers" and other bolts to make sure they are tight



3 Dress Bright for Safety

- Wear light- or bright-colored clothing so you can be seen
- Tuck away shoelaces or other strings or cords so they don't dangle--they may get caught in the moving parts of your bike
- Loose or baggy clothing can also be dangerous--so make sure you wear snug clothes
- Never wear headphones



4 Obey the Rules of the Road

- Ride on the right
- Ride single file
- Obey traffic signs, signals, and laws
- Ride straight--no surprises!
- Look back and signal before turning
- Yield to people walking
- Use lights if riding at night (remember to ask your parents for permission)
- Always stop at the end of your driveway--look left, right, then left again before entering the road
- Feel unsafe? You can always walk you bike

When we all drive safely and follow the rules of the road, it is easy to be safe and have fun!