

SAFE CYCLING IN OXFORD

From : Ed Wigzell
Sustainable Travel Officer
University of Oxford
Estates Services

Date: 2022

Dear Student

Cycling in Oxford is a very good idea; it's often the fastest way of getting round the city and research has shown that the more people cycle, the safer it becomes. If you're not used to cycling in traffic there are some important things you need to know to keep yourself safe.

Before you cycle in Oxford - see <https://travel.admin.ox.ac.uk/bike/>

Get the right equipment - the absolute minimums are a mechanically safe bike that fits you, front and rear lights are a legal requirement when cycling in the dark, rear reflector and a good quality lock. Wear something highly visible and reflective, particularly at night. Most choose to wear a helmet, make sure it is fitted correctly. Estates Services offer discounted D-Locks, front and rear lights, seat covers and reflective slap bands. Details at <https://travel.admin.ox.ac.uk/bike/training>. Discounts of 5-10% offered to students at many local bike shops, just show your University card.

Register your bike – theft of bicycles is common in Oxford. The University is part of Bike Register, used by Police forces across the country. This will increase the chances of your bike being returned if stolen. The bike marking and registration scheme is free; further information about cycle security and bike registration is available on our website above or contact University Security Services at ouss.administration@admin.ox.ac.uk or 01865 272944.

Improve your urban cycling skills – the University offers six hours of free, one to one cycle training to students, delivered by experts from Broken Spoke, a local bike co-op, see our website above. You can also access an interactive map which shows different types of cycling routes in and around Oxford to help you plan your journey and make sure it suits your riding ability <http://www.transportparadise.co.uk/cyclemap/>.

Make sure you are mentally prepared - never cycle after drinking alcohol (it is illegal to ride your bike under the influence of drink or drugs); read the Highway Code (the laws about how and where you can ride a bike are more like the laws for cars than people think: see <https://www.gov.uk/rules-for-cyclists-59-to-82>).

Maintain your bike – your bike can be repaired at any local bike shop or you can take your bike to the well-equipped workshop at Broken Spoke, a local bike co-op, where bike mechanics will help you to fix your own bike <http://bsbcoop.org/what-we-do/drop-in-workshops/>.

Whilst on your bike

Ride in a good visible position - at least a car door distance from parked cars, not weaving into gaps (you disappear). Get good eye contact with other road users to be sure that they have seen you. At junctions, either make sure you can get to the front of the traffic and be visible, or remain in your place in the queue in the centre of the lane. Get into the habit of only overtaking on the right hand side. One of the most common causes of accidents is collision with vehicles which are turning left. Obey the rules of the road, don't cycle on pavements unless a sign shows that it is permitted and don't cycle through red lights, including at pedestrian crossings. Be careful and considerate of other road users.

If things go wrong

If you are involved in an accident, make sure that you get professional help either at the John Radcliffe Hospital (Tel. 01865 741166) or from your College nurse or doctor. To report a stolen bike contact the local Police station (Tel. 101) and, if your bike is registered, then also contact University Security Services (Tel. 01865 272944).