

Riding a bike is fun. It builds children's self esteem and allows them to enjoy their community and environment.



Teaching children to ride safely

One way children learn is by watching what other people do. You can help your child develop safe behaviours and responsible attitudes to bicycle safety by always setting a good example.

By riding with your child on roads and paths you can identify the hazards in the local area and together plan to either avoid these hazards or work out how to negotiate them safely.

Bike Ed courses

Another way to teach your child to ride safely is to enroll them in a Bike Ed course.

Bike Ed programs are available for 8-13 year olds and can be conducted at school by trained instructors or teachers. Alternatively, local Road Safety Consultants can assist you in locating community based Bike Ed programs.

Choosing the right bike for your child

Make sure the bicycle fits the child. Take your child with you when you shop for a bike so they

can try it out. Don't buy a bike for the child to grow into as oversized bikes are dangerous.

A bike is the correct fit when the child is able to:

- place the balls of both feet on the ground when sitting on the seat
- straddle the centre bar of the bike – their feet should be flat on the ground and there should be about 2-5 cm clearance between the bar and the crotch
- reach the handlebars comfortably when seated on the bike.

Bicycle maintenance

Check the mechanical condition of your child's bicycle regularly, especially the tyres, wheels, chains, brakes and lights.

Take the bike to a local bike shop if you're unsure of what to look for.





Skills children need

It is important children develop appropriate cycling skills and traffic awareness before riding on cycle paths and roads.

Are you confident that your child has the following skills?

- balance and coordination
- steering control
- walking the bike
- scanning the environment
- braking
- signalling
- positioning for turns and riding in traffic
- mounting and dismounting
- awareness of and courtesy for other road users.



Safe places to ride

Children should only ride in a traffic environment with the supervision of an adult.

There are plenty of places to ride bikes away from traffic, such as footpaths, bike paths, shared paths and bush tracks. These places are used by many people for different purposes, so your child needs to learn how to share the paths. There are some basic rules and points to consider to make sure your child is safe when riding their bike.

Some rules for riding on roads and paths

A bicycle is a vehicle and riders must follow all the road rules when riding on roads and paths:

- keep to the left of the path or road (unless making a right turn)
- give way to pedestrians
- obey all road signs
- always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle
- ride no more than two abreast – the bike rider should be prepared to ride in single file on narrow roads and paths.

There is a system of penalties that can be enforced when road rules are not obeyed.

Wearing a helmet

Queensland law requires that everyone must wear a helmet when riding a bike. Helmets help protect bike riders from head injuries and can save lives.

When buying a helmet it must:

- have the Australian Standards mark – TM AS 2063, AS/NZS 2063
- fit firmly and comfortably on the person's head and shouldn't be able to move in any direction
- have adjustable straps so there is no slack when they are fastened.

Helmets come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours and some will fit better than others.

A correctly fitted and securely adjusted helmet should not move. A helmet that does not fit correctly is unsafe and it may move or slip off in a fall or crash.





Safety equipment check for you and your bike

- 1. Correct size bike** - the bicycle must be the correct fit so that the child can place the balls of both feet on the ground when sitting on the seat. The child must also be able to reach the handlebars comfortably when seated on the bike.
- 2. Bell** - should be loud enough to warn someone of your approach.
- 3. Reflectors** - on pedals, wheel spokes and the front and back of the bike make the bike more visible.

- 4. Brakes** - should be in good working order - when you squeeze brakes they should grip the wheel firmly.
- 5. Helmet** - correctly fitted, it should help protect bike riders from head injuries and save lives.
- 6. Clothing** - brightly coloured clothing that can not get caught in the chain to make sure you are visible to other road users.
- 7. Footwear** - enclosed footwear with non-slip soles for protection. Thongs are not suitable footwear.



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General information on safe cycling can be found on Queensland Transport's road safety web site **www.roadsafety.net** or the cycling web site **www.transport.qld.gov.au/cycling**

Your local council may have further information about safe cycling and maps of bicycle paths.

For more information about Bike Ed, contact:

Brisbane South East Region	3253 4010
Sunshine Coast	5477 8420
Gold Coast	5583 1517
All other areas	13 23 80