Rider's guide

Bikeability Scotland Level 2



Name:

Cycling Scotland

bikeability.scot

February 2026

Introduction

Bikeability Scotland is the national cycle training programme for school children. It is designed to give you the skills and confidence to ride your bike more often.

Bikeability Scotland Level 2 introduces using roads and riding safely and responsibly in traffic. Before starting level 2 you have already learned to ride your bike and have demonstrated all level 1 outcomes.

There are six learning outcomes in Level 2:

- Identify and respond to hazards.
- Comply with signals, signs and road markings.
- Communicate with other road users.
- Maintain suitable riding positions.
- Start and stop on-road journeys.
- Negotiate junctions.

This guide contains information and activities to support your cycle training.

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Bike, helmet, clothing and equipment checks

It's important that your bike is safe to cycle on the road. This means that all parts of your bike should work correctly. If your bike is unsafe, it might lead to an accident.

During training, you will have learned how to do the **M check**.

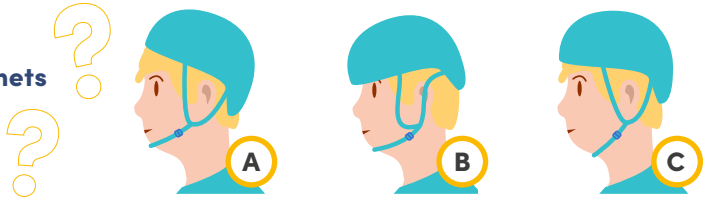
Find and circle three faults with this bike:



Helmet

A helmet will not prevent an accident. However, if it is fitted properly it may help protect your head if you fall.

Which of these helmets is correctly fitted?



Clothing and equipment

You should wear clothing that helps you stay comfortable, be seen, is appropriate for the weather, and that won't get caught up in your bike.

How would you fix the following:

- Loose bag straps: _____
- Bike lock wrapped around handlebars: _____
- Baggy trousers: _____

Core functions

The bike control skills you developed during level 1 training are the foundation of Bikeability Scotland. In addition to control, there are four 'core-functions' that you learn in Bikeability Scotland to use when cycling on-road.



Making good and frequent observations

To make sure you are cycling safely, you need to know what is going on all around you. The best way to do this is to be able to look at the road ahead of you and over both of your shoulders.

Being able to look behind you is a key skill – the shoulder you choose to look over depends on what direction you will turn.



Choosing and maintaining the most suitable riding positions

Bikeability Scotland training teaches you to adopt the most appropriate road position based on the situation. You choose a position that is best for your safety and other road users at a particular time. You will often ride in the centre of your lane, and ideally never less than a metre from the kerb.

Good road positioning allows you to be seen more easily by other road users, see more of the road around you and also communicate your intentions to others.

A useful memory aid is **COPPS** (**C**ontrol, **O**bserve, **P**osition, **P**riority, **S**ignal/Communicate). 'Signal' is used to refer to all forms of communication with other road users.

Understanding priorities on the road, particularly at junctions

When you visit a shop, you join a queue and the person in front of you goes first – they have priority over you. When riding your bike on the road there are also rules about who gets to go first and when. This is really important as it allows you to know how other road users will act. In Bikeability Scotland, you learn who has priority (gets to go first).

Communicating/Signalling intentions clearly to others

When you ride a bike it is really important that you communicate with other road users. There are lots of ways you can communicate – the most obvious one is a hand signal to let people know you wish to turn in a particular direction. Another very important way to communicate with someone is to make eye contact with them. This is especially important as it lets you know that the other road user has seen you. Your position in the road, or even a look over the shoulder is a way of communicating your intentions on the road.

You can also use your voice to call out to people who might not have seen you.

Questions:

Q: Why do you usually look over your right shoulder?

A: _____

Q: Why should you not ride your bike in the gutter?

A: _____

Q: When turning left or right, who should you communicate with (other than people driving cars)?

A: _____

Q: Who should you give priority to when using shared use paths?

A: _____

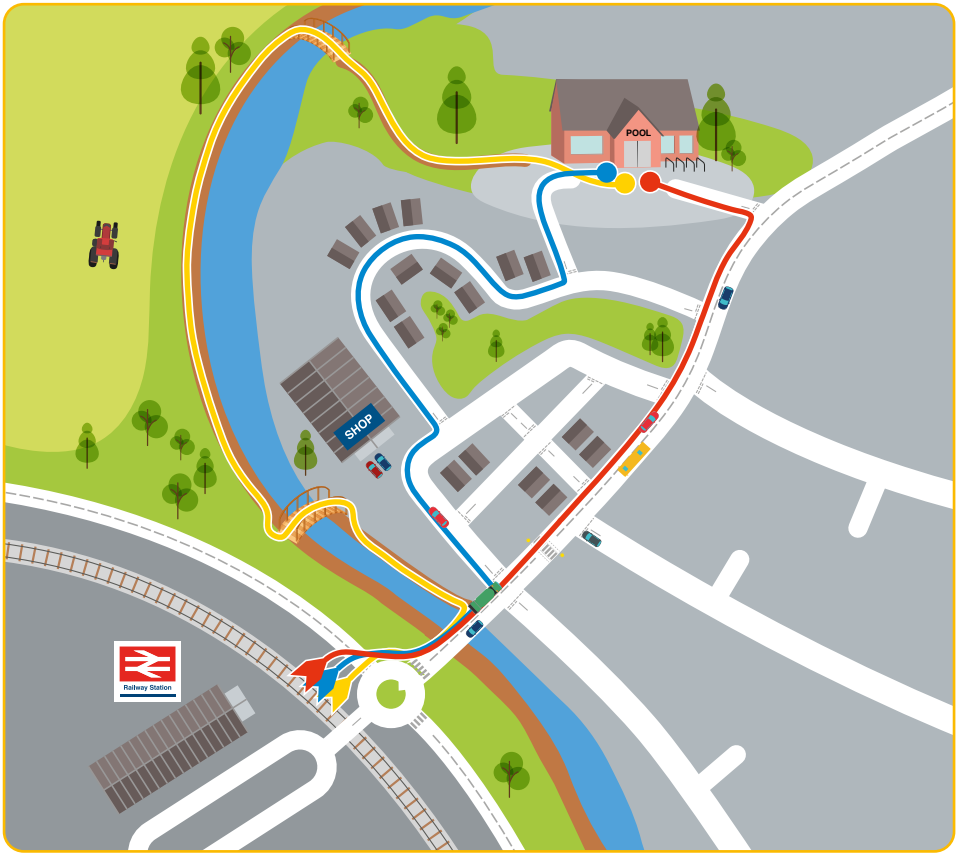
Identify and respond to hazards

When riding on the road, you need to anticipate possible hazards and prepare to respond to them.



Look at the picture and decide how you would respond to these hazards:

- Parked cars - car doors may open
- Pedestrians (and pets) crossing the road
- Uneven road with slippery drain cover
- Children may come onto the road between parked cars



Looking at the map, link the advantages and disadvantages of the three routes:

BLUE

RED

YELLOW

- Shortest and most direct
- Traffic free - no cars
- Smaller roads - fewer cars
- Busier road with faster vehicles
- Route is unlit and can be muddy
- More junctions to cross

Comply with signals, signs and road markings

When cycling on the road, you need to obey signals, signs and road markings. Some signs you may see are shown below.

Signs giving orders

These signs are mostly circular.
Those with blue circles usually tell you what you must do.



Keep left



Shared path route for pedal cycles and pedestrians only



Turn right ahead



Route recommended for pedal cycles

Signs with red circles tell you not to do something.



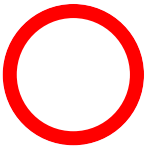
No cycling



No right turn



No entry for vehicles including pedal cycles



No vehicles except pedal cycles being pushed by hand

Warning signs

These are usually triangular



Road works



Children going to or from school



Steep hill downwards

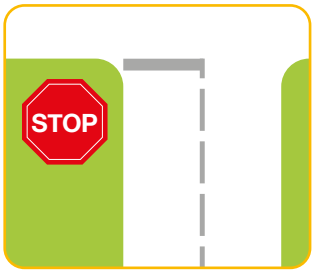


Zebra crossing ahead

Across the road

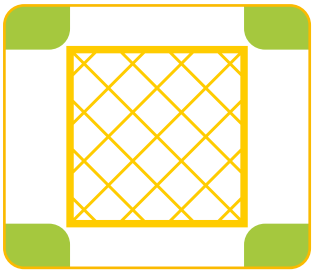


Give way to traffic on the major road

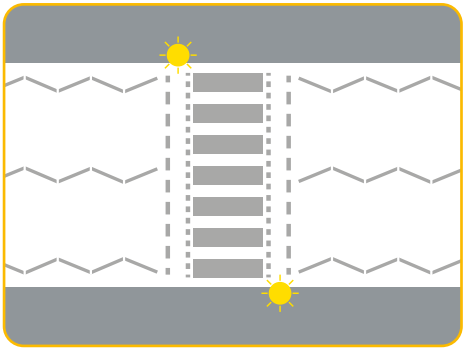


Stop at the solid STOP line

Box junction



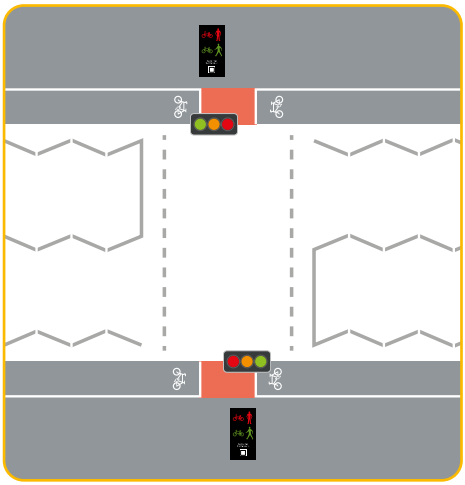
Do not enter the box unless your exit road or lane is clear, except to turn right



Zebra and Pelican Crossings

Vehicles must not overtake, wait or park in the zig zag areas. Pedestrians should not cross on the zig zag areas. They should always use the crossing.

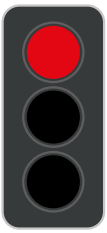
You must stop for pedestrians at zebra crossings.



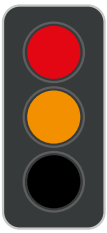
Toucan Crossings

Toucan crossings are light controlled crossings which allow people on bikes and pedestrians to share crossing space and cross at the same time.

Traffic lights



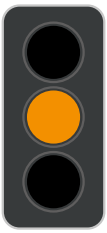
Red
STOP
Wait behind the stop line



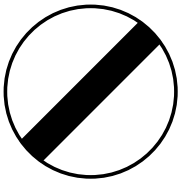
Red and amber
Also means STOP



Green
You may go if it is safe to do so. Take special care if you mean to turn left or right and give way to pedestrians who are crossing.



Amber
Also means STOP



If you live in the countryside it is likely you will see this sign often, which means, national speed limit. Some vehicles can travel up to 60 (or even 70mph) in these areas.

Safety around railways

Cycling to the station is a good option for longer journeys. Most stations have secure cycle racks, and you can take your bike with you on many trains.

At the station, never cycle on the platform, and make sure your bike lights are switched off.

If the road or cycle path crosses a railway using a level crossing take extra care.

- Follow all signs and instructions. Wait until all warnings have stopped.
- It might be safer to dismount and walk.
- If you need to use gates, do not cross if there is any sign or sound of a train approaching.



What do you think these signs mean?

Match the description with the image:



Road narrows on the left.



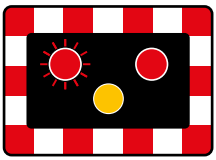
T junction with priority over vehicles from the right.



Level crossing with barrier or gate ahead.



Give priority to vehicles from opposite direction.



No through road for vehicles.



Stop when flashing (used at railway crossings, fire stations, open bridges).



Toucan crossing - People on cycles can cross the road with pedestrians when the light is green.

Communicate with other road users

You can communicate with other road users in a variety of ways:

Observations

Make eye contact with other road users.

Hand signals

Indicate your direction, or desire to slow.

Sound

Use your bell, especially useful to alert people walking and cycling. Use your voice: give a friendly greeting to horse riders, or call out in an emergency.

Position

Your road position can indicate your intention when passing side roads and at junctions.



Arm signals

When turning left or right, you should communicate to other road users with a clear arm signal, ideally held for 3 seconds.

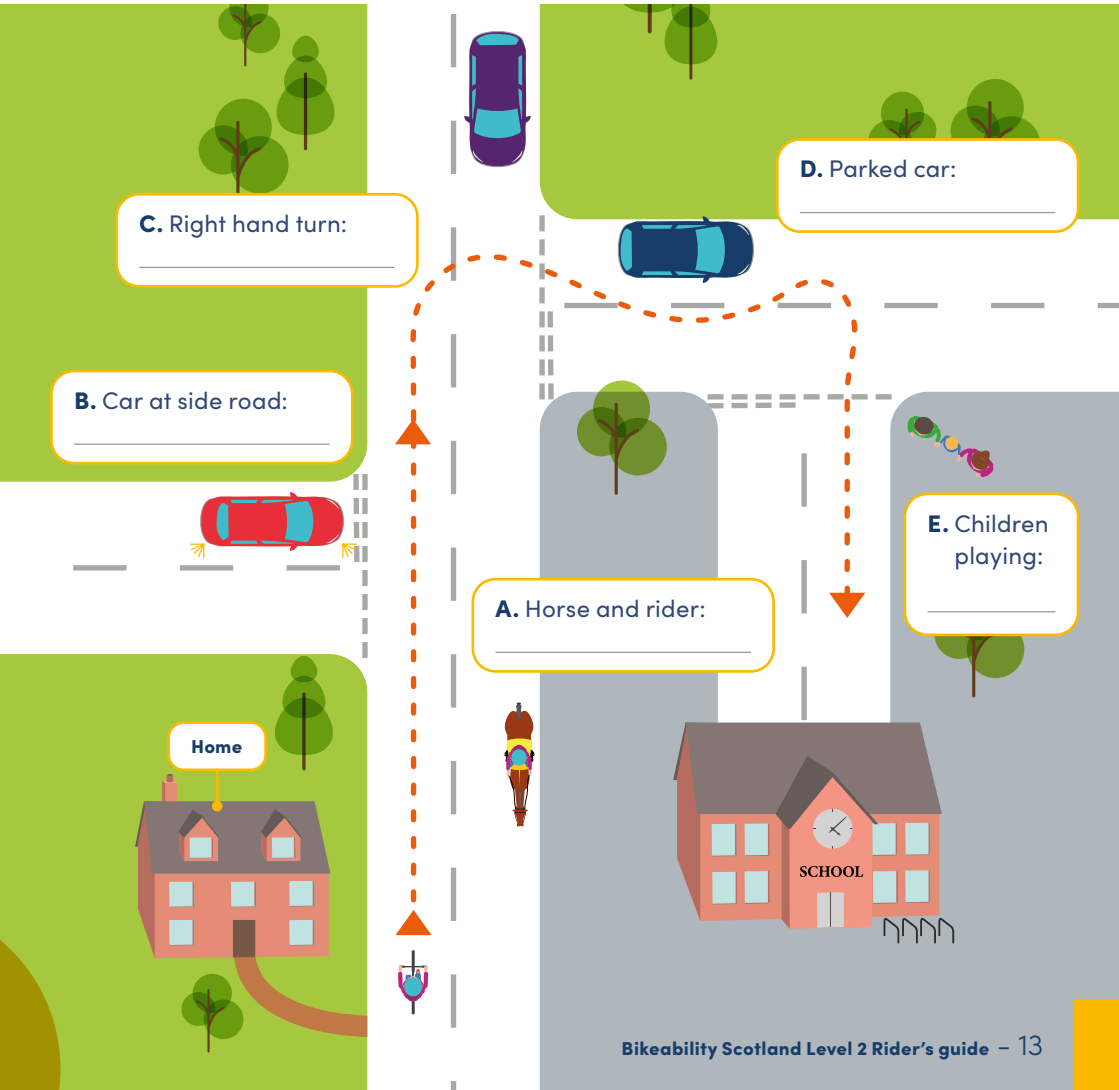
You should also be familiar with the slowing down signal presented in the Highway Code.

Communicate with other road users

How would you communicate with other people on your route to school?

Choosing from this list, consider the most appropriate method of communication. You may choose more than one if necessary.

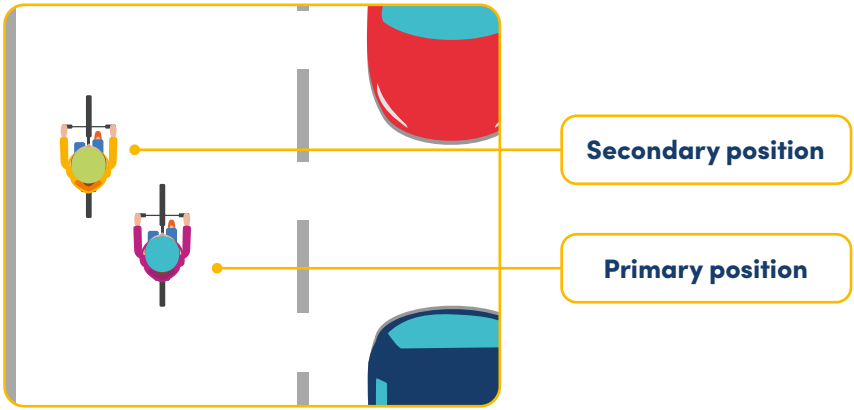
Eye contact, hand signal, make a sound, change road position.



Maintain a suitable riding position

Road position may change depending on factors such as location, other road users and weather conditions.

The most common positions are the **'Primary'** and **'Secondary'** position.



The primary position

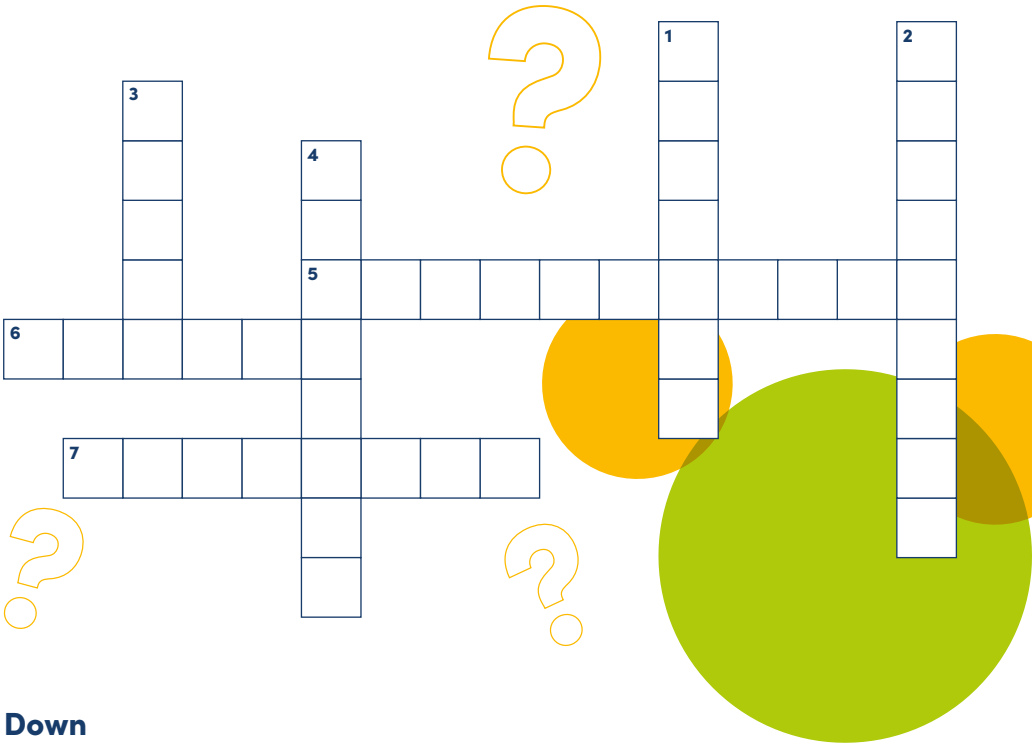
- Is usually the centre of your lane.
- Allows you to see more, and helps other road users see you.
- Is the best position when it is not safe for other road users to pass you.

The secondary position

- Is further to the left of the primary position.
- Allows faster traffic to come past you, but still provides enough space to react and see the road ahead.
- Is ideally a metre away from the kerb, and is *never* the gutter.

Note: sometimes if the road is narrow, there may be little difference between primary and secondary positions

Complete the crossword below, thinking about road positioning.



Down

1. Your regular position when negotiating junctions (7)
2. Use this position when it is safe to let other vehicles overtake (9)
3. Which way are you turning if your position is closer to the middle of the road? (5)
4. Avoid this area when passing parked cars (8)

Across

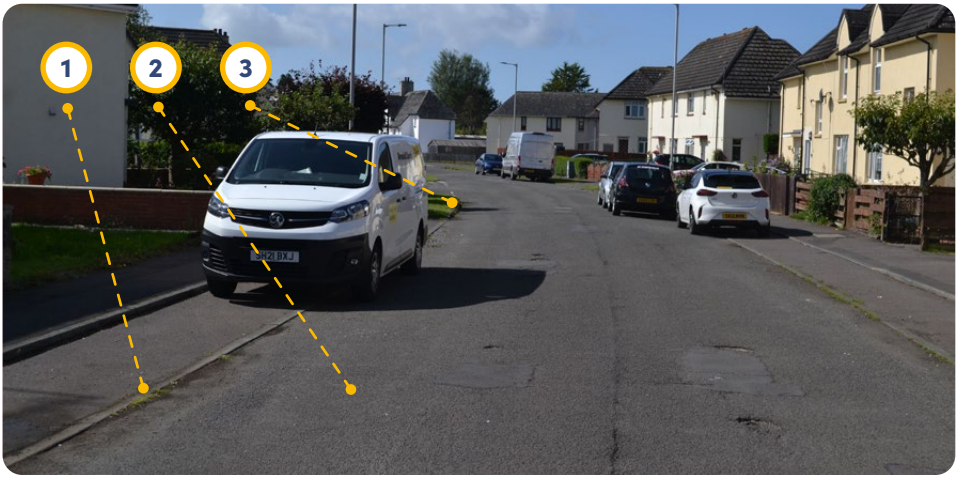
5. Look out with this core function (11)
6. Never ride in this area at the edge of the road (6)
7. These broken bits of road are hazards (8)

Crossword answers are on Page 23.

Start and stop on-road journeys

Look at the photos below, and identify:

A: A safer place to start:

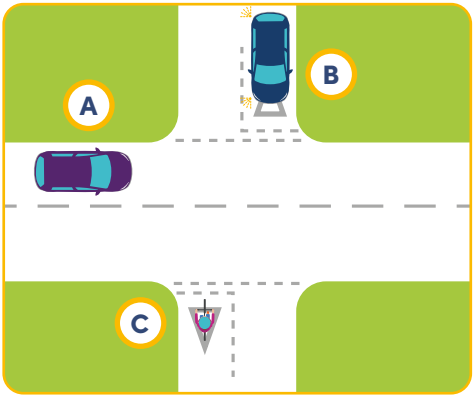


B: A safer place to stop:

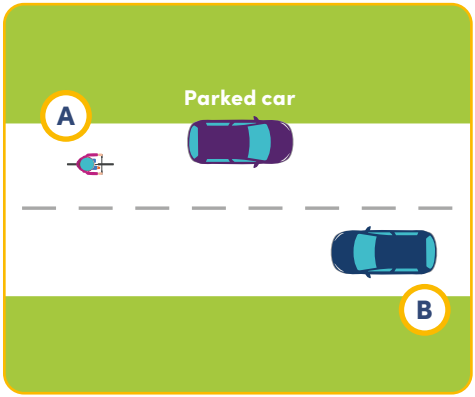


Priorities

Look at the pictures below, and decide who has priority (goes first).

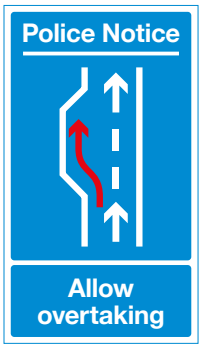


Priority: _____



Priority: _____





If you are riding in the countryside, you might cycle on a "single track road" - this means there is only space for one road user at a time to get past. This is helped by "passing places".

If you get to the passing place and see a road user up ahead, you should wait in the passing place if it is on your side of the road, or opposite it, if it is on the other side of the road.

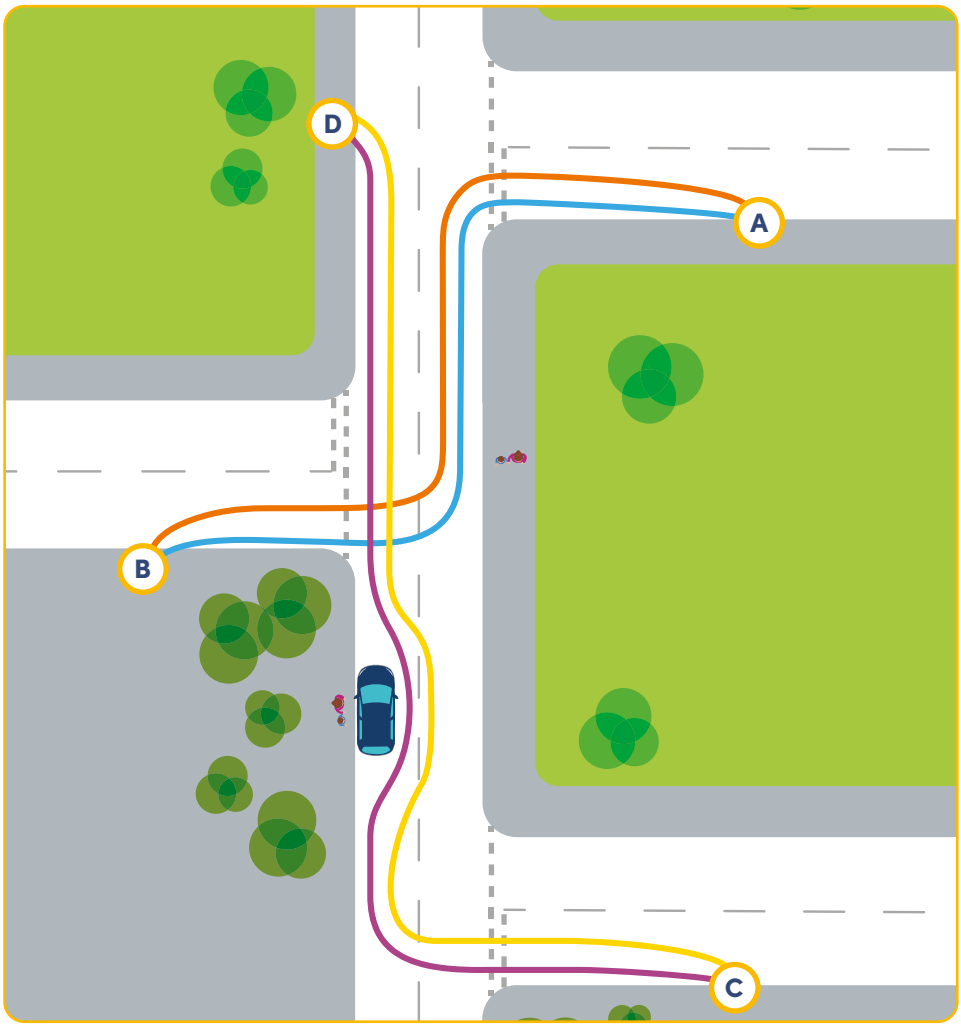
Use passing places to allow faster moving vehicles to pass safely.

Negotiate junctions: position

Choose the coloured line that you would follow for each journey and explain your choice, mentioning riding position.

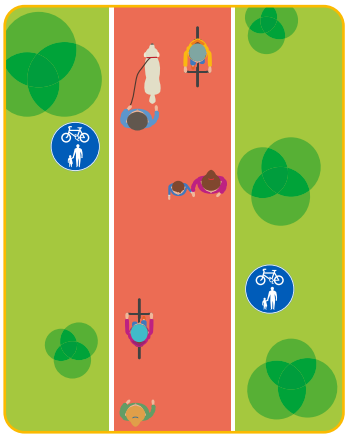
1. **A** to **B** _____

2. **C** to **D** _____



Share space and use cycle infrastructure

As more places recognise the benefits of cycling it is becoming more common to see shared use paths and cycle lanes.

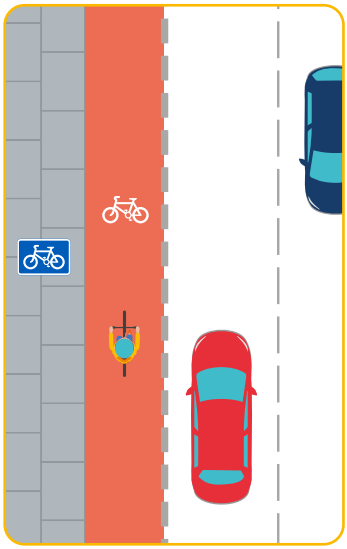


Shared use paths

Shared use paths are separate from the carriageway, and are often shared with pedestrians and horse riders.

It is important to look out and protect people and animals travelling slower than you by adjusting your speed and giving plenty of space.

A horse and their rider can be very easily scared so be prepared to stop and give them time to react to your call of 'Hi', and pass wide and slow.



Cycle lanes

Cycle lanes are usually on the carriageway. Some lanes will have a protective separation, but often are simply painted lines.

Cycle lanes may help to protect you, but you should only use them when it is safe to do so.

You do not have to use a cycle lane. Some examples of why you may not choose to use them are listed below. Can you think of any more?

- They are covered in debris or cars are parked in them
- Car doors could open and hit you
- They place you in secondary position when you need to improve your visibility.

The Highway Code and responsibilities as a rider

The Highway Code is a set of rules for all road users.

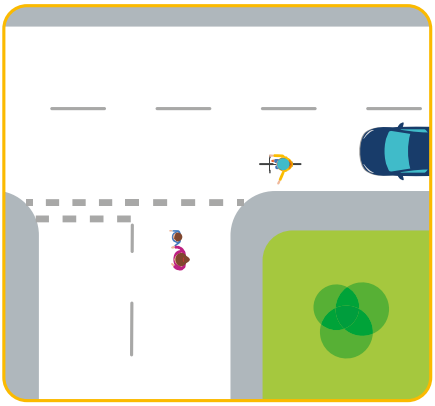
Rule H1 states that ALL road users have responsibility for their own, and other road user's safety, and that *"those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility".*

This means that when we are cycling, we have responsibility for the safety of people who are walking and wheeling.



Rule H2 of the Highway Code says *"At a junction you should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning".*

People walking and wheeling also have priority on shared paths, including in parks and promenades. You should slow down or stop for them and give them plenty of space.



In some places it is not permitted to cycle – if you see the 'no cycling' sign you should climb off and walk, or choose a different route.



No cycling

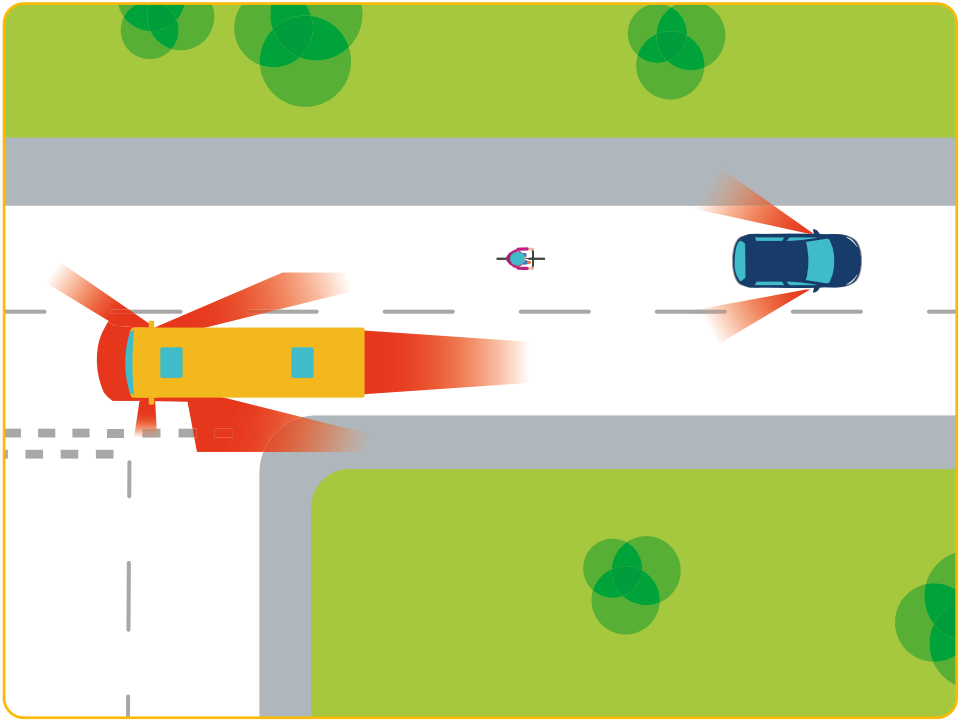
Vehicle blind spots

Many vehicles have “blind spots” – areas around the vehicle that the driver cannot see through windows or in their mirrors.

These areas are bigger for larger vehicles, including buses, trucks and vans. Most of these vehicles have extra sensors and mirrors fitted, but the safest thing to do is make sure that you can see the driver - this means they will be able to see you.

Avoid passing behind vehicles that may be ready to reverse.

Do not ride up the inside (the left) of large vehicles.
Wait far enough behind to see the driver’s mirror.



Riding with a friend

Cycling with a friend can be a lot of fun.

When riding together:

- Agree on your route and how you will communicate with each other
- Give each other enough space, in case you need to suddenly slow down or stop

You are allowed to ride side-by-side, but this needs extra care and you must always be prepared to move into single-file (one behind the other). Before you set off, agree who will ride at the front when you are in single-file.

- Riding side-by-side can improve your visibility, and be useful on roads where there is not space to allow faster vehicles to pass (like using the primary position).
- Make sure you both have enough space in case one of you quickly needs to change position, or when passing parked vehicles.
- Allow faster vehicles to pass when there is space, by riding in single-file, or wait in passing places on rural roads.
- When turning at junctions it is usually easier to ride in single file to give you more space. Make your own decisions before turning.

On cycle paths and shared use spaces, always slow down and make space for other users including people walking and wheeling.



For more information, including links to resources and wider cycling opportunities visit **bikeability.scot**

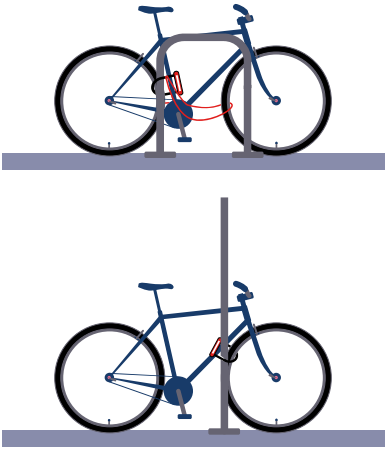
Locking a bike

Always lock your bike to something that can't be moved – a cycle rack is ideal, but if there isn't one, look for an object fastened to the ground that cannot be broken and that the bike cannot be lifted from.

Cheap bike locks can be poor quality, and easily broken by thieves. A good quality D-lock will provide much better protection.

Make sure you have locked the frame to the stand, and not just a wheel, as shown in the picture.

You might want to remove any bottles or bike lights before you leave your bike.



Answers:

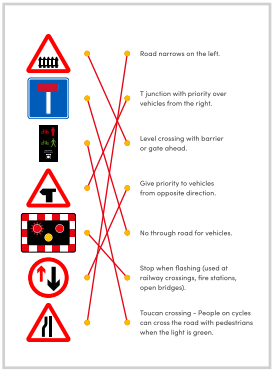
Page 3 – M Check
Front tyre deflated, chain off, saddle in wrong position
Helmet – C is correctly fitted
Loose bag straps – tie ends together or tuck them into pocket
Bike lock – carry it somewhere else, or make sure it is not blocking brake levers or steering
Baggy Trousers – tuck them into socks or use a clip to hold them tight

Page 5 – Core functions quiz
1 – faster vehicles will overtake on your right
2 – the gutter can be filled with debris and you have less visibility
3 – all other road users, including people walking on pavements
4 – people walking and wheeling – see page 20

Page 6
Parked cars – ride at least a doors width from the vehicle
Pedestians crossing the road – use a primary position and slow down to let them cross safely
Uneven road – keep both hands on the handlebars, ride in primary position to give yourself space to change direction
Children coming out between parked cars – scan the road and cover your brakes to react quickly

Page 7
Red: Shortest and most direct / Busier road with faster vehicles
Blue: Smaller roads – fewer cars / more junctions to cross
Yellow: Traffic free – no cars / route is unlit and can be muddy

Page 11



Page 13 – Communications
(suggested)
Right hand turn - hand signal
Car at side road - eye contact
Parked car - change road position
Horse and rider - make a sound
Children playing - make a sound

Page 15 - Crossword answers:
Primary, Secondary, Right, Doorzone, Observation, Gutter, Potholes

Page 16 – Start and Stop on-road journeys
Start: '2' gives visibility beyond the parked van and round corner, and is not in the vehicle blind spot
Stop: The view of '3' is not obstructed by parked cars, and is on left hand side of the road

Page 17 – Priorities
Left image: A, Right image: B

Page 18 - Negotiate junctions: position
1. A to B: Orange
2. C to D: Yellow

Bike check

Use this diagram to check that your bike is safe before riding. Ask an adult to help if there are any problems with your bike. You don't need to use the diagram every time, but it's good to get into the habit of checking your bike regularly.



Cycling at night: When it is dark you must use a white light at the front, and red light and a reflector at the back (as a minimum).

Cycling Scotland

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

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