



## Riding In Traffic

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Below is a short guide on riding in traffic, with much of the information gleaned from New Hampshire law and "Street Smarts":

<http://www.bikexpert.com/streetsmarts/usa/index.htm>

Bicyclists on public roadways in New Hampshire are required to follow all the same laws as motorists and have all the rights given to motorists. According to New Hampshire Motor Vehicle Law Section 265:143: Every person propelling a vehicle by human power or riding a bicycle shall have all of the rights and be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle under the rules of the road.

Overwhelmingly, the safest way to ride a bicycle in traffic is to follow the normal traffic patterns. By riding with traffic, a cyclist becomes safer and more predictable to motorists.

The rules of the road set up a pattern for every situation, telling which driver has the right of way. Sometimes you have to wait for other drivers - for example, at a stop sign - but sometimes they have to wait for you. Bicyclists have the same rights - and responsibilities - as motorists.

If you ride in violation of the traffic laws, you greatly increase your risk of a crash. You also may give up all of your rights. If you get into a crash, the courts will almost always find that it was your fault!

***Riding right begins with riding on the right.*** Some bicyclists think they're safer on the left, where they can see cars coming, but riding on the left is actually one of the biggest causes of car-bike crashes.

If you ride on the left, both you and the oncoming driver must come to a complete stop to avoid head-on collisions. When you ride on the right, drivers behind you only have to slow to your speed - and they have much longer to react. Also, drivers and pedestrians about to pull out from side streets and crosswalks will be looking toward you - in the direction traffic normally comes from.

Don't weave in and out between parked cars. If you weave to the right after passing a parked car, it will hide you from drivers approaching from behind you. Then you have to pop back out into the path of overtaking traffic when you reach the next parked car. Put yourself in the place of a driver a couple of hundred feet behind you. Could this driver see you?

***It's much safer to ride in a predictable, straight line,*** where everyone can see you. Motorists don't mind slowing down for a predictable, visible bicyclist nearly as much as they mind a bicyclist who swerves out in front of them.