

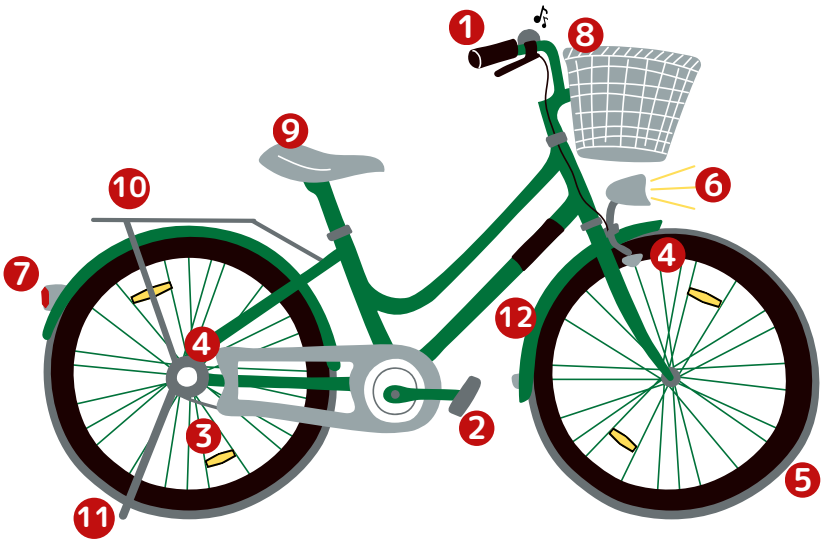
TRAFFIC SAFETY GUIDE FOR CYCLISTS

Updated April 2026

This guide was created based on information from the Metropolitan Police Deparment, the Hokkaido Police, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure Transport and Tourism.

BICYCLE SAFETY CHECK

Before you ride your bicycle, make sure to check the following points and adjust or repair the bicycle as necessary.





Pay extra attention when checking your bicycle if you didn't use it during winter!

1. Are the handlebars properly aligned with the front wheel?
2. Are the pedals loose or bent out of alignment?
3. Is the bike chain properly tightened and not rusted? Does it rotate smoothly?
4. Are the front and rear brakes working well?
5. Do both tires have enough air? Is the tread worn down?
6. Does the headlight shine brightly when turned on?
7. Does the rear light work? Are there reflectors on the rear and sides?
8. Are all other bicycle parts attached properly and in good working order?
9. Is the seat is firmly fixed at a height where both of your feet can touch the ground?
10. Is the luggage rack fixed firmly in place and undamaged?
11. Does the bike stand work properly when in use? Does it move smoothly?
12. Are the mud guards fixed firmly in place?

⚠ **Improperly Maintained Bicycle**
Traffic infraction fine: 5,000 yen
Penalty: Criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen



FIVE RULES FOR SAFE BICYCLE USE

1 In principle, cyclists should stay on the road and only use sidewalks in exceptional cases.



- As bicycles are considered vehicles, cyclists should cycle on the road as a general rule.
  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 6,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen
- Cyclists should ride on the left side of the road
  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 6,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen
- As an exception, you may ride on the sidewalk in the following cases
  - The sidewalk is signposted “Bicycles Permitted”
  - You are a child (under 13), elderly (70 and above), or a person with a disability
  - When there are narrow roads, roadworks, parked cars, and other such exceptional circumstances that make it difficult to ride on the left side of the road

  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 3,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine or petty fine of no more than 20,000 yen



- Pedestrians have the right of way on the sidewalk, so slow down when passing pedestrians and keep to the side. If you are at risk of obstructing pedestrians, make a full stop.
  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 3,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine or petty fine of no more than 20,000 yen

2 At intersections, obey traffic lights and stop signs, and check for safety.



- Cyclists must obey traffic lights when riding on the road
  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 6,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen
- At intersections make a full stop and check both ways.
  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 5,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

3 Always use your bike lights at night.



- At night, use your bicycle lights and wear reflective gear
  ⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 5,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

4 It is prohibited to ride a bicycle under the influence of alcohol.



- Just as with driving a car, you should not ride a bicycle while under the influence of alcohol.
  ⚠ **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 5 years, or criminal fine of no more than 1,000,000 yen (in case of riding under the influence)

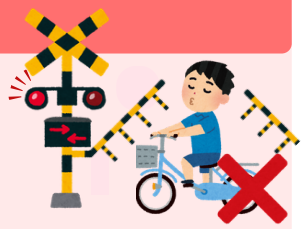
5 Wear a bicycle helmet.



Parents and guardians of children under the age of 13 must ensure that their children wear a helmet when riding a bicycle. All cyclists, not just children, are required to make an effort to wear a helmet.

PROHIBITED ACTS

Entering an active railway crossing.



Do not enter a railway crossing while the barrier is closing or the alarm is sounding.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 7,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

Riding a bicycle with defective (or no) brakes.



Do not ride a bicycle that does not have brakes installed on both the front and back wheels.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 5,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

Holding an umbrella.



Do not carry any objects, such as an umbrella, that may obstruct your vision or upset your balance when riding a bicycle.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 5,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

Using a mobile phone.



Do not hold a mobile phone to talk or text while riding a bicycle.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 12,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 6 months, or criminal fine of no more than 100,000 yen

Using earphones, etc.



Do not use earphones, etc., to listen to music, etc., while riding a bicycle. This prevents you from hearing the sounds and voices around you, which you need to be aware of to safely ride a bicycle.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 6,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

Riding side-by-side.



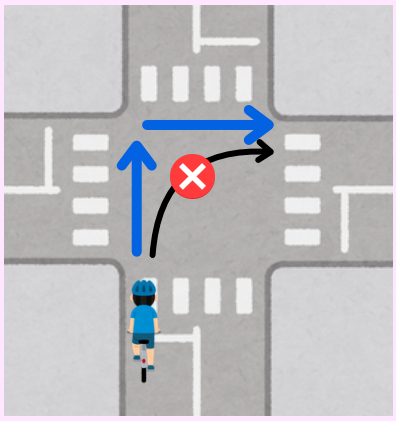
Do not ride alongside other bicycles.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 3,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine or petty fine of no more than 20,000 yen

TRAFFIC RULES

Turning right at intersections

If there are no traffic lights, you must keep as near to the left edge of the road as possible, ride straight ahead to the other side of the intersection, and reduce speed sufficiently before turning.



⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 3,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine or petty fine of no more than 20,000 yen

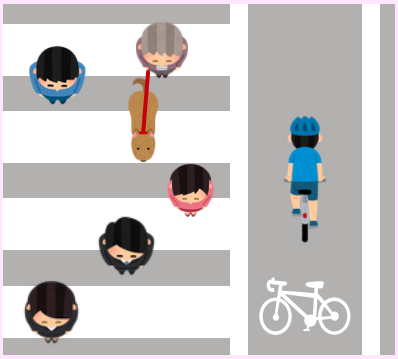
TWO-STEP TURN

When turning right at an intersection with traffic lights, you must first go straight through the intersection while the light is green, stop there, and turn your bicycle to face right. Only proceed when the light in front of you turns green.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 6,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

Crossing the road

When crossing a road, you must use a **designated bicycle crossing lane** if one is located nearby. Also, if there is a bicycle crossing lane at an intersection, you must use that lane.



IF THERE IS NO DESIGNATED BICYCLE CROSSING

Pedestrian crossings are for pedestrians, so you can only ride your bicycle across them if there are no pedestrians on the crossing and you are not likely to obstruct pedestrian traffic.

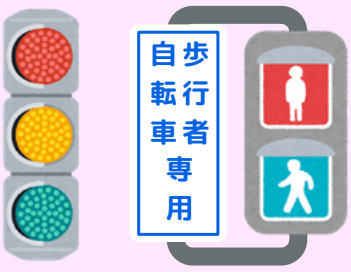


If riding a bicycle through the pedestrian crossing may obstruct pedestrian traffic, please dismount and walk across.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 5,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine or petty fine of no more than 20,000 yen

Understanding which traffic lights to obey

When on the road, you must obey the traffic lights facing you. If you are riding on the sidewalk, obey the pedestrian lights. However, when the pedestrian light has a sign that indicates "Pedestrians and Cyclists Only," even cyclists traveling on the road must also obey the pedestrian lights

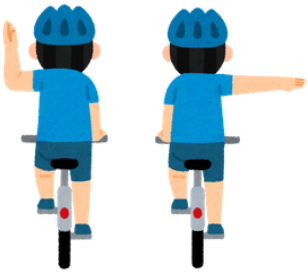


⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 6,000 yen **Penalty:** Imprisonment for no more than 3 months, or criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen

HAND SIGNALS

Cyclists must communicate their intended movement using hand signals and maintain the hand signal until the movement is complete. See below for the hand signals used to communicate right and left turns, U-turns, slowing, and stopping.

⚠ **Traffic infraction fine:** 5,000 yen **Penalty:** Criminal fine of no more than 50,000 yen



- Turning right
- Changing lanes to the right
- Making a right U-turn



- Turning left
- Changing lanes to the left
- Making a left U-turn



- Slowing down
- Stopping



For more details on regulations that apply to violations of the Road Traffic Act, such as the Blue Ticket System, please refer to the following leaflets.

Starting April 1, 2026, the Blue Ticket System will apply to bicycles!

Starting April 1, 2026, **the Blue Ticket System (Traffic Infraction Notification Procedure)**, which previously applied only to automobiles and other similar vehicles, **has been extended to apply to bicycles**. For details, please refer to the leaflet created by the National Police Agency.

https://www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan/info/detail.html?pid=6231532375324

New penalties for dangerous cycling!

Starting November 1, 2024, **new penalties for dangerous cycling have been established** to prevent cycling-related accidents caused by using a phone while cycling or cycling under the influence of alcohol. For details, please refer to the leaflet created by the Metropolitan Police Department.

www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan/info/detail.html?pid=8730062336999

ROAD SIGNS

Cyclists must obey road signs. Below is a selection of road signs related to cycling. See the National Policy Agency list linked at the bottom of the page for a complete list of traffic lights and road signs.



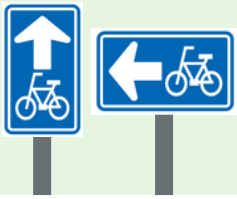
Road Closed to Bicycles and Specified Motorized Bicycles



Traffic Lanes Exclusively for Standard Bicycles



Motor Vehicles Only



One Way for Bicycles and Specified Small Motorized Bicycles



Bicycles and Specified Small Motorized Bicycles Only



Cycling Side-by-Side Allowed



Standard Bicycles and Pedestrians Only



Bicycle Crossing Lane



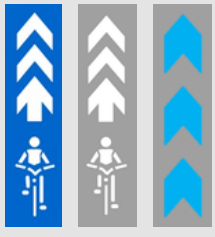
Pedestrians Only



Pedestrian Crossing and Bicycle Crossing Lane

List of Traffic Lights and Road Signs (National Police Agency)

https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/traffic-light_english.pdf



Bicycle Navigation Marks and Lines

These marks and lines specify the area and direction in which a bicycle should travel. Bicycles should travel in the direction that the arrows are pointing. (Riding in the opposite direction is not allowed.)

IF YOU GET INTO A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT



1 **Stop cycling immediately.**

2 **Move your bicycle to the side in order to prevent obstructing other traffic.**

3 **In cases of injury, call 119 for an ambulance.**



Stop any bleeding using a clean handkerchief or cloth, and provide support for the injured person until the ambulance arrives. However, do not move the person unnecessarily.

4 **Call the police (110) regardless of whether anyone is injured or not.**



Do not leave the site of the accident under any circumstance until the police arrive. As the operator of the vehicle, you are legally obligated to report the details of the accident to a police officer.

ENROLLING IN ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Cyclists should purchase personal accident insurance to cover any accidents

- In the event of a bicycle accident, the cyclist may be held liable for large amounts of damages.
- Please check with your insurance provider to see if you are already covered for bicycle accidents.



HOW TO PREVENT BICYCLE THEFT

1 **Always double lock your bicycle!**

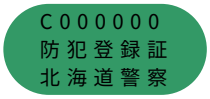


Bicycle thieves want to be able to steal a bike in a short amount of time. Using a two-lock system, such as a chain or u-lock in addition to the regular lock, is effective in preventing this.

2 **Use caution even in bicycle parking areas! Attach your bike to fixed objects where possible.**



3 **Always register your bicycle!**



Completing the “Bike Theft Prevention Registration” helps prevent theft and identify the owners of abandoned bicycles. It is highly recommended that you register your bicycle.

www.hiecc.or.jp/soudan support@hiecc.or.jp TEL: 011-200-9595 FAX: 011-221-7845