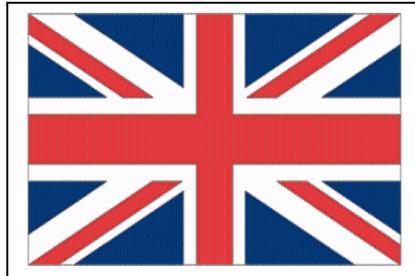




www.italy-ontheroad.it



Cycling with safety



When there is a cycling track it must be used.



This is a far cry from normal cycle safety guides, which usually tell you little more your helmet and to follow the law. But consider this for a moment: wearing a helmet will do absolutely nothing to prevent you from getting hit by a car.

Plenty of cyclists are killed by cars even though they were wearing helmets. Ironically, if they had ridden without helmets, yet followed the guidelines listed below, they might still be alive today.

Don't confuse wearing a helmet with biking safely. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. It's better to not get hit. That's what real bicycle safety is about.

As for following the law, most people are already aware that it's stupid to race through a red light when there's cross traffic, so the **follow the law** advice isn't that helpful because it's too obvious. What you'll find here are several scenarios that maybe **aren't** that obvious.

The other problem with the FOLLOW THE LAW message is that people may think that's all they need to do.

But following the law is not enough to keep you safe, not by is long shot. Here's an example: the law tells you to ride as far to the right as is practicable. But if you ride too far to the right, someone exiting a parked car could open their door right in front of you, you'll be less visible to motorists pulling out of driveways and parking lots, and motorists coming from behind may pass you way too

closely in the same lane because you didn't make them change lanes. In each of these cases you could have been following the law, but could still have been hit.

Obviously, cruising through a stop sign when there's no cross traffic isn't necessarily dangerous, but we can't recommend that you do so, because it's against the law, not because it's unsafe. You should understand the difference. By all means follow the law, but understand why you're doing so.

	<p>1 The right cross</p> <p><i>This is one of the most ways to get hit (or almost get hit). A car is pulling out of a side street, parking lot, or driveway on the right.</i></p> <p>Notice that there are actually two possible kinds of collision here: either you're in front of the car and the car hits you, or the car pulls out in front of you and you slam into it.</p>
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HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION

- 1) **Get a headlight.** If you're riding at night, you should absolutely use a front headlight. It's required by law, anyway. Even for daytime riding, a bright white light that has a flashing mode can make you more visible to motorists who might otherwise right cross you. Look for the new led headlights which last ten times as long a set of batteries as old-style lights. And head-mounted lights are the best, because then you can look directly at the driver to make sure they see your light.

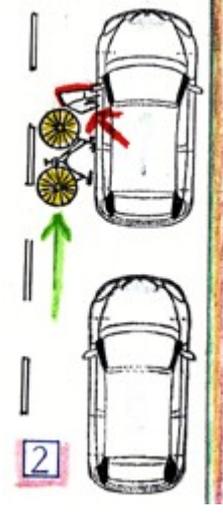


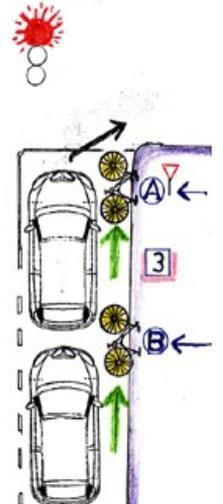
- 2) **Honk.** Get a loud horn and use it. Whenever you see a car approaching, or waiting, ahead of you and to the right. If you don't have a horn, then yell "Hey!". You may feel awkward honking or yelling, but it's better to be embarrassed than to get hit.



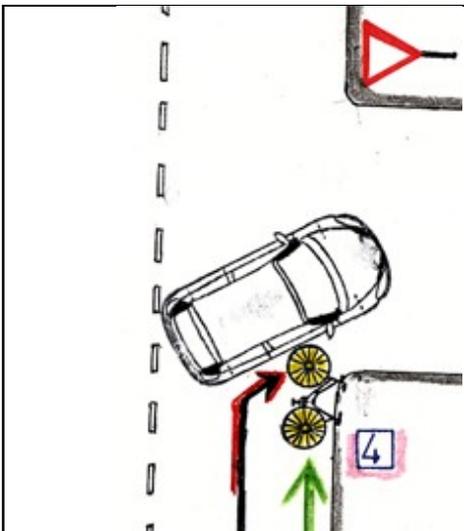
- 3) **Slow down.** If you can't make eye contact with the driver (especially at night), slow down so much that you're able to completely stop if you have to. Sure, it's inconvenient, but it beats getting hit.
- 4) **Ride further left.** Notice the two blue lines "A" and "B" in the diagram. You're probably used to riding in "A", very close to the curb, because you're worried about being hit from behind. But take a look at the car. When that motorist is looking down the road for traffic, he's not looking in the bike lane or the area closest to the curb; he's looking in the **middle** of the lane, for other cars. The farther left you are (such as in "B"), the more likely the driver will see you. There's an added bonus here: if the motorist doesn't see you and starts pulling out, you may be able to go even farther left, or may be able to speed up and get out of the way before impact, or roll onto their hood and they slam their brakes. In short, it gives you some options. Because if you stay all the way to the right and they pull out, your only **OPTION** may be to run right into the driver's side door.

<p>2 The door open</p> <p><i>Before overtaking a car, be sure that somebody inside do not open the door unexpectedly. Advice to maintain a major distance from a parked car.</i></p>	<p><i>A driver opens his door right in front of you. You run right into it if can't stop in time.</i></p> <p>If you're lucky, the motorist will exit the car before you hit the door, so you'll at least have the pleasure of smashing them too when you crash, and their soft flesh will cushion your impact.</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION.</p> <p><u>Ride to the left.</u> Ride far enough to the left that you won't run into any door that's opened unexpectedly. You may be wary about riding so far into the lane that cars can't pass you easily, but you're much more likely to get doored by a parked car if you ride too close to it than you are to get hit from behind by a car which can clearly see you.</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">3 Red Light</p> <p><i>You stop to the right of a car that's already waiting at a red light or stop sign. They can't see you. When the light turns green, you move forward, and then they turn right, right into you.</i></p> <p>Even small cars can do you in this way, but this scenario is especially dangerous when it's a bus or a semi that you're stopping next to.</p> <p><i>Remember: if a motorist shows the intention to turn right, don't overtake the vehicle because there is danger that cyclist may not be seen. HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION: <u>Don't stop in the blind spot.</u> Simply stop behind a car, instead of to the right of it. As per the diagram below.</i></p>
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This makes you very visible to traffic on all sides. It's impossible for the car behind you to avoid seeing you when you're right in front of it. Another option is to stop at either point **A** in the diagram above, or at a point **B**, behind the first car so it can't turn into you, and far enough ahead of the second car so that the second driver can see you clearly. It does no good to avoid stopping to the right of the first car if you're going to make the mistake of stopping to the right of the second car. Either car can do you in. If you chose spot **A**, then ride quickly to cross the street as soon as the light turns green. Don't look at the motorist to see if they want to go ahead and turn. If you're in spot **A** and they want to turn, then you're in their way. Why did you take spot **A** if you weren't eager to cross the street when you could? When the light turns green, just go, and go quickly. If you chose spot **B**, then when the light turns green, don't pass the car in front of you, stay behind it, because it might turn right at any second. If it doesn't make a right turn right away, it may turn right into a driveway or parking lot unexpectedly at any point. Don't count on drivers to signal. They don't. Assume that a car can turn right at any time.



4 The right Hook

A car passes you and then tries to make a right turn directly in front of you, or right into you.

They think you're not going very fast just because you're on a bicycle, so it never occurs to them that they can't pass you in time.

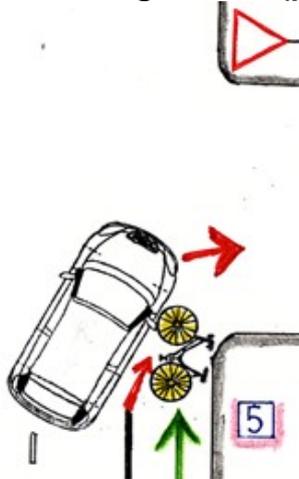
Even if you have to slam on your brakes to avoid hitting them, they often won't feel they've done anything wrong.

This kind of collision is very hard to avoid because you typically don't see it until the last second, and because there's nowhere for you to go when it happens.

HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION

- 1) Don't ride on the sidewalk. When you come off the sidewalk to cross the street you're invisible to motorists. You're just begging to be hit if you do this.
- 2) Ride to the left. Taking up the whole lane makes it harder for drivers to pass you to cut you off or turn into you. Don't feel bad about taking the lane: if motorists didn't threaten your life by turning in front of or into you or passing you too closely, then you wouldn't have to. If the lane you're in isn't wide enough for cars to pass you safely, then you should be taking the whole lane anyway.
- 3) Glance in your mirror before approaching an intersection. Be sure to look in your mirror well before you get to the intersection. When you're actually going through an intersection, you'll need to be paying very close attention to what's in front of you.

5 The right hook (pt.2)



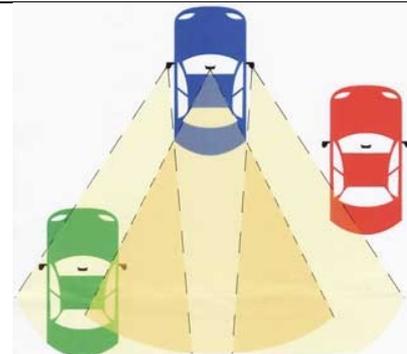
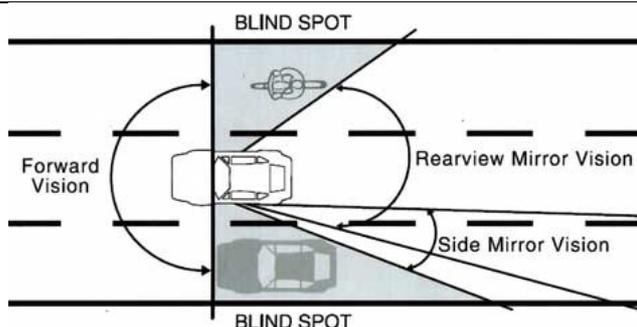
2 Look behind you before turning right. Here's your opportunity to avoid hitting cyclists who violate tip 1 above and try to pass you on the right. Look behind you before making a right hand turn to make sure a bike isn't trying to pass you.

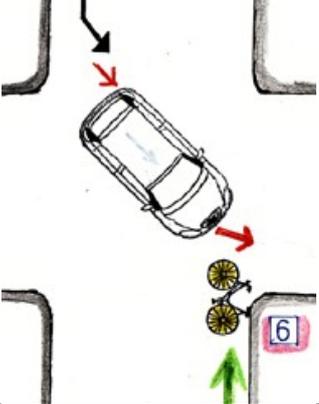
You're passing a slow moving car (or even another bike) on the right, when it unexpectedly makes a right turn right into you, trying to get to a parking lot, driveway or side street.

HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION

- 1 Don't pass on the right. The collision is very easy to avoid. Just don't pass any vehicle on the right. If a car ahead of you is going only 10 mph, then you slow down, too, behind it. It will eventually start moving faster. If it doesn't, pass on the left when it's safe to do so.

When passing cyclists on the left, announce "on your left" before you start passing, so they don't suddenly move left into you.



	<p><u>6 The left cross</u></p> <p><i>A car coming towards you makes a left turn right in front of you, or right into you. This is similar to tip 1, above.</i></p> <p>HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION</p> <p>1) <u>Don't ride on the sidewalk.</u> When you come off the sidewalk to cross the street, you're invisible to turning motorists</p>
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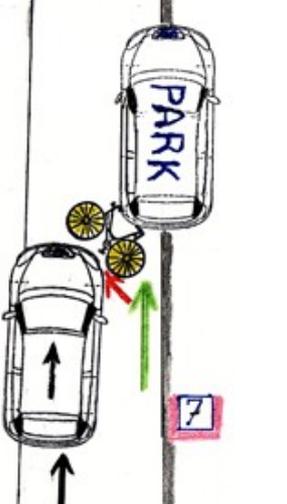


2) Get a headlight. If you're riding at night, you should absolutely use a front headlight. It's required by law in most nations, anyway.

3) Wear something bright, even during the day. It may seem silly, but bikes are small and easy to see through even during the day. Yellow or orange reflective vests really make a big difference.

4) Don't pass on the right. Don't overtake slow moving vehicles on the right. Doing so makes you invisible to left turning motorists at intersections. Passing on the right means that the vehicle you're passing could also make a right turn right into you, too.

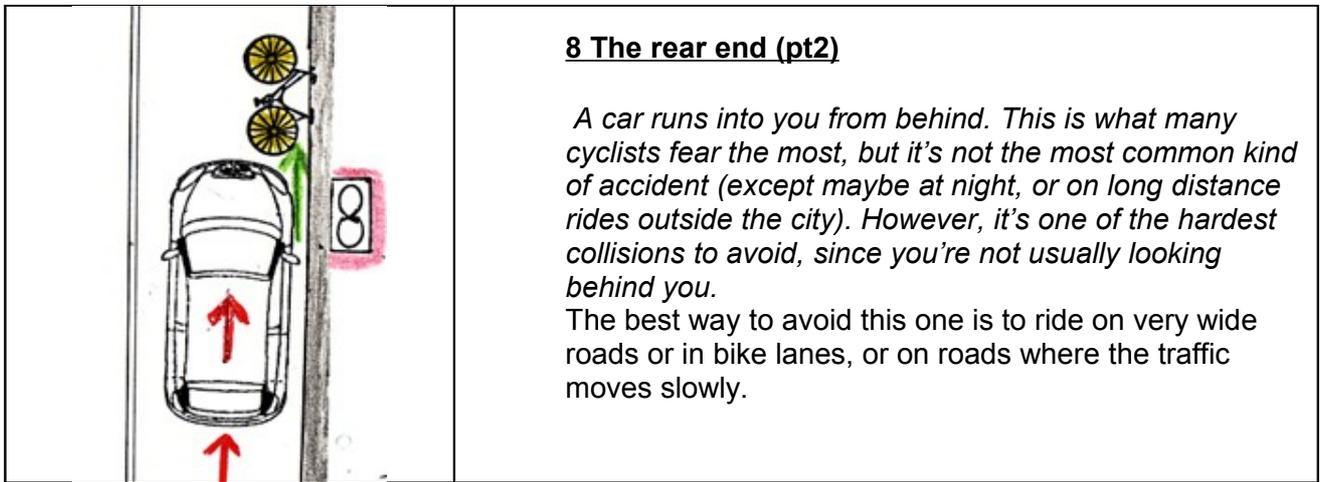
5) Slow down. If you can't make eye contact with the driver (especially at night), slow down so much that you're able to completely stop if you have to. Sure, it's inconvenient, but it beats getting hit.

	<p><u>7 The rear end</u></p> <p><i>You innocently move a little to the left to go around a parked car or some other obstruction in the road, and you get nailed by a car coming up from behind.</i></p> <p><i>Remember: before overtaking a slow vehicle or avoiding an obstacle (for example: an animal, road yard, a stopped motor) first of all, it is necessary to look very well behind in order to be sure that no vehicle is coming. If there is the sureness of the manoeuvre it is to be signaled with the sign of the arm to inform who is coming.</i></p> <p>HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION</p> <p>1) <u>Never, ever move left without looking behind you first.</u> Some motorists like to pass cyclists within mere inches, so moving even a tiny bit to the left unexpectedly could put you in the path of a car.</p>
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Practice holding a straight line while looking over your shoulder until you can do it perfectly. Most new cyclists tend to move left when they look behind them, which of course can be disastrous.

2) Don't swerve in and out of the parking lane if it contains any parked cars. You might be tempted to ride in the parking lane where there are no parked cars, dipping back into the traffic lane when you encounter a parked car. This puts you at risk for getting nailed from behind. Instead, ride a steady, straight line in the traffic lane.

3) Use a mirror. If you don't have one, go to a bike shop and get one now. There are models that fit on your handlebars, helmet, or glasses, as you prefer.



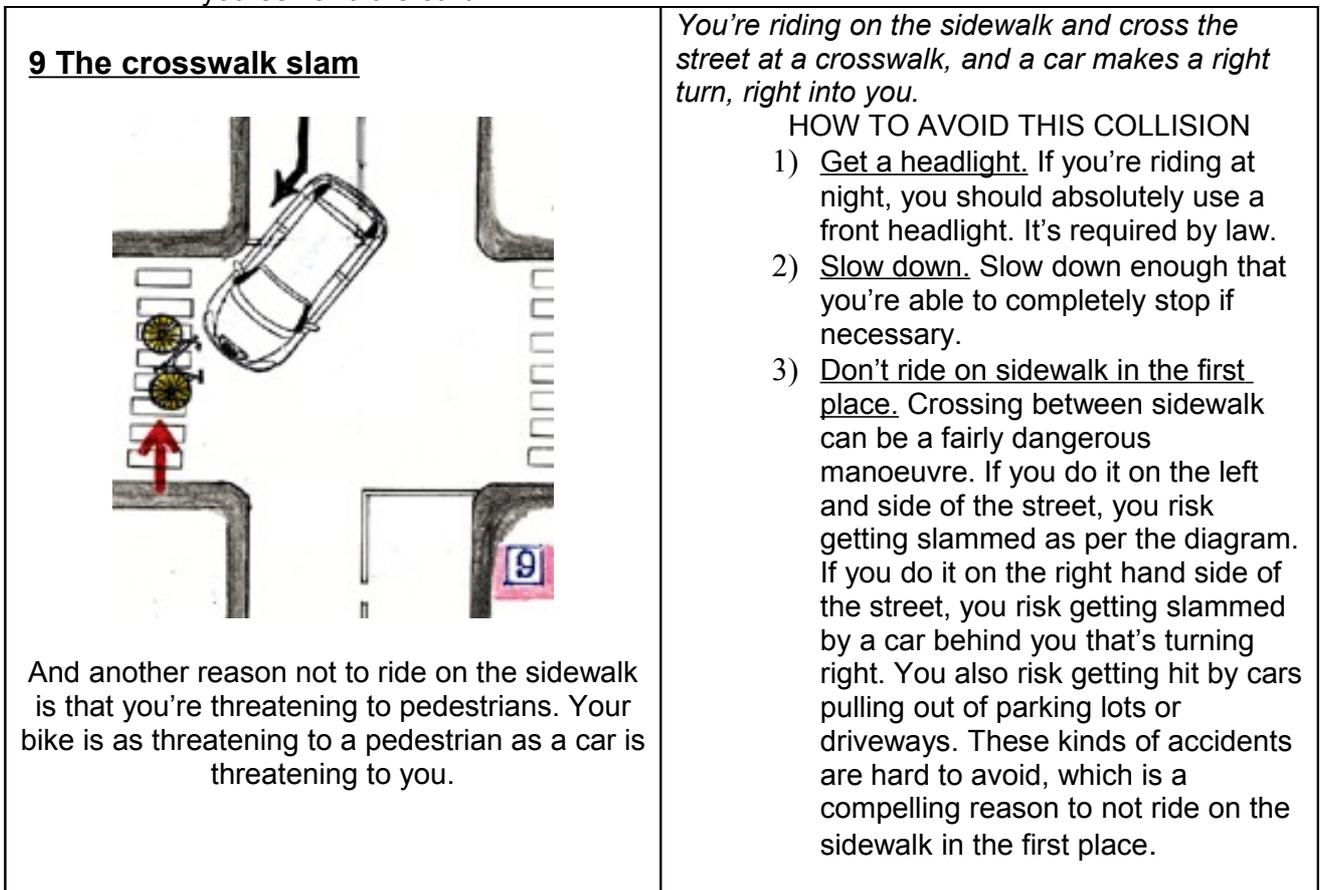
8 The rear end (pt2)

A car runs into you from behind. This is what many cyclists fear the most, but it's not the most common kind of accident (except maybe at night, or on long distance rides outside the city). However, it's one of the hardest collisions to avoid, since you're not usually looking behind you.

The best way to avoid this one is to ride on very wide roads or in bike lanes, or on roads where the traffic moves slowly.

HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION

- 1) Get a rear light. If you're riding at night, you absolutely should use a flashing red rear light.
- 2) Wear a reflective vest. High quality reflective gear makes you a lot more visible even in the day time, not just at night.
- 3) Choose wide streets. Ride on streets whose outside lane is so wide that it can easily fit a car and a bike side by side. That way a car may zoom by you and avoid hitting you, even if they didn't see you.
- 4) Choose slow streets. The slower a car is going, the more time the driver has to see you.
- 5) Use back streets on weekends. The risk of riding on Friday or Saturday night is much greater than riding on other nights because all the drunks are out driving around.
- 6) Get a mirror. Get a mirror and use it. If it looks like a car doesn't see you, hop off your bike and onto the sidewalk.
- 7) Don't hug the curb. This is counter intuitive, but give yourself a little space between yourself and the curb.



9 The crosswalk slam

You're riding on the sidewalk and cross the street at a crosswalk, and a car makes a right turn, right into you.

HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION

- 1) Get a headlight. If you're riding at night, you should absolutely use a front headlight. It's required by law.
- 2) Slow down. Slow down enough that you're able to completely stop if necessary.
- 3) Don't ride on sidewalk in the first place. Crossing between sidewalk can be a fairly dangerous manoeuvre. If you do it on the left and side of the street, you risk getting slammed as per the diagram. If you do it on the right hand side of the street, you risk getting slammed by a car behind you that's turning right. You also risk getting hit by cars pulling out of parking lots or driveways. These kinds of accidents are hard to avoid, which is a compelling reason to not ride on the sidewalk in the first place.

And another reason not to ride on the sidewalk is that you're threatening to pedestrians. Your bike is as threatening to a pedestrian as a car is threatening to you.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>10 The wrong-way wallop</u></p> <p><i>You're riding the wrong way (against traffic, on the left hand side of the street). A car makes a right turn from a side street, driveway, or parking lot, right into you. They didn't see you because they were looking for traffic only on their left, not on their right. They had no reason to expect that someone would be coming at them from the wrong direction. Even worse, you could be hit by a car on the same road coming at you from straight ahead of you. They had less time to see you and take evasive action because they're approaching you faster than normal (because you're going towards them rather than away from them).</i></p>
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And if they hit you, it's going to be much more forceful impact, for the same reason.

HOW TO AVOID THIS COLLISION

Don't ride against traffic. Ride with traffic, in the same direction.

Riding against traffic may seem like a good idea because you can see the cars that are passing you, but it's not. It's forbid.

- 1) Cars which pull out of driveways, parking lots, and cross streets, which are making a right onto your street, aren't expecting traffic to be coming at them from the wrong way. They won't see you, and they'll plow right into you.
- 2) How the heck are you going to make a right turn?
- 3) Cars will approach you at a much higher relative speed.
- 4) Riding the wrong way is illegal and you can get ticketed for it.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Accident 11</u></p> <p>Look out for roundabout.</p> <p>Bikes and moped must be much to right hand, to ring right hand.</p> <p><i>Before entering into a round-about, give right of way to the pedestrians who are on the zebra crossing and also to the vehicles that have it. It is dangerous to put in, by the side or before a vehicle already inside the round-about. The out going from the round-about will be signalized with the arm as it is changing of direction.</i></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">    </div>	
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When there is a cycling track it must be used.



Look out for children passing.



Some advices

Advice: to persons above 16 years old, for the transportation of a child (highest 7 years old); use the special seat which will guarantee any surences (safety), that is it will protect the legs of the child and will not disturb the movements of into is riding.

Remember: before coming out of a garage, courtyard, car park etc. you have to stop at edge of the roadway to verify that you can insert in the flow of the circulation.

Moreover: it is forbidden to the drivers of bicycles (and motorcycles) to circulate side by side and / or to tow because the two vehicles, in towing, circulating shifted and by side in case of brake and /or manoeuvre, for the two, there is a high risk of falling as they obstacle one another.

When you circulate in single file, you have to maintain a sufficient sure distance from the cyclist before you because, in case of sudden brake or obstacle (like: hole), there will be enough time to react avoiding collision or a fall.

The cyclists are the road user with disadvantage because: as they do not have body that protect them in case of crash; they are more slow and unstable than the other vehicles.

Be so strict with the law of RIGHT OF WAY and, instead to risk an accident, it is preferable renounce to the right of way (even if it is your right).

Do not forget that:

With the sign-board "STOP" you must always stop before the line of stop (even if there is no body).

With sign-board "GIVE RIGHT OF WAY" (priority) you must give right of way to all the vehicles circulating only when the road is free.

STOP



GIVE RIGHT OF WAY

On a wet road, you have to moderate your speed and maintain a major sure distance (this is for all the vehicles), it is very important the efficiency of the tyres. If they are obsolete, in case of rain, they will lose adhesion and there will be risk of falling down and accident.

On a wet road, the space of brake increases. Be careful of the zebra-crossing, manhole covers, wheel-tracks and rails because they are so slippery when wet: also do not brake or turn roughly upon them because the risk of fall and/or accident is too much.

A move to turn, a change of direction or an over-take will be done by looking first of all behind to ascertain the surenees (safety) and there is the need to signalize it with an arm, or a hand, in an unequivocal way.

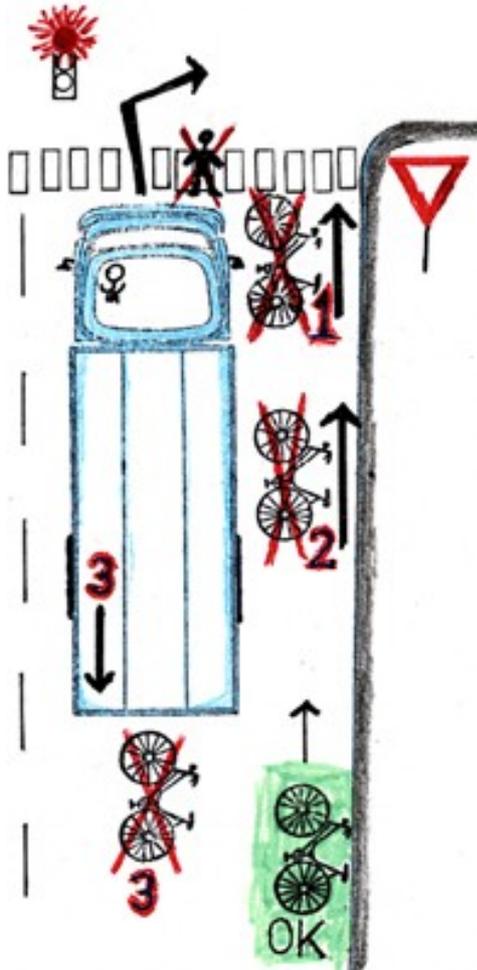
When you turn left: look behind, give sign with hand or arm, move towards the centre of the road, remember the rights of right of way (you have to give right of way to who is circulating by your right hand), look again behind, then bend.

The errors during this movement are most of the time, the cause of accidents.

When you want to turn right: give sign of the intention and give right of way to the foot passengers on the zebra crossing.

Don't ride at the side of lorries.

Lorry drivers are high up and on the left hand-side and they cannot see anything passing on the right hand side of the lorry:



- 1) if a pedestrian wants to cross the road, or if you are on a bike at the side of a lorry and want to go straight on, if the lorry **URNS RIGHT** he **can't** see you and he will knock you over. This is even more likely if you are on your bike in the same position.
- 2) The lorry widens his path to the left to do a right turn, whereas the pedestrian or cyclist goes straight on. **NEVER STAND BESIDE A LORRY.**
- 3) Don't stand behind the lorry: if he reverses he won't see you and you will be knocked down.

Remember very well! the cyclist will be in the position where the motor vehicle drivers can see them very well especially the lorry and truck drivers. If you find to be in a hidden side of a motor vehicle, you will not be seen and you will put yourself in a dangerous situation.

Wait behind, when the motor truck is at stop at the red traffic light or at a stop and never beside.

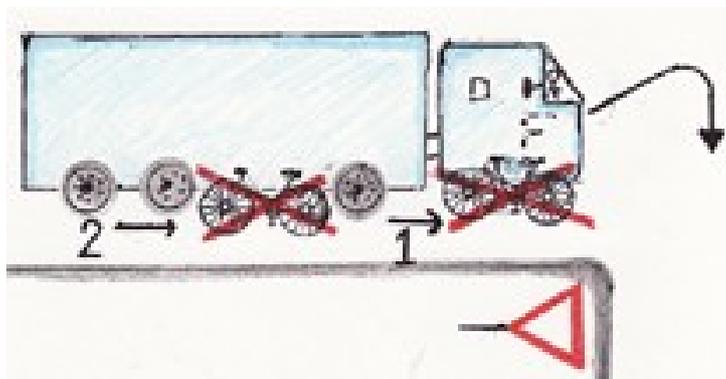
Remember you must never stand beside a lorry: stay behind it, on the right hand side of the road/carriageway and never overtake it.

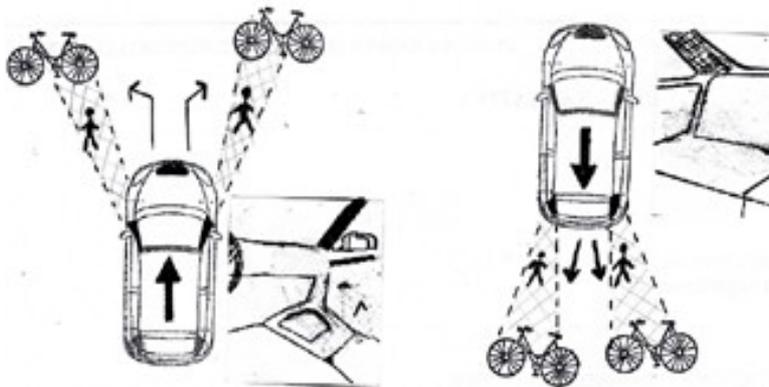
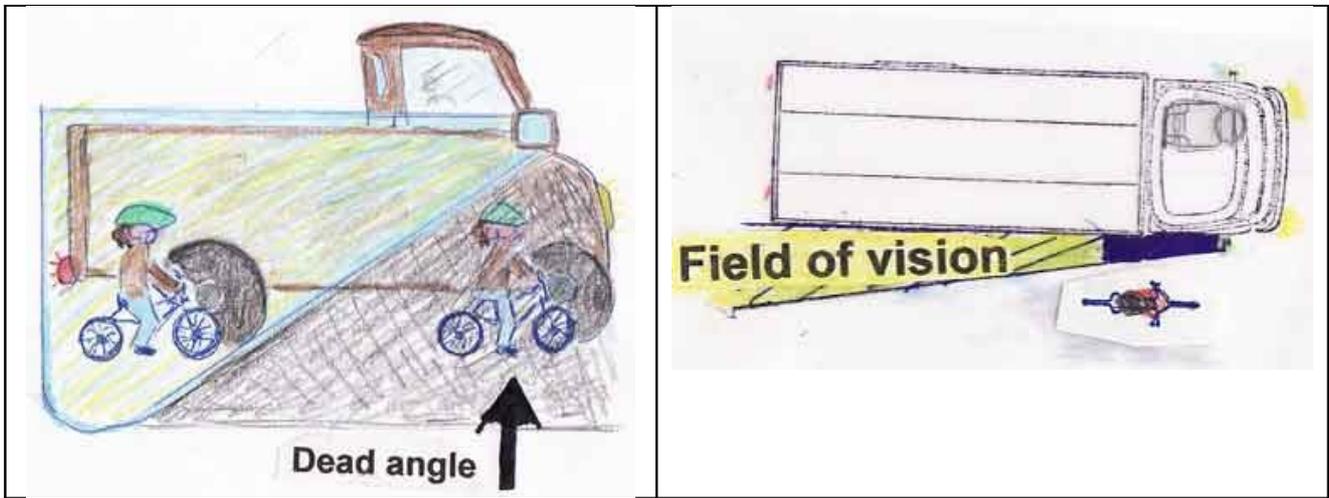
Only the most modern and costly lorries have a right side mirror added which faces downwards and allows the driver to see the lower right-hand side of the lorry (bicycle n°1), otherwise there is a blind area and the driver **cannot** see anything.

Only the most modern and costly lorries have acoustic devices and telecameras that allow vision behind the lorry when reversing: otherwise the driver **cannot** see.

Remember, that lorries, especially articulated ones or those with trailers, to turn right must widen their paths to the left, otherwise this would be impossible due to the length.

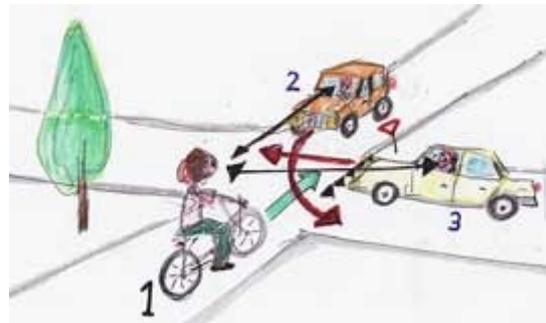
Never overtake a lorry when it is turning because the driver cannot see you and he will knock you over, **even on roundabouts**.





Remember that certain parts of the **chassis** create blind points and reduce the visibility: creating an obstacle between you and the object in all directions: forwards and backwards, to the right and to the left.

(As shown in the diagram).



Always remember: be careful and keep your distance.

Advice to put on crash-helmet.

P.s. If you want to go for a trip in bicycle, my advice is to choose a roads with less traffics, establishing beforehand the route (help up with a road map); foresee rests, especially if there are children; choose suitable clothes and shoes (light dresses, warm induments, clothes), impermeables (waterproof); equipments to repair punctures,; water and snacks.

Update: 3rd June 2007

Bibliographia:

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DVR Deutscher Verkehrssichrhitsrat e V.

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