

Welcome to Bicycling!

Riding a bike is a fun, healthy activity that is enjoyed by many people. Learning the traffic and trail rules will allow riding to be as safe as possible. Experienced bicyclists who follow the rules are up to 20 times safer than novice bicyclists.

Missouri Bicycle Requirements

- In Missouri, bicycles and motorized bicycles may ride on any street except travel lanes of interstate highways or where prevented by a local law. (Motorized bicycles must be licensed as mopeds.)
- Bicyclists have the same rules, rights and responsibilities as other drivers. For example, bicyclists must stop at stop signs and drive on the right-hand side of the road. Anyone riding slower than the speed limit shall stay as far to the right-hand side as safe.
- Anyone riding between sunset and sunrise must have a headlight on the front, a red reflector or tail light on the back, reflective material or a light on the moving parts of the bicyclist or bike and reflective material or lights on the sides of the bike.
- All bikes must have brakes that work.
- Bicycles may be ridden on sidewalks except in busy downtown areas and where prevented by local law. Pedestrians have the right of way and bicyclists must alert walkers by voice, horn or bell. Motorized bicycles may not be ridden on sidewalks.
- No bicyclist may hold onto another vehicle.
- Use turn and stop hand signals (see Sections 304.019 and 307.192, RSMo) at all times when operating a bicycle or motorized bicycle on Missouri streets and highways.
- Traffic signals often fail to detect bicyclists--meaning that the signal won't cycle and give you the green. Bicyclists can sometimes proceed through a red light, but only under very specific conditions: 1) You come to a complete stop. 2) The traffic signal shows a red light for an unreasonable amount of time and appears to be malfunctioning. 3) You wait for a safe break in cross traffic--both vehicles and pedestrians.

On-Road Safety Suggestions

Wear safety gear. *Always* wear a helmet. Wearing sunglasses, gloves and bike shorts are a good idea, too.

Obey the law. Not stopping at a stop sign is dangerous and makes motorists feel that a bicyclist isn't being fair.

People in cars have someplace to go ... don't hold them up without a good reason.

Night-time reduces visibility. Night-time bicyclists should have bright lights and wear reflective clothing.

Ride single file in traffic. State law allows bicyclists to ride side-by-side, but only when they are not impeding (blocking or slowing down) other vehicles. Otherwise, you must ride single file to the right as far as safe.

Off-Road Trail Rules

Plan ahead. Know your equipment, your ability and where you are riding. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Ride on open trails only. Don't trespass on private land (including Federal and state wilderness areas).

Leave no trace. Do not ride on wet and muddy trails. Stay on existing trails (don't create new ones).

Control your bicycle. Watch where you are going and obey all bicycle speed limits.

Always yield the trail. Call a friendly greeting or use a bell, but don't startle other users. Stop if necessary to allow others to pass.

Never scare animals. Be quiet and follow directions from equestrians you see. Never chase animals. Leave gates as you found them or as signs say.

Pre-ride check. Inflate tires, check brakes, carry a repair kit and make sure your tire pump works.

Carry tools. Include a tire repair kit, spare inner tube or inner tube repair kit, bike multi-tool, chain tool, tire pump and lubrication oil.

For more information, see the Revised Statutes of Missouri Sections 300.347, 300.350, 304.019, 304.285, 307.183, 307.185, 307.188, 307.190, 307.191, 307.192, 307.193, 307.195. See also city and county traffic ordinances.

Missouri State Statutes Regarding Bicycles

300.347. Riding bicycle on sidewalks, limitations - motorized bicycles prohibited.

(1) No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk within a business district;

(2) Whenever any person is riding a bicycle upon a sidewalk, such person shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give audible signal before overtaking and passing such pedestrian;

(3) No person shall ride a motorized bicycle upon a sidewalk.

300.350. Riding bicycles, sleds, roller skates, by attaching to another vehicle, prohibited.

No person riding upon any bicycle, motorized bicycle, coaster, roller skates, sled or toy vehicle shall attach the same or himself to any vehicle upon a roadway.

300.330. Bicycle lane regulations

The driver of a motor vehicle shall not drive within any sidewalk area except as a permanent or temporary driveway. A designated bicycle lane shall not be obstructed by a parked or standing motor vehicle or other stationary object. A motor vehicle may be driven in a designated bicycle lane only for the purpose of a lawful maneuver to cross the lane or to provide for safe travel. In making an otherwise lawful maneuver that requires traveling in or crossing a designated bicycle lane, the driver of a motor vehicle shall yield to any bicycle in the lane.

As used in this section, the term "designated bicycle lane" shall mean a portion of the roadway or highway that has been designated by the governing body having jurisdiction over such roadway or highway by striping with signing or striping with pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicycles.

300.411 and 304.678 Overtake bicycles at a safe distance

(1) The operator of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle proceeding in the same direction on the roadway, as defined in section 300.010, RSMo, shall leave a safe distance, when passing the bicycle, and shall maintain clearance until safely past the overtaken bicycle.

(2) Any person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of an infraction unless an accident is involved in which case it shall be a class C misdemeanor.

304.285. Red light violations

Any person operating a motorcycle or bicycle who violates the provisions of section 304.281 or section 304.301 by entering or crossing an intersection controlled by a traffic control signal against a red light shall have an affirmative defense to that charge if the person establishes all of the following conditions:

(1) The motorcycle or bicycle has been brought to a complete stop;

(2) The traffic control signal continues to show a red light for an unreasonable time;

(3) The traffic control is apparently malfunctioning or, if programmed or engineered to change to a green light only after detecting the approach of a motor vehicle, the signal has apparently failed to detect the arrival of the motorcycle; and

(4) No motor vehicle or person is approaching on the street or highway to be crossed or entered or is so far away from the intersection that it does not constitute an immediate hazard.

The affirmative defense of this section applies only to a violation for entering or crossing an intersection controlled by a traffic control signal against a red light and does not provide a defense to any other civil or criminal action.

307.180. Bicycle and motorized bicycle, defined. As used in sections 307.180 to 307.193:

(1) The word bicycle shall mean every vehicle propelled solely by human power upon which any person may ride, having two tandem wheels, or two parallel wheels and one or two forward or rear wheels, all of which are more than fourteen inches in diameter, except scooters and similar devices;

(2) The term motorized bicycle shall mean any two or three-wheeled device having an automatic transmission and a motor with a cylinder capacity of not more than fifty cubic centimeters, which produces less than three gross brake horsepower, and is capable of propelling the device at a maximum speed of not more than thirty miles per hour on level ground. A motorized bicycle shall be considered a motor vehicle for purposes of any homeowners- or renters-insurance policy.

307.183. Brakes required.

Every bicycle and motorized bicycle shall be equipped with a brake or brakes which will enable its driver to stop the bicycle or motorized bicycle within twenty-five feet from a speed of ten miles per hour on dry, level, clean pavement.

307.185 Lights and reflectors, when required - standards to be met.

Every bicycle and motorized bicycle when in use on a street or highway during the period from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise shall be equipped with the following:

(1) A front-facing lamp on the front or carried by the rider which shall emit a white light visible at night under normal atmospheric conditions on a straight, level, unlighted roadway at five hundred feet;

(2) A rear-facing red reflector, at least two square inches in reflective surface area, or a rear-facing red lamp, on the rear which shall be visible at night under normal atmospheric conditions on a straight, level, unlighted roadway when viewed by a vehicle driver under the lower beams of vehicle head-lights at six hundred feet;

(3) Reflective material and/or lights visible from the front and the rear on any moving part of the bicyclists, pedals, crank arms, shoes or lower leg, visible from the front and the rear at night under normal atmospheric conditions on a straight, level, unlighted roadway when viewed by a vehicle driver under the lawful lower beams of vehicle headlights at two hundred feet; and

(4) Reflective material and/or lights visible on each side of the bicycle or bicyclist visible at night under normal atmospheric conditions on a straight, level, unlighted roadway when viewed by a vehicle driver under the lawful lower beams of vehicle headlights at three hundred feet.

The provisions of this subdivision shall not apply to motorized bicycles which comply with National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration regulations relating to reflectors on motorized bicycles.

307.188. Rights and duties of bicycle and motorized bicycle riders.

Every person riding a bicycle or motorized bicycle upon a street or highway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle as provided by chapter 304, RSMo, except as to special regulations in sections 307.180 to 307.193 and except as to those provisions of chapter 304, RSMo, which by their nature can have no application.

307.190. Riding to right, required for bicycles and motorized bicycles.

Every person operating a bicycle or motorized bicycle at less than the posted speed or slower than the flow of traffic upon a street or highway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as safe, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction, except when making a left turn, when avoiding hazardous conditions, when the lane is too narrow to share with another vehicle or when on a one-way street. Bicyclists may ride abreast when not impeding other vehicles.

307.191. Shoulder riding, allowed but not required for bicyclist operators

(1) A person operating a bicycle at less than the posted speed or slower than the flow of traffic upon a street or highway may operate as described in section 307.190, or may operate on the shoulder adjacent to the roadway.

(2) A bicycle operated on a roadway, or the shoulder adjacent to a roadway, shall be operated in the same direction as vehicles are required to be driven upon the roadway.

(3) For purposes of this section and section 307.190, "roadway", means that portion of a street or highway ordinarily used for vehicular travel, exclusive of the berm or shoulder.

307.192. Bicyclists may signal right turn with right arm

The operator of a bicycle shall signal as required in section 304.019, RSMo, except that a signal by the hand and arm need not be given continuously if the hand is needed to control or operate the bicycle. An operator of a bicycle intending to turn the bicycle to the right shall signal as indicated in section 304.019, RSMo, or by extending such operator's right arm in a horizontal position so that the same may be seen in front and in rear of the vehicle.

307.193. Penalty for violation.

Any person seventeen years of age or older who violates any provision of sections 307.180 to 307.193 is guilty of an infraction and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than twenty-five dollars. Such an infraction does not constitute a crime and conviction shall not give rise to any disability or legal disadvantage based on conviction of a criminal offense. If any person under seventeen years of age violates any provision of sections 307.180 to 307.193 in the presence of a peace officer possessing the duty and power of arrest for violation of the general criminal laws of the state or for violation of ordinances of counties or municipalities of the state, said officer may impound the bicycle or motorized bicycle involved for a period not to exceed five days upon issuance of a receipt to the child riding it or to its owner.