

Summer School

breakthegridlock.org

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About Break the Gridlock



An all-volunteer, grass-roots organization aimed at reducing Chicago's automobile dependence- formed 1999

About us:

- ~ Martin: Performance Bicycle, Bobby's Bike Hike, Midnight Marauders, Bike Winter; identified cyclist for 19 years, carfree for 10 years
- ~ Lauren: Bike Winter, Marauders, Massing Up, West Town Bikes, Cycling Sisters, cross-country cyclist, bike polo player, bike lover for 3 years, carfree for 22 years
- ~ Howard: Bike Winter, Chicago Ghost Bikes, Chicago Cycling Club, Stolen Bike Registry, bike commuter for 15 years, carfree for 6 years

Why Summer School?

- ~ Sudden demand due to gas prices
- ~ Concern for safety of new bike commuters
- ~ Desire to see new bike commuters succeed
- ~ Desire to see increased modeshare

More cyclists =

- safer streets for cyclists
- larger voice for bicyclists' needs
- shift in infrastructure
- greater support for cycling resources
e.g. bike shops, bike stations

Agenda/outline

Safe Cycling Technique

Choosing a Route

**Combining bicycle commuting
with transit**

Chicago Cycling and the Law

Cycling Etiquette

Choosing a Bike

Accessories and Dress

Maintenance Considerations

Avoiding Theft

****Further Resources****

=Scope=

- ~ Basic knowledge to help a beginning bike commuter make safe choices
- ~ Not a substitute for hands-on or on-the-road training
- ~ Use of identified follow-up resources encouraged (resource handout)

Safe Cycling Technique

Safety: Mindfulness, building safe habits

- learn from mistakes and near misses

- identify one or more potentially dangerous situations on your commute each day

 - (most important for regular route)

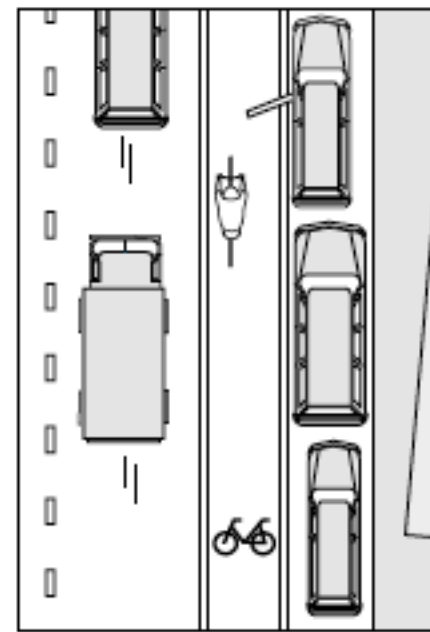
- mentally rehearse strategies for avoiding possible accidents in future

- strategies to stay mindful—talk yourself through situations, e.g. say to self "look left, look right" at alleys/crossings

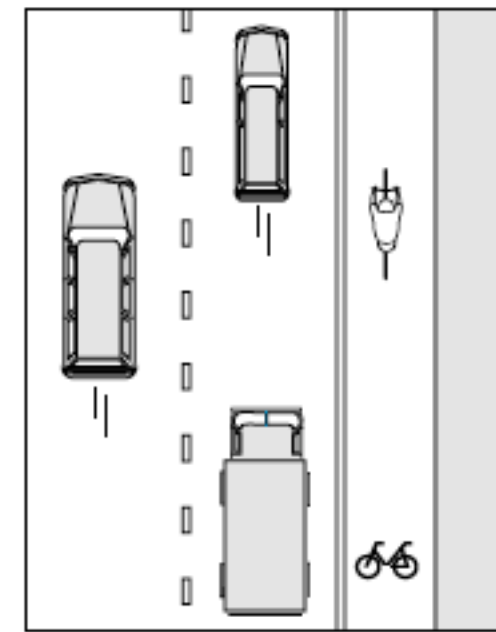
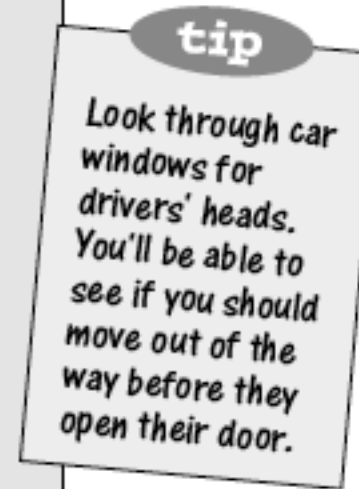
Lane Usage/Navigation

- ✦ door zone
- ✦ keeping a line
- ✦ looking behind without swerving

How should you position yourself in the bike lane?



RIDE ON THE LEFT in the bike lane if there are parked cars on your right. This way you can avoid doors or pedestrians that suddenly appear in your path.



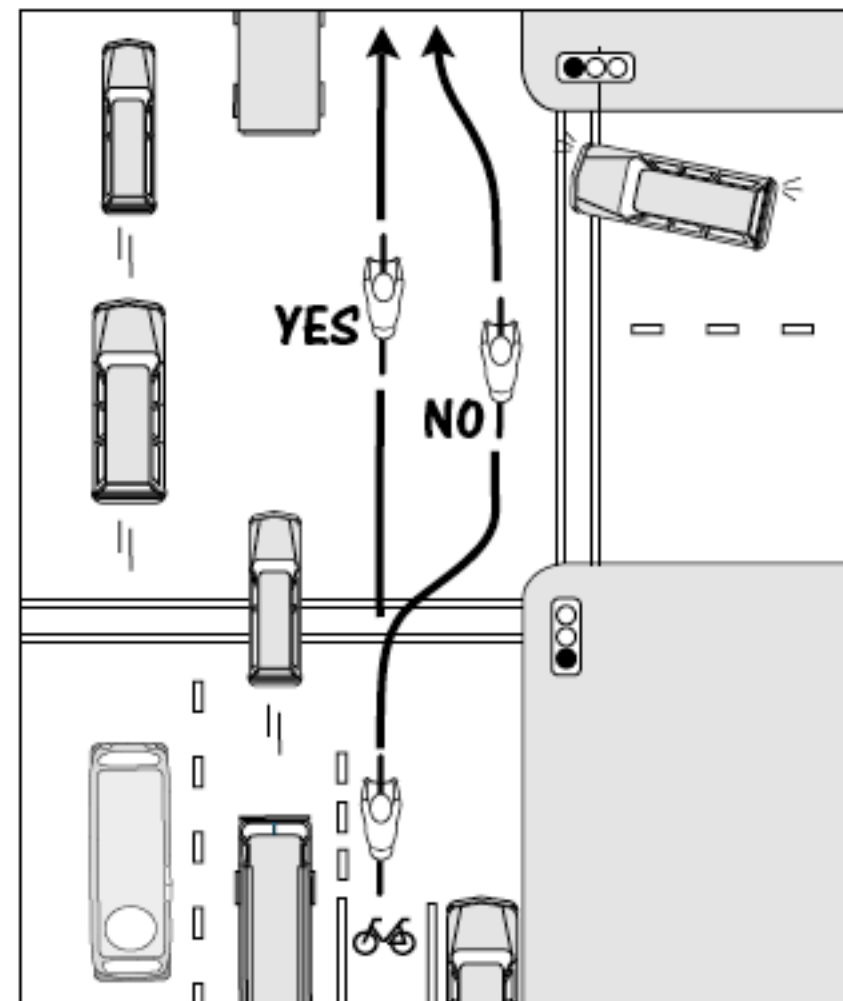
RIDE IN THE MIDDLE of the bike lane when there are no cars between you and the curb. This way, you are visible to motorists and you avoid debris that gathers at the curb.

Intersections and turning

- ✧ What to do when a bike lane ends

What should you do when the bike lane ends?

- Try to move in the straightest possible line to where you'll ride on the other side of the intersection.
- Don't veer into the right-turn lane. If you stay away from the curb, motorists can see you better.

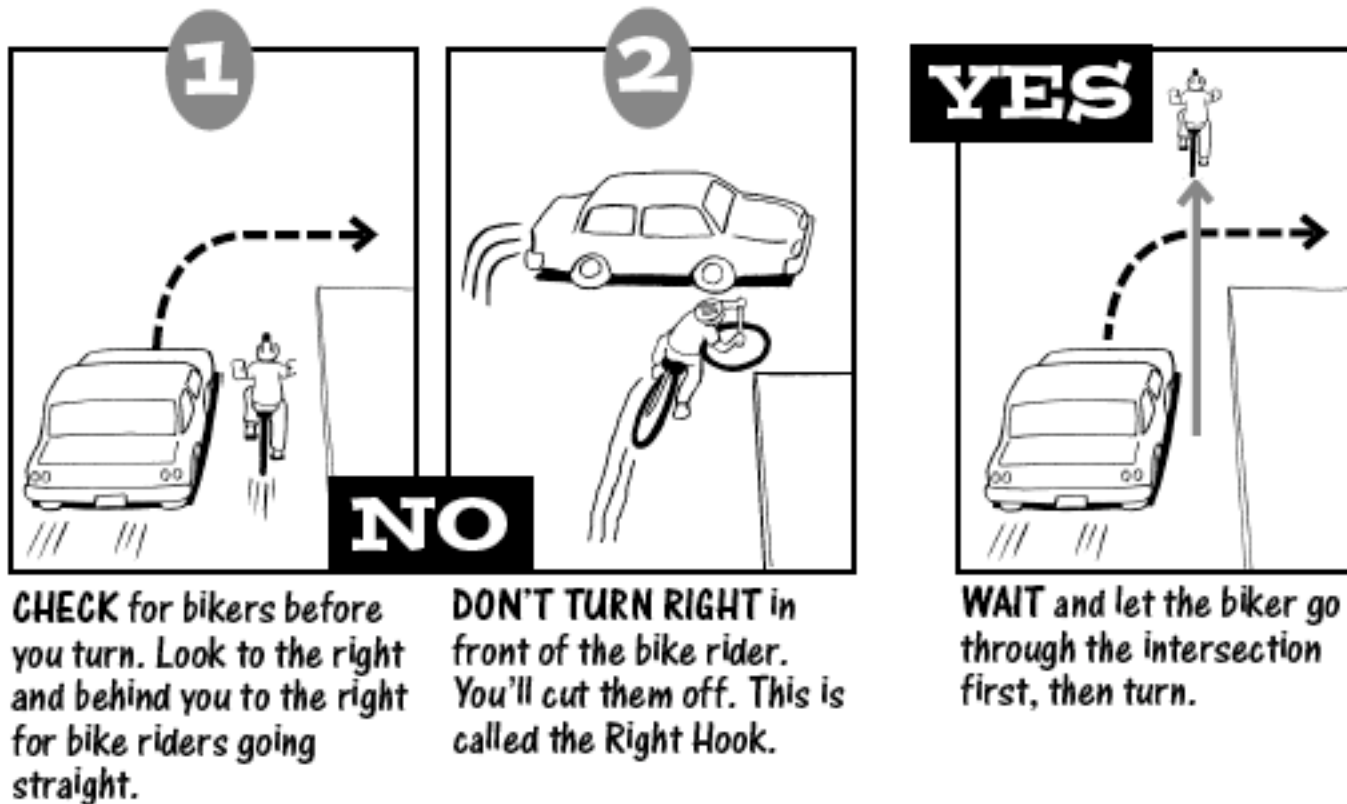


Intersections and turning

- Common Hazards: Right Hook, Left Cross

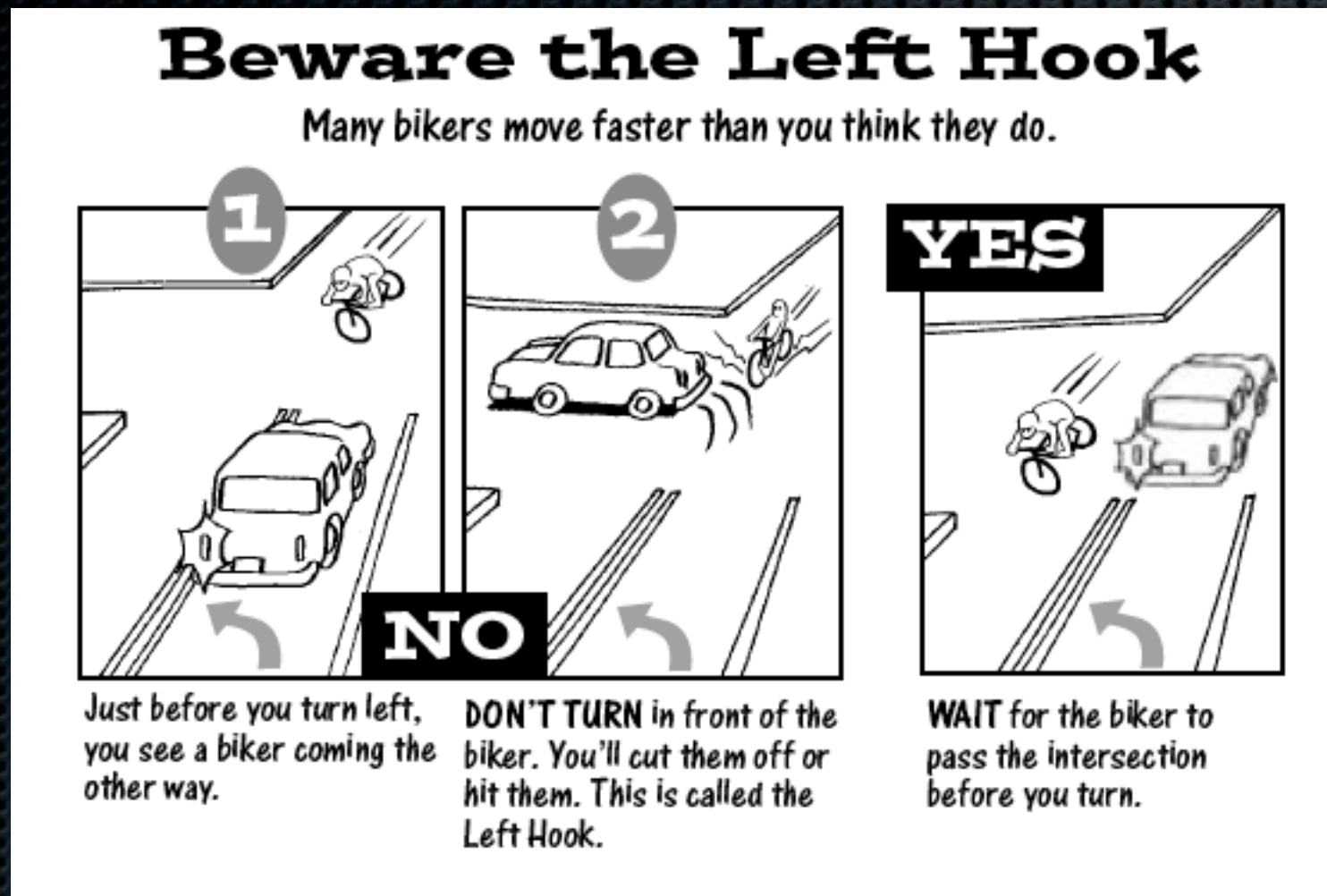
Beware the Right Hook

Before turning right, always look for and yield to bike riders.



Cyclist:
Don't pass cars on
the right at
intersections!

Intersections and turning



- ✦ Why? Drivers typically count oncoming cars subconsciously when planning a left turn
- ✦ Motorists scan for specific things and may not see a bike

What you can do:

- assume turning driver does not see you
- wave to get attention, wait for sign of being seen
- slow when approaching intersection and be ready to yield if necessary

Intersections and turning

other considerations

- ✦ look each direction long enough to register movement, or look each direction multiple times
- ✦ Avoid “pedal strike”—keep pedal up while turning
- ✦ Asphalt roll-off—be aware street may not be level when coming to a stop, especially on side streets
- ✦ Scan for pedestrians, make noise proactively

How to behave around a bus

- ✦ Stay behind if at all possible
- ✦ Never pass on right
- ✦ Don't leapfrog—pass on left only when stopped and not likely to pass you again soon
- ✦ Avoid streets with bus routes when possible

Signaling

- left turn, right turn, stopping

Use Hand Signals

Whenever you change lanes or turn, signal with your arm. If you're about to move in an unexpected way—like around a bunch of glass—point to the part of the road you're moving to. Also signal when slowing down—you don't have brake lights! The law says you must signal 100 feet before making a turn, so you might have to signal while shifting and braking—but don't do it if you'll lose control. You can yell your intentions, but remember that noisy traffic might prevent others from hearing you. (Note that the law requires signaling a right turn with your left arm, but many cyclists use the right-arm signal shown.)



Also:

- Wave
- Use a bell or horn
- Call out to get others' attention

Study: Ian Walker, Bath University

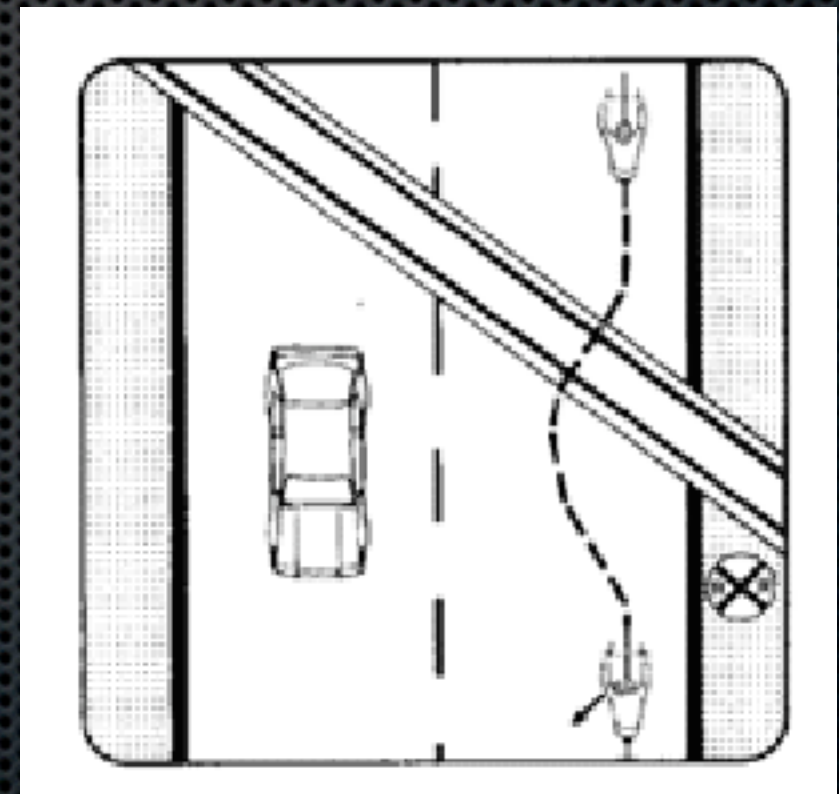
- ✦ found drivers gave him an average of 5.5 more inches passing distance when he wore a woman's wig
- ✦ Conclusion: ?



Dealing with Common Hazards

✦ Train tracks

- slow down and look behind you for traffic
- change lane position as necessary to approach tracks at **right angle**
- return to original lane position



Dealing with Common Hazards

- ✦ Bridges—stay light on handlebars, avoid sudden steering changes, pedal at steady pace. Be mindful of traffic around you and take the lane if you need to.
- ✦ Grates—avoid if possible
- ✦ Plates—slippery when wet
- ✦ Holes—avoid if possible, go straight across if unable to avoid

Dealing with Common Hazards

- ✦ Sun direction/glare: be aware drivers may not see you
- ✦ Double parked vehicles: look, signal
- ✦ Wet pavement: Avoid painted markings, allow increased stopping time
- ✦ Never wear earphones while cycling

Dealing with Common Hazards

✦ Wrong-way cyclist

- slow down and move as far to right as safe as soon as aware of oncoming cyclist
- be ready to stop completely
- avoid attempting to negotiate passing position—it can make things worse

Be ready for mishaps

- ✦ carry ID, emergency info, pertinent medical info
- ✦ I.C.E.

After a collision or fall

- ✦ should you get up?
- ✦ getting police/emergency response
- ✦ getting other participant's info
- ✦ getting witness info
- ✦ getting legal assistance

Route Choice:

[Major arteries vs. secondary streets{

[Bike paths

[Bike lanes

[Maintaining proximity to bus route/ train

Width/lanes?

Bus route?

Controlled crossings?

Pavement integrity?

Neighborhood?

Route Choice: resources

- [Chicago Bike map (distribute)

- [Google Maps

- [listserv: Chicagobikeroutes@yahoogroups.com

- [Bike club rides

Multimodal Commuting: CTA

- * Bikes on buses: 24 hours
- * Must be 14 or older
- * Remove heavy items from bike
- * stay close to front
- * inform driver when exiting
- * folding bike can ride in bus



Multimodal Commuting: CTA

**COMCAST SIGNS:
DO NOT PREVENT
RACK USE**



Multimodal Commuting: CTA

- * TRAINS: 2 bikes per car maximum
- * Not allowed 7-9 AM, 4-6 PM M-F except holidays
- * Not allowed July 3rd, also conductor discretion
- * Use swing gate rather than turnstile, or have attendant open security gate.
- * Not permitted on escalators

Multimodal Commuting: Metra

- * Must be 16 y.o.
- * 3 bikes per ADA car, 2 per electric car
- * Permitted on all weekday trains arriving in Chicago after 9:30 AM and leaving Chicago before 3:00 PM and after 7:00 PM
- * **Blackouts:**
 - * Blues Fest (Weekend only - June 7 - 8)
 - * All days during Taste of Chicago (June 27 - July 6)
 - * Independence Eve Fireworks (July 3)
 - * Venetian Night (July 26)
 - * Lollapalooza (August 1 - 3)
 - * Air & Water Show (August 16 & 17)
 - * Jazz Fest (Weekend only - August 30 - August 31)
- * 36" Bungee securing top tube to lower rail
- * Conductor discretion rules!

Multimodal Commuting: Tips

- * Keep a “beater” bicycle at the station to complete one leg of your journey
- * Lock inside station if available
- * Don't lock to “CTA property” except bike rack
- * Plan your route to parallel transit route in case of technical problem

CYCLING AND THE LAW

GENERAL

9-52-10- Rights and duties

- (a) Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be **granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle** by the laws of this state declaring rules of the road applicable to vehicles or by the traffic ordinances of this city applicable to the driver of a vehicle, except as to those provisions of laws and ordinances which by their nature can have no application.
- (b) The regulations in the traffic code applicable to bicycles shall apply whenever a bicycle is operated upon any roadway or public sidewalk or upon any public path set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles, subject to those exceptions stated herein.
- (c) **Whenever authorized signs are erected indicating that no right or left turn or turn** in the opposite direction is permitted, **no person operating a bicycle shall disobey the direction of any such sign** unless he dismounts from the bicycle to make the turn, in which event he shall then obey the regulations applicable to pedestrians.
- (d) Every person convicted of a violation of any provision of this chapter regulating bicycles shall be fined \$25.00.

Added Coun. J. 7-12-90, p. 18634

CYCLING AND THE LAW

11-15-1505- **Position of bicycles and motorized pedal cycles on roadways** - Riding on roadways and bicycle paths (Illinois)

(a) Any person operating a bicycle or motorized pedal cycle upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall ride **as close as practicable and safe to the right hand curb or edge of the roadway except** under the following situations:

1. When **overtaking and passing** another bicycle, motorized pedal cycle or vehicle proceeding in the same direction; or
2. **When preparing for a left turn** at an intersection or into a private road or driveway; or
3. **When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions** including, but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, bicycles, motorized pedal cycles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to continue along the right hand curb or edge. For purposes of this subsection, a "substandard width lane" means a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle or motorized pedal cycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.
4. When approaching a place where a right turn is authorized.

(b) Any person operating a bicycle or motorized pedal cycle upon a **one way** highway with two or more marked traffic lanes **may ride as near the left hand curb** or edge of such roadway as practicable.

CYCLING AND THE LAW

9-52-40- Yielding right-of-way (Chicago)

- (a) The operator of a bicycle emerging from an alley, driveway or building shall, upon approaching a sidewalk or the sidewalk area extending across any alleyway, yield the right-of-way to all pedestrians approaching on the sidewalk or sidewalk area and, upon entering the roadway, shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on the roadway.
- (b) Whenever any person is riding a bicycle upon a sidewalk, such person shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give audible signal before overtaking and passing such pedestrian.
- (c) Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near as practicable to the right-hand side of the roadway, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction and **at all times giving the right-of-way to other moving vehicles.**

CYCLING AND THE LAW

SINGLE FILE VS. 2 ABREAST?

Illinois: 11-15-1501.1-Persons riding bicycles or motorized pedal cycles upon a roadway **shall not ride more than 2 abreast**, except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for their exclusive use. Persons riding 2 abreast shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a single lane subject to the provisions of Section 11-1505.

Chicago: 9-52-50- Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway **shall not ride other than single file** except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles.

CYCLING AND THE LAW

9-52-20- Riding bicycles on **sidewalks** and certain roadways (Chicago)

- (a) No person shall ride a bicycle upon a sidewalk within a business district.
- (b) No person 12 or more years of age shall ride a bicycle upon any sidewalk in any district, unless such sidewalk has been officially designated and marked as a bicycle route.
- (c) Bicycles shall not be operated on Lake Shore Drive or on any roadway where the operation of bicycles has been prohibited and signs have been erected indicating such prohibition.
- (d) Whenever a usable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to a roadway, bicycle riders shall use such path and shall not use the roadway.

Reports of ticketing:
N. Sheridan (\$250, special ordinance)
Andersonville
West Town
Lakeview?

CYCLING AND THE LAW

BASIC EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

9-52-80- Head lamps, reflectors and brakes

(a) Every bicycle when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with a **head lamp** which shall emit a white light visible from a minimum distance of 500 feet from the front and with a **rear red reflector** capable of reflecting the head lamp beams of an approaching motor vehicle back to the operator of such vehicle at distances up to 200 feet or a rear lamp emitting a red light visible from a distance of at least 200 feet from the rear.

(b) Every bicycle shall be equipped with a **brake** that will enable the operator to **make the braked wheel skid** on dry, level, clean pavement.

Helmets: Required only for messengers in “central business area”

CYCLING AND THE LAW

NEW LAWS

3-foot rule (Illinois)

From IL Sec. 11-703. Overtaking a vehicle on the left.

(d) The operator of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle or individual proceeding in the same direction on a highway shall leave a safe distance, but not less than 3 feet, when passing the bicycle or individual and shall maintain that distance until safely past the overtaken bicycle or individual.

CYCLING AND THE LAW

NEW LAWS

New Chicago Ordinance (3/08)

9-16-20-e Right of way to a bicycle on Left Turn

The driver of a vehicle within an intersection intending to turn to the left shall yield the right of way to a bicycle approaching from the opposite direction which is within the intersection or so close thereto as to constitute an immediate hazard. Added Coun. J. 3-12-08, p. 22783

9-16-20-f Turning right in front of a bicycle

When a motor vehicle and a bicycle are traveling in the same direction on any highway, street, or road, the operator of the motor vehicle overtaking such bicycle traveling on the right side of the roadway **shall not turn to the right in front of the bicycle** at that intersection or at any alley or driveway until such vehicle has overtaken and is safely clear of the bicycle. Added Coun. J. 3-12-08, p. 22783

9-36-10-c Overtaking on the left

The operator of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle or individual proceeding in the same direction on a highway **shall leave a safe distance, but not less than 3 feet**, when passing the bicycle or individual and shall maintain that distance until safely past the overtaken bicycle or individual. Added Coun. J. 3-12-08, p. 22783

9-80-35- Opening and closing vehicle doors

No person shall open the door of a vehicle on the side available to moving traffic **unless and until it is reasonably safe to do so**, and can be done without interfering with the movement of other traffic, nor shall any person leave a door open on the side of a vehicle available to moving traffic for a period of time longer than necessary to load or unload passengers. Added Coun. J. 3-12-08, p. 22786

CYCLING AND THE LAW

LEAGUE OF ILLINOIS BICYCLISTS
RULES OF THE ROAD WALLET CARDS

FOR THOSE
“SPECIAL ENCOUNTERS”

Cycling Etiquette

Interacting with other cyclists

- keep some distance
- call out “passing on your left”
- never pass on right
- warn others behind you of glass or other hazards
- ding your bell, honk your horn, smile and wave

•*treat other cyclists like family-
we have enough challenges already!*

Cycling Etiquette

Interacting with Pedestrians

- be courteous
- if on sidewalk, remember you're a guest
- slow to stop if necessary around children/strollers
- get attention in non-aggressive manner-
“excuse me, sorry!”
- always yield the right of way to pedestrians-
pass behind them in crosswalks

“in a kind and compassionate society, the most vulnerable road user should always have the right of way” -MH

PEDESTRIANS ARE NOT CONES

Cycling Etiquette

Interacting with motorists

- signal your intent
hand signals, bell/horn, eye contact
- wave to break driver out of trance
- wait for clear acknowledgement before
assuming motorist is aware of you
- don't assume driver sees you based only
on eye contact
- when educational need is apparent,
communicate in least emotional manner
possible; find a way to get the motorist to
think about their actions