

## Cycle Training UK's top 10 tips for urban cyclists.

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**1 Have a roadworthy bike that fits you.** Regularly check the brakes and tyre pressure, and don't ignore any strange noises, vibration, or jumping gears you notice as you are riding - they probably indicate a problem. A new bike bought from a traditional bike shop should be safe, but beware of mail-order 'bargains' or bikes bought from supermarkets. If in doubt, take it to a bike shop for advice (or sign up for a Cycle Training UK maintenance course!).

**2 Have great bike control skills.** You should understand how to shift your body weight when making an emergency stop, be able to swerve safely, make efficient use of your gears, keep good control of the bike while looking directly behind, and confidently ride one-handed. Ride with your fingers on your brake levers. If this seems uncomfortable you need to adjust the brake lever position to fit you.

**3 Use the road!** Pavement cycling is slow, dangerous, annoying to pedestrians, and illegal. It demonstrates a lack of confidence in the cyclist. Join the road where you can see and be seen by people already on the road...who have priority.

**4 Think positioning!** If you do have enough space for drivers to overtake you comfortably (on wide roads) ride away from the kerb, never in the gutter, and be aware that drivers tend to leave you the same room on your right as the room you leave for yourself on the left. Ride in the stream of traffic when you can match it's speed or when you need to to avoid car doors or the mouth of a side road. If forced to ride close to parked cars or slower moving traffic do so slowly so you have time you react to hazards such as an opening door.

**5 Check behind frequently,** especially before changing position on the road. Looking behind attracts the attention of drivers as well as ensuring that you know what is happening around you.

**6. See, be seen, communicate!** Communicate your intentions with hand-signals, and by correct road positioning. Don't signal without looking behind first - it may be unsafe to signal if someone is overtaking at that moment, or it may be unnecessary to signal if no one is there! Also, a driver is more likely to see your signal if you have looked behind first (see point 5).

**7. Aim to arrive at junctions in the middle of your lane** whether you are turning left or right, or going straight ahead. This prevents dangerous overtaking. On approach to lights the least safe option is to undertake on the left so either wait your turn or consider overtaking (on the right) to get to the front, pulling in to the stream of traffic if it starts moving.

**8 Roundabouts.** Arrive at, and move through roundabouts, in the middle of the most appropriate lane.

**9. Winterise!** If you aim to commute all through the year, fit your bike with full mudguards, get some lights, gloves, and invest in a lightweight breathable waterproof jacket and over-trousers. A peaked cap will keep the rain out of your eyes or off your glasses.

**10. Get some cycle training.** Reading these tips is a small start, but there is no substitute for on-road cycle training. Even the most experienced rider usually becomes a more effective and assertive cyclist. Contact [www.cycletraining.co.uk](http://www.cycletraining.co.uk)