

Safe Cycling

Your safety is our first priority



Helping you have a safe and enjoyable cycling experience is why we operate LifeCycle Adventure tours. Here, we share some ideas on helping you get the most from your cycling – safely and while having fun.

Safety Resources

There are many great resources to help those less familiar with cycling or those looking to brush up their cycling skills. We strongly encourage you to look at these resources before your trip – we also carry some material on the van for those that like to cram at the last minute.

Some great advice can be found on the League for American Bicyclists website: <http://www.bikeleague.org/>. Their fact sheets cover topics from basic safety through to clothing and tips on climbing.

The Californian Department of Motor Vehicles site reminds us that, “Bicycle riders on public streets have the same rights and responsibilities as automobile drivers and are subject to the same rules and regulations as any other vehicle on the road.” Their website also has valuable information on bicycle rules and safety, as well as some helpful hints and general bicycle information: <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/about/bicycle.htm>. The San Francisco Bicycle Coalition has great tips on urban cycling: <http://www.sfbike.org/?safety>

Finally, trust the Canadians to be hot on safety. One of the best safety and road craft guides we have found is from the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition. Their excellent Bike Sense manual is a comprehensive guide to bike handling and traffic skills. It is available free at library branches in Victoria and Vancouver or, perhaps more conveniently, online at: <http://bikesense.bc.ca/manual.htm>

If you look at some of the links above, you will see that almost everyone has their favorite top tips on safety, so we thought we would add our own.

The LifeCycle Adventures Safety Seven

1. **Ride predictably** in smooth lines and avoid weaving or wobbling. *[In a safe place, practice looking over your shoulder without wobbling.]*
2. Stay alert, **be aware and anticipate**: anticipate what other vehicles will do, anticipate what gear you will need to be in after you stop and anticipate the approaching road surface – do you need to avoid gravel, potholes or broken glass? Should you dismount to cross railroad tracks? *[FACT: 50%*

of urban accidents happen solo. That is, people just fall off of their own accord. A little anticipation would work wonders here!]

3. **Be as visible as you can be.** We supply fluorescent triangles for those who require them. *[When riding in our florescent cycling jersey we have noticed that cars actually give us a noticeably wider berth as they pass by.]*
4. **Chose a safe riding position on the road.** Do not be cowed into a dangerous riding position. For example, avoid riding so close to the edge of the road that you are riding on grit, or dangerously broken pavement or where you are at risk of being hit by an opening car door. *[Any search of the internet for “California Vehicle Code Section 21202” will show you that this is a controversial topic. The law requires that you stay “as close as is practical” to the right hand side of the road. However, the law also states that you have the right to avoid conditions (including, but not limited to vehicles, bicycles, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes) that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge.]*
5. **Obey the law.** Drivers will give cyclist more respect, and you are far safer, if you obey all the traffic laws – including stopping at stop signs, riding on the right hand side of the road and not riding under the influence of alcohol. *[FACT: 10% of 'cyclist at fault' accidents are caused by cyclist using the wrong side of the road.]*
6. **Ride assertively but defensively.** At junctions, make eye contact with drivers. Assertive riding is easier for drivers to predict, but cars are bigger and harder than we are, so we always try to avoid getting into confrontations with them. *[FACT: 63% of cyclist collisions occur at intersections. The most common cause of accidents, where the driver is at fault, is the driver’s failure to yield the right of way.]*
7. **Check out your bike** and make sure you are confident that it is roadworthy. Check brakes, tires and quick release mechanisms. Your LifeCycle Adventures guides are on hand to help if you have any concerns.

