

BIKE BADGES SKILLS

**BIKE EVERYWHERE
MONTH**

Like anything else, biking takes practice!

Learn and practice bike skills in a safe environment, so you can focus on fun when going for a bike ride.

Doesn't it feel good to learn something new?

What you need

- Bike
- Helmet
- Ruler or measuring tape
- A trusted grown-up

Info for Adults: Tips for getting started

Get familiar or refresh your memory on skills for riding on the road. Watch the Manitoba Cycling Association's 6-minute video, [Traffic Skills 101](#). You'll be ready to model safe riding for our kids! These skills will make them much safer and more confident cyclists.

Shoulder check

Doing a shoulder check while continuing to ride in a straight line helps us be aware of what's happening behind us. This is important when moving across on the road, which might happen to avoid a pothole, go around parked cars, or make a turn. Shoulder checking is new for kids, and they need practice to be able to ride straight while they look back.

Use the front brake too

While lots of kids are taught to only use their rear brake, this is actually only about 30% of a bike's stopping power. As kids grow up and ride faster, it is important to learn to use both brakes safely, which means learning how to shift weight backwards.

Ride with safe space

New bike riders are often tempted to ride as close as possible to parked cars or the curb, usually from trying to stay away from passing cars. This can put riders in dangerous zones, like the "door zone" of parked vehicles, or into the curb where debris and potholes are common. Practice riding 1 metre from the curb or parked cars to stay safe.

What else can we practice to be safe on the road?

Practice signaling- left turn, right turn, and stopping (Link to MPI manual)
Learn Road Signs- It's never too early to learn the rules of the road! While out riding or even driving with your child, talk with them about the road signs they see so they understand what they mean.

These skills will make them much safer and more confident cyclists. These activities are a good starting point, but don't stop there, and keep it fun with quizzes and positive reinforcement.



BIKE BADGES SKILLS

1 SHOULDER CHECK

Why: There are times when we need to know what's happening behind us! Learn how to "shoulder check", a quick look behind us while riding our bikes.

Step 1: Find a place where you can ride safely, like a quiet street or a bike path. Make sure that there aren't any cars coming when you do this.

Step 2: Draw a long, straight line with chalk. This should be at least 5 metres or longer!

Step 3: Ride your bike straight down the line. Is it long enough to count to 5 seconds (five Mississippi)? If not, make it longer until it is. Practice this until it's easy.

Step 4: Ride down the line and quickly look backwards over your left shoulder, just for a second. Can you keep riding straight? What does your grown-up say?

Practice until you can look behind you and stay to the line! Now, can you do the same thing looking over your right shoulder?

Congratulations! Ready for your next challenge?

2 USE YOUR FRONT BRAKE

Learn to use your front brake so you can stop quicker! It's important to be able to stop safely and with control - what if someone walks in front of you, or there's a pothole.

Step 1: [Watch this video](#). See how much faster the cyclists stop when they use their front brakes? They can do this by moving their bums back, so they won't go over the handlebars.

Step 2: Find a place to practice using your front brakes. It might be a good idea to do this on grass, because it's softer.

Step 3: Ride around and then try braking with your front brake and shifting your bum back. Start slowly at first, and then try braking harder!

Remember, if your tires skid and leave black marks on the pavement, you're braking too hard.

Practice until you're comfortable shifting your bum back while using your front brake!

Way to go! On to the last challenge.

BIKE EVERYWHERE MONTH

3 TAKE UP SPACE

Why: While riding a bike, you can take up space on the road. If you ride too close to the side, you might ride into a car door if someone is getting out. Or if riding right beside the curb, cars might squeeze you to the side.

You should ride 1 meter away from parked cars or the curb. And remember to always ride on the right side of the road. It will feel more comfortable to take a bit more space.

Step 1: Draw a line of about 1 metre. 1 metre is 100cm, which is about 3.5 rulers.

Step 2: Practice riding 1 metre away from a curb with a grown-up.

Go find your trusted adult, and show them that you know how to ride your bike at least 1 metre away from parked cars and curbs- awesome!

BONUS: Next time When you are out riding your bike with others, make sure that everyone keeps a safe distance from parked cars and from the curb.

BONUS: If you do a shoulder check first, and nobody's behind you, you might feel safer taking a little more space away from parked cars!