

# The Peel Region Cyclists Handbook

Everything you need to know  
about cycling in Mississauga,  
Brampton, and Caledon

First Edition, 2017

walk<sup>PEEL</sup>roll



# Cycling is for everyone!

**Join thousands of people in Mississauga, Brampton, and Caledon who ride bicycles because it's convenient, healthy, inexpensive and fun.**

This handbook will teach you about your bicycle, our traffic laws and safe cycling habits. When riding your bike, always remember to use your best judgement, take your time, and have fun!

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# Reasons to ride

## Convenient

You can go wherever you want, whenever you want, as soon as you hop on.

## Healthy

Using your bike regularly will increase your physical activity, improve your mental health and make you feel more energetic.

## Affordable

Owning and operating a bicycle is a fraction of the cost of a car or transit. Once you own a bike, it is free to operate!

## Environmentally-friendly

Contribute to cleaner air and less crowded streets by taking your bike instead of a car.

## Fun

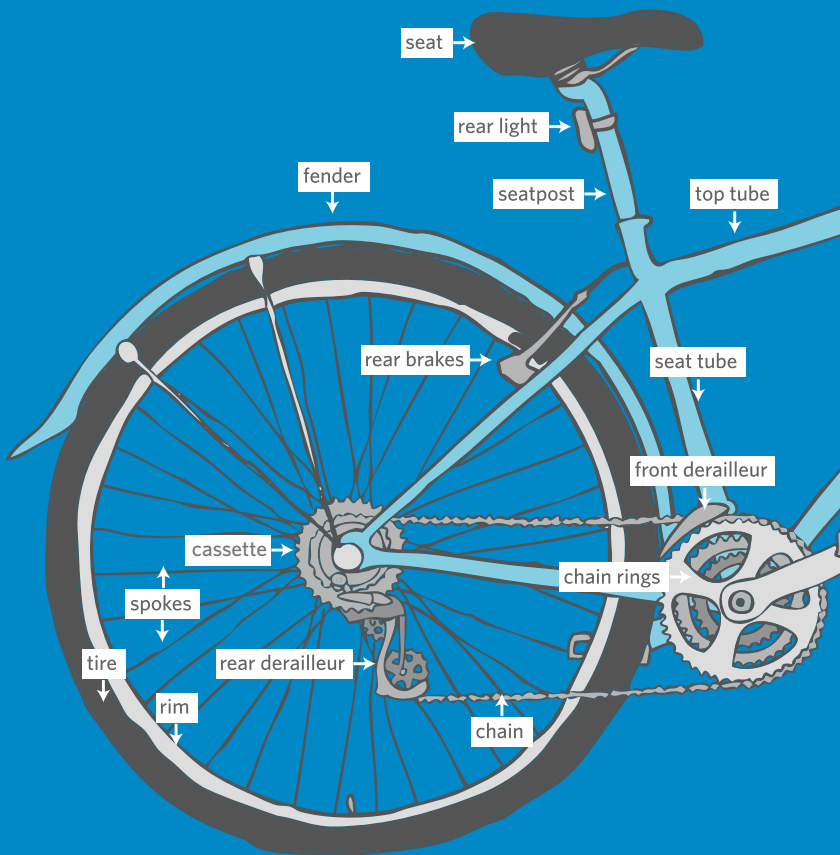
Exploring local neighbourhoods and parks with family and friends is one of the many ways to have fun on your bike.

## A safe way to explore Peel

A growing network of bicycle lanes and trails as well as traffic laws to protect cyclists make cycling increasingly safe and enjoyable.

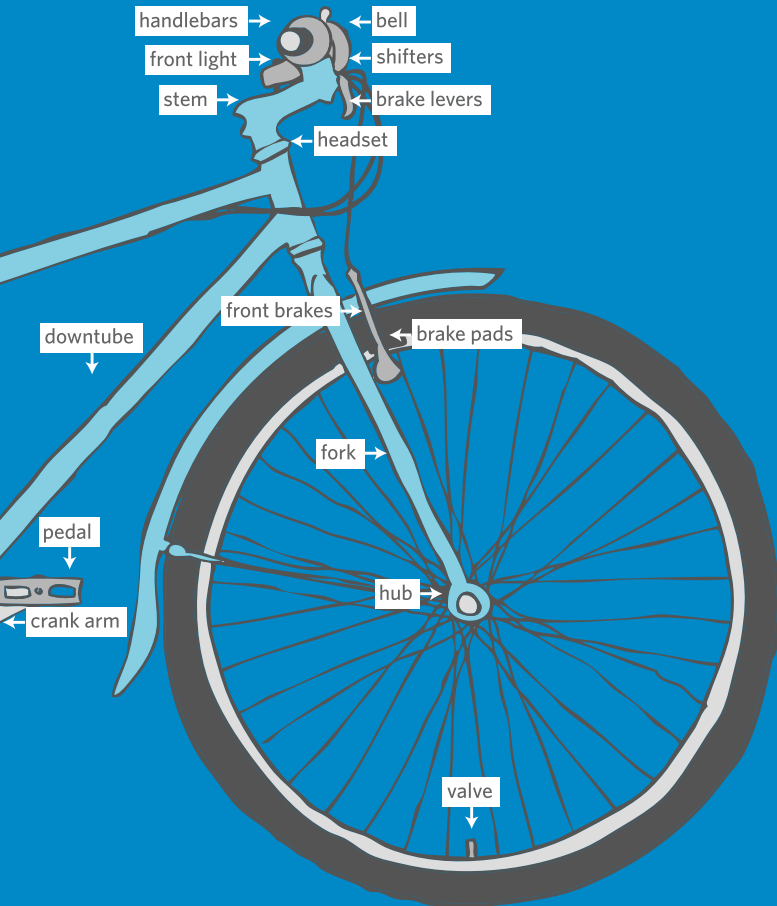


# The bicycle





Need some advice on where to bike and how to fix your bike? Check out [walkandrollpeel.ca/organizations](http://walkandrollpeel.ca/organizations) for local support!



# Ready to ride

## Does your bicycle fit?

Make sure you can stand over the crossbar of your bike. When sitting you should comfortably reach the handlebars and your leg should be slightly bent while touching the pedal at its lowest point.

## Keep your ride smooth with the ABC checklist:

### Air

- tires have enough air
- wheels spin freely

### Brakes & bars

- brakes are working
- handlebars are stable




### Chain and crank

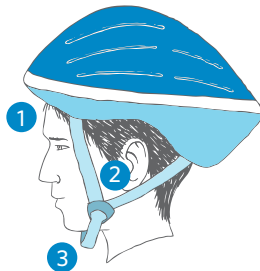
- chain is tight and lubricated
- pedals spin freely
- crank arm is not wobbly

## Wear a helmet that fits

In Ontario, the law states cyclists under 18 must wear one.

## Follow the 2-V-1 rule

-  2 fingers between your eyebrow and your helmet.
-  The straps should form a "V" around your ears.
-  1 finger should fit between the strap and your chin.



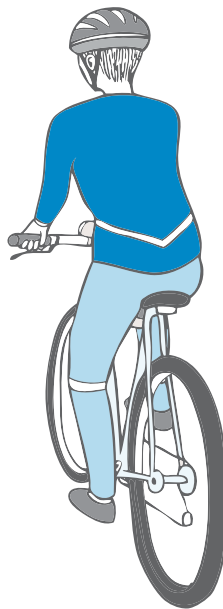
For more on helmets visit [walkandrollpeel.ca/helmets](http://walkandrollpeel.ca/helmets)

## Take care of children

By law, small children must be seated in an approved child's bicycle seat, bike trailer, or cargo bike. In Ontario, it is illegal for two people to ride on a bicycle meant for one person.

## Be seen, be heard, be safe

Ontario law requires that a bicycle be equipped with a front white light and rear red light or reflector at night, and a bell or horn at all times. Good quality lights cost less than \$20. A bell lets people know you are there. Ring it when passing parked, pulled-over, or turning cars to alert the driver of your presence. The more people see and hear you, the safer you are.



*A cyclist is easier to see in the daytime.*

*It is more difficult for drivers to see you at night.*

*Lights, reflectors, reflective tape and reflective clothing help drivers see you at night.*

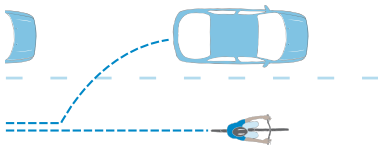


*Boost your cycling skills! Increase your confidence and improve your riding skills through a cycling course or community ride. Find out more at [walkandrollpeel.ca](http://walkandrollpeel.ca)*

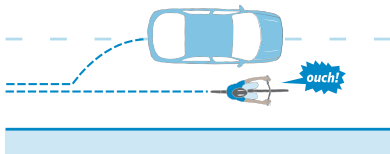
# Rules of the road

## Highway Traffic Act

Ontario's Highway Traffic Act (HTA) outlines the rules that all road users - including cyclists - must follow. In addition, there are also some laws that are specific to bikes.



✓ *by law, drivers must give one metre when passing a cyclist in Ontario.*



✗ *insufficient passing distance is a dangerous and ticketable offence.*

## Cyclists and the law

Riding a bicycle does not require a license or special permit - anyone can do it! Cyclists are legally required to follow traffic rules, obey signs and use hand signals. A cyclist who has disobeyed a traffic law can be stopped by a police officer and may be fined. If stopped by police, cyclists must identify themselves correctly.

## Riding on the road

As a general rule, the slowest-moving vehicles, like bikes, occupy the road lane closest to the curb. Keeping one metre between you and the curb, or parked cars, ensures that you are visible to other road users and have room to maneuver if a car passes you too closely.

Drivers must give one metre when passing a cyclist in Ontario or face a fine and demerit points. Ride with confidence!



## Examples of ticketable HTA offences and fines for cyclists\*

person under 18 not wearing helmet while on bike	\$85
lack of / defective bicycle bell, horn, or lights	\$110
improper (or no) arm signal to indicate turns or stops	\$110
fail to stop at a red light	\$325
careless operation of bicycle or vehicle	\$490

## Examples of HTA offences, fines, and demerit points for drivers\*

insufficient passing distance (drivers must leave 1 metre)	\$110 + 2 points
fail to move left to avoid collision with bicycle	\$145 + 2 points
opening car door into traffic	\$365 + 3 points
distracted driving	\$490 + 3 points

*\*Fine amounts listed are inclusive of provincial set fines and all additional fees.*

## Fines, not demerit points

Cyclists do not receive demerit points on their driver's licence for tickets issued while riding their bicycle. But they can be given tickets for which they have to pay fines.

Sometimes, a cyclist may feel the road is too dangerous and will use the sidewalk. Should you choose to do this, it is safest to always let pedestrians proceed first, and walk your bike through crosswalks and busy areas of sidewalk.

## Sidewalks are for walking

In Peel Region, only bicycles with wheels less than 50 cm (20 inches) in diameter, the size of most childrens' bike wheels, are allowed on the sidewalk.

In some locations crossrides are being installed. Crossrides are areas beside crosswalks that allow cyclists to ride their bicycle across intersections without dismounting.



Find legal resources: Information your rights and responsibilities as a cyclist can be found at [mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/pdfs/cycling-skills.pdf](https://mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/pdfs/cycling-skills.pdf)

# Cycle safely

## Pay attention

Pay attention in traffic, as drivers and pedestrians might not see you. Stay alert for hazards like potholes, cars changing lanes, or car doors opening into your lane. Respect other road users.

## Ride in a predictable, straight line

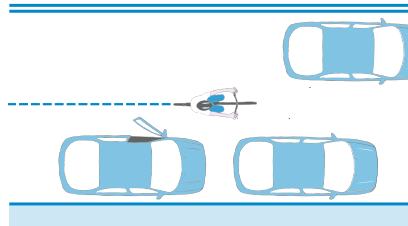
If you ride confidently and predictably in a straight line, other road users will be able to recognize your behaviour and give you room to ride.

Do not swerve in and out of traffic or construction zones - it is your right to take up as much space as you need.

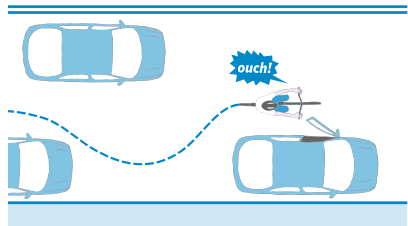
Ride a safe distance from parked cars, so that you don't ride into someone's door if they open it without looking. Always check over your left shoulder before changing lanes.

## Watch for pedestrians

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users. Stop at pedestrian crosswalks and always be respectful.



- ✓ *keep a good distance from parked cars.*



- ✗ *resist the temptation to ride into gaps.*

## Signal your turn

Signal your turn before you reach an intersection by using hand signals or clearly pointing.



*left-hand turn*



*stop*



*right-hand turn*

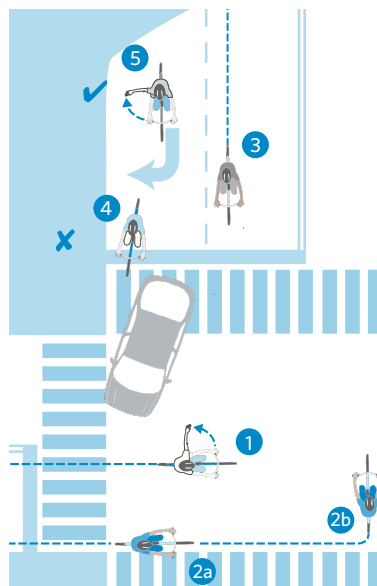


*right-hand turn*

Reduce your speed on turns - especially on wet roads.

## Intersections

- 1 You can turn left with traffic using the far left lane or turning lane
- 2a You can turn left by riding along the inside of the crosswalk, and make a two-part left turn.
- 2b
- 3 Only enter the right-turn lane if you are turning right. Do not enter it if you are going straight through the intersection.
- 4
- 5 Do not pass right-turning drivers on the right if you are going straight, unless you are in a bike lane and the driver has given you the right of way.
- 5 If you are turning right, wait your turn behind a right-turning car.



# Sharing the road

## Large vehicles

Be cautious when riding near trucks, buses and other large vehicles. Don't pass them in an intersection unless you are absolutely certain they are proceeding straight. Never pass them on the right if they are turning right, only on the left. Large vehicles can make wide turns.

## Electric scooters

Electric or power-assisted bicycles (commonly known as e-bikes) are not allowed on multi-use paths and off-road trails. They are allowed to use painted bicycles lanes on the road.

## Collisions

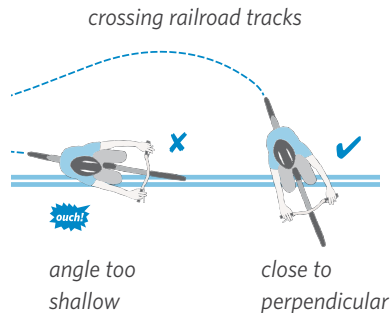
If you are involved in a collision, you are entitled to benefits - including money to replace your bicycle or pay health bills - even if you caused the collision. Be sure someone calls the police, exchange contact information with the driver, and write down their licence plate number and insurance information.

Call 911 for emergencies. For non-emergencies call Peel Regional Police at 905-453-3311 in Brampton and Mississauga and the Ontario Provincial Police at 1-888-310-1122 in Caledon.

## Railroad tracks

Tires can get caught in rail tracks, and they are very slippery when wet. Always try to cross them with your wheel at a right angle so you don't get caught!

Follow all railroad crossing signals and rules when crossing the tracks.



# Biking in the city & beyond

## Getting around your community

More than half of trips Peel residents make to work, school, shop, and meet friends can be made in less than 30 minutes on a bike.

## Ride with an experienced cyclist

If you are a beginner, partner with a more experienced cyclist to learn how to ride safely in traffic and discover the best routes in your neighbourhood.

## Choose the best route

Municipal trails maps will help you choose a route using bicycle lanes, trails or side streets without trucks and speeding cars. Try a new route on a Sunday to experience it without busy weekday traffic.

## Bike to work or school

Commuting by bicycle is a healthy and affordable way to travel. Studies show that people who bike as part of their daily commute are more likely to achieve doctor-recommended levels of physical activity, and are able to focus better at school or work.

Plan your trip to school with our School Trip Planner:

[walkandrollpeel.ca/schooltrip](http://walkandrollpeel.ca/schooltrip)

## Bike lanes and trails

New dedicated bike infrastructure is making it less stressful and more enjoyable to ride a bike in Peel.

Use the Peel Trails Map to find the best routes for you.



*View the interactive Peel Trails Map at [walkandrollpeel.ca/map](http://walkandrollpeel.ca/map)*

*Get a print copy of your local map at your nearest library or recreation centre.*

*To get a print copy mailed to you for free, contact [walkandroll@peelregion.ca](mailto:walkandroll@peelregion.ca)*

## Weather-proof your ride

Wear whatever you feel comfortable in. Layers of light clothing that can be added or removed as needed are best in colder weather. Waterproof jackets and pants will keep you dry when it rains. Wear sunscreen in the summer, and bring a water bottle to stay hydrated on longer trips. Fenders will keep you dry when you splash through rain or snow.

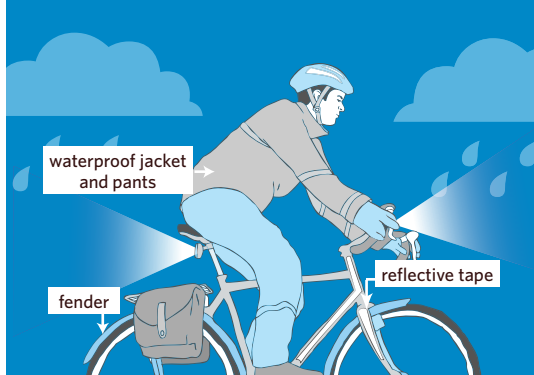
## Transit with your bicycle

All MiWay, Brampton Transit and GO Transit buses have bike racks on the front of the bus to use anytime. Nearly all transit stations have racks you can lock your bike to, so you can bike to the closest station and then take the bus or train.

Bicycles are allowed on the GO Train anytime, except on trains which are scheduled to arrive at Union Station from 6:30 to 9:30 a.m., and which depart from Union Station from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m on weekdays. Foldable bikes are permitted at all times.

## Lock your bike

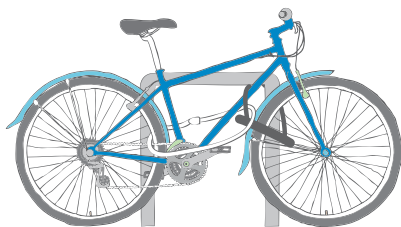
Always lock your bike frame and both wheels to prevent theft. A U-lock fixed to a bike rack works best, otherwise try a secure post or pole. Use a second lock for extra security.



*stay comfortable and dry with the right clothes and fenders.*

## Fight bike theft!

Register your bike online at [peel.police.ca/bikes](http://peel.police.ca/bikes) and help fight bike theft. It's free, fast, and increases the chances of your bike being returned if it's lost or stolen and found in Mississauga or Brampton. You will also be sent an anti-theft sticker that shows your bike has been registered, and receive tips on how to prevent bike theft.



*lock your front wheel to the rack, and use a cable lock to secure your rear wheel.*

# Riding a bicycle will keep you healthy & happy.

**walk+roll** <sup>PEEL</sup>

[walkandrollpeel.ca](http://walkandrollpeel.ca)



**MISSISSAUGA**

[mississauga.ca/cycling](http://mississauga.ca/cycling)



**BRAMPTON**  
Flower City

[brampton.ca/cycling](http://brampton.ca/cycling)



**TOWN OF CALEDON**

[caledon.ca/cycling](http://caledon.ca/cycling)



[peelregion.ca](http://peelregion.ca)



[peelpolice.ca/bikes](http://peelpolice.ca/bikes)



[caledon.ca/opp](http://caledon.ca/opp)

# Start your journey to health, happiness, & freedom!

To download this handbook or to order copies visit [walkandrollpeel.ca/handbook](http://walkandrollpeel.ca/handbook)  
or email [walkandroll@peelregion.ca](mailto:walkandroll@peelregion.ca).

*This handbook was created through a partnership between the Region of Peel, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, Peel Regional Police and the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police. Special thanks to the Mississauga and Brampton Cycling Advisory Committees for their input*

*The Peel Cyclists Handbook, First Edition, March 2017  
Illustrations: Jay Dart, Stephanie Leeson, Thevishka Kanishkan  
Design: Simon Farla, Thevishka Kanishkan*

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