

Cupertino SR2S Guide to Safe Cycling This School Year

The end of summer is near and the kids are headed back to school. These last few months of warm, sunny weather are perfect for testing out new cycling routes to schools, stores, and community centers as we all gear up for our Autumn routines. We've created this short safety guide to keep all you riders cycling in safe style and grace.

Bicycle Handling 101

- ***Riding in a Straight Line:*** Riding in a straight line sends a clear message to other road users of the direction you are traveling. A predictable route of travel is safer for everyone, so while on your bicycle use slight motions to steer the front wheel, center yourself, and look ahead of you to help with balance.
- ***Scanning:*** Looking over your shoulder, or scanning, is a skill that helps cyclists change lanes or merge safely on streets. In all situations and especially in traffic, predictability and communication with drivers is essential to cyclist safety. Tell drivers when you are going to change speed or roadway position by scanning, signaling your intended direction, and moving when it is safe.
- ***Signaling:*** Signaling is a key element of predictability for cyclists out on the road. By letting other road users (motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, etc.) know which direction you intend to go by signaling with your right or left hand, you'll keep everyone safer and happier. Drivers appreciate the courtesy of a hand signal and often respond kindly. For more information on how to signal, visit: <http://bikeleague.org/content/signaling>

Traffic Law 101

- ***Drive Your Bike:*** Cyclists fare best when they act and are treated as drivers of vehicles. Remember to **drive** your bike out on the road and obey all traffic signs and signals just as a car would. Evading the rules of the road only puts yourself and others in danger.
- ***Ride on the Right-Hand Side of the Road:*** Cyclists are safest and most predictable when riding on the right-hand side of the road with traffic. This puts you in the correct position to read all signs and signals and be visible to cars. Preserve the safety of our Cupertino streets and don't be a wrong-way rider.
- ***First Come, First Served:*** Cyclists and motorists are both considered operators of vehicles and therefore have equal rights when sharing the road. As a cyclist, you have the right to use as much of the lane as you need to feel safe and comfortable and by law drivers must yield to you if you were there first. When the lane is wide enough to allow car and bike traffic side-by-side safely, ride on the right-hand side of the road and allow faster vehicles to pass on the left.

Nutrition 101

- ***Eat Before You're Hungry, Drink Before You're Thirsty:*** Summertime in the South Bay means heat. Remember to adequately hydrate and fuel your body before and during a ride. We recommend water and electrolyte sport drinks for hydration and carbohydrates and proteins for energy. Avoid fats, especially on long rides, as they are difficult for the body to digest.

Information from this article was provided in part by the League of American Bicyclists. For more information or safety tips, visit [Cupertino.org/saferoutes](https://cupertino.org/saferoutes) or email saferoutes@cupertino.org.