

Bike Equipment

Your bicycle type should match your riding style. A mountain bike or hybrid bike (a cross between a mountain bike and a road bike) are typically best for commuting to class. **Your bike should fit you.** You should be able to stand over the frame of your bike with both feet on the ground, and the seat should be positioned high enough for your legs to extend fully. Riding with the seat too low makes it harder to pedal. There are several excellent bicycle dealers in the area that can answer questions about finding a good-fitting bike.

Always wear a safety certified-bicycle helmet. The helmet should sit snug and level on your head, without any movement. Wearing a bicycle helmet when you ride can greatly reduce your risk of serious head injury.

Bike Parking

Always lock your bike regardless of how long you plan to leave it unattended. **We recommend a "U"-shaped locking system**, since cables and chains can be easily cut. Secure or remove any bags or accessories that can be stolen, and lock your bike to campus provided bicycle parking only. Bicyclists may be ticketed for locking bikes in unauthorized locations.

Planning Your Route

Many communities in the Kansas City region are constructing bicycle facilities and routes to make bicycle travel safer. It is important to **pick routes to and from class that you feel confident riding.** As you become more experienced and build confidence riding on the road, you may find more choices on available routes. Before riding somewhere you're not familiar with, talk to someone who knows the area, or drive the route first. When planning your route, pick streets that have low traffic and low speed limits, or roadways with wide outside curb lanes, or striped bike lanes.

Streets are not the only places to bicycle, but they offer the most direct routes to most destinations. You may be able to combine road miles with a multi-use path on your route. The average bicyclist will travel two miles in ten minutes. If bicycling more than four miles, **you might consider combining your trip with public transit.** All Johnson County Transit (The JO) buses are equipped with bike racks, and many KC Metro buses also accommodate bicycles. Information about community bicycle routes and facilities may be found at www.marc.org, or on many local city and county Web sites.



Bicycle Safety for College Students



Getting Around Campus

As you settle into your new academic environment, new friends, and new surroundings, you will map your way to various destinations around campus. Some students drive cars, others ride the bus or walk, and many get around by bike. This booklet is written to aid college students who use a bicycle to get around campus, and for other short trips. We hope that you will find this information helpful as you get acquainted with your campus and community.

Why Bike?

For many students, the bicycle represents more than just a quick way to get around on campus — **it is an inexpensive, environmentally safe form of transportation.** Bicycling to and from class can help keep you in good physical shape, and many students find that they save time because parking is more convenient and closer to classrooms.

Be Safe

Whether riding in traffic or on designated paths, unsafe **cycling can be very dangerous.** The following are some bicycle safety tips that could help keep you out of harm's way:

- Always wear a helmet.
- Many bicyclists carry a mobile phone for emergencies.
- If you ride 30 minutes before dusk or 30 minutes after sunrise, you should have a white headlight and rear reflector. A taillight, additional reflectors and reflective clothing can also make you more visible.
- Check the weather forecast before riding, and avoid riding in extreme weather conditions. **Fenders and waterproof clothing are recommended for wet weather rides**, and be especially cautious of breaking distances in slick conditions.
- Inspect your bicycle before and after each ride — tires, gears and brakes need to be in good working order every time you ride.

Kansas City Regional Bike Maps are now available at www.marc.org



Rules of the Road

Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as any other driver of a vehicle. While a driver's license is not required to ride a bike, **bicyclists are required to know and obey all traffic laws** such as stopping at stop signs and traffic lights and signaling before turning or changing lanes. Bicyclists should never, under any circumstances, ride against traffic.

A high percentage of all car/bike collisions result from cyclists going the wrong way. **Stay to the right** if you are moving slower than other traffic, maintain a constant position in the lane about three feet away from the curb or parked cars. **Do not weave in and out of parked cars.** Maintaining a presence on the road will help drivers see you and will reduce the chance that motor vehicles will pull in front of you. If lanes are too narrow to share with motor vehicles, the safest place to ride your bicycle is in the middle of the lane. If the lanes become wider, move over to the far right side again.

Many cyclists believe they are safer and more comfortable riding further to the right than suggested here, but **riding too far to the right puts the cyclist in greater danger.** Poor sightlines, opening car doors, and unforeseen roadway hazards can lead to serious injuries, and even death.

When you're about to cross an intersection, don't veer to the left or right, maintain a direct path through the intersection. Practice looking over your shoulder, behind you for traffic. This simple but essential skill allows you to move safely left or right to avoid a hazard, change lanes, or make a turn. **Looking over your shoulder makes drivers pay attention to you.** You need to master this skill even if you have a mirror just as you would if you were driving in a car. Communicate the direction you are turning with hand signals at least 100 feet prior to a turn or change in lanes.

Traffic flows smoother when drivers predict what others will do based on traffic laws. By following traffic laws and being aware of your surroundings your bicycle rides will be much safer.

Remember...

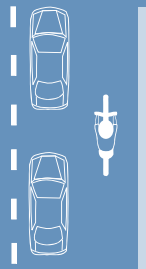
1. Wear a helmet.

Before you get on your bike, put on a helmet. Make sure chin straps are adjusted properly, buckled and snug. Unlike broken bones and road rash, head injuries can be debilitating or deadly. Wearing your helmet may save your life!



2. Share the road.

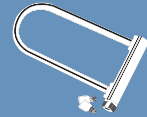
Always share the road with cars when riding on streets. Learning how to safely ride in traffic is a critical step in using your bicycle as a means of transportation. Select routes that you feel confident riding at your skill level. Riding with an experienced partner can also help.



Sharing the lane.

3. Lock it up.

College campuses are notorious bike theft locations. Whenever you are away from your bike, lock it up. Metal "U-Locks" (shown above) tend to be the safest. Try to secure the bike frame and the front tire to an authorized bike rack for best results.



4. Know your route.

Don't bike on a route or street if you are not familiar with its traffic flow, terrain, or shoulder width. Carry a cell phone or money for a pay phone if you do stray into unfamiliar territory and need to call for a ride.

Off-Street Bicycling

On multi-use paths, bicycles should yield to pedestrians, and do not pass unless there is room. Slow down and call out "on your left" or "on your right" before passing cyclists, skaters, runners or walkers. **Riding on the sidewalk is normally not safe** because bicyclists move faster than pedestrians and are hard to hear. Always yield to pedestrians when you are in their space, and dismount if pedestrian traffic is high. Be alert where sidewalks cross alleys, driveways and streets — look left, right and left again before proceeding.

Bike More. Walk More. Explore KC.

For more information, please visit www.marc.org/bikeped

Be Smart.

Be Confident.

Be Alert.

Be Predictable.

Share the Road.

Have Fun.

