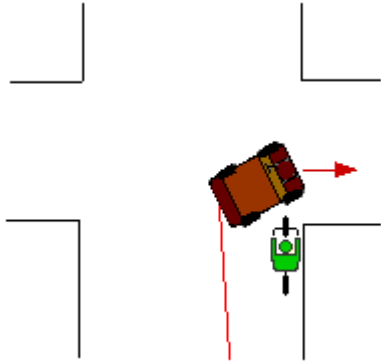


The Right Hook:

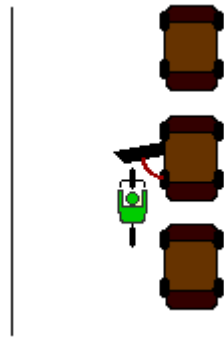


A car passes you and then tries to make a right turn directly in front of you, or right into you. They think you're not going very fast just because you're on a bicycle, so it never occurs to them that they can't pass you in time. Even if you have to slam on your brakes to avoid hitting them, they often won't feel they've done anything wrong. This kind of collision is very hard to avoid because you typically don't see it until the last second, and because there's nowhere for you to go when it happens.

How to avoid it:

- 1. Don't ride on the sidewalk.** When you come off the sidewalk to cross the street you're invisible to motorists. You're just begging to be hit if you do this.
- 2. Ride to the left.** Taking up the whole lane makes it harder for drivers to pass you to cut you off or turn into you. Don't feel bad about taking the lane: if motorists didn't threaten your life by turning in front of or into you or passing you too closely, then you wouldn't have to. If the lane you're in isn't wide enough for cars to pass you safely, then you should be taking the whole lane *anyway*.
- 3. Glance in your mirror before approaching an intersection.** (If you don't have a handlebar or helmet mirror, get one now.) Be sure to look in your mirror *well before* you get to the intersection.

The Door Prize:



A driver opens his door right in front of you. You run right into it if you can't stop in time.

How to avoid it:

Ride to the left, outside of the "door zone". Ride far enough to the left that you won't run into any door that's opened unexpectedly. You may be wary about riding so far into the lane that cars can't pass you easily, but you're MUCH more likely to get doored by a parked car if you ride too close to it than you are to get hit from behind by a car which can clearly see you.

This pamphlet brought to you by:

The Nevada Bicycle Coalition
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How to Not Get Hit by a Car

Important lessons on Bicycle Safety

This pamphlet shows you real ways you can get hit and real ways to avoid them.

This is a far cry from normal bicycle safety guides, which usually tell you little more than to wear your helmet and to follow the law. But consider this for a moment: **Wearing a helmet will do absolutely nothing to prevent you from getting hit by a car!** Sure, helmets might help you *if* you get hit, and it's a good idea to wear one, but **your #1 goal should be to avoid getting hit in the first place.**

80% - 85% of serious head injuries could have been avoided by wearing a helmet.

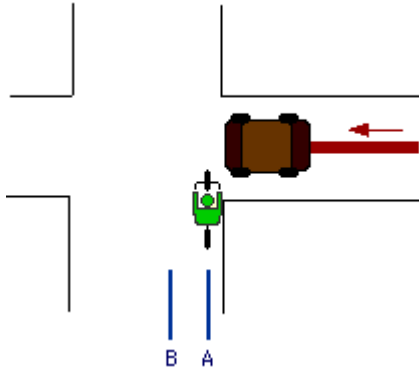
But don't confuse wearing a helmet with biking safely. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. It's better to not get hit. That's what real bicycle safety is about.

Obedying the law is important not because not to do so is illegal. It's important because that is what motorists expect you to do. Doing the unexpected is a recipe for disaster.

Obedying the law and wearing a helmet are important first steps to bicycling safely but this pamphlet is about real world accidents and real world ways to avoid them.

This information provided by Michael Bluejay and www.bicyclesafe.com and used by permission.

The Right Cross:



This is one of the most common ways to get hit (or almost get hit). A car is pulling out of a side street, parking lot, or driveway on the right.

How to avoid it:

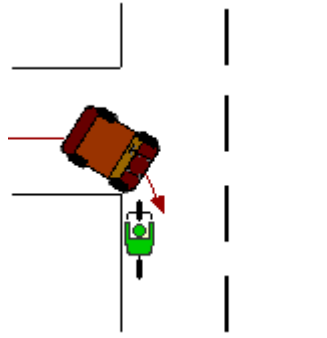
1. Get a headlight. If you're riding at night, you should absolutely use a front headlight. It's required by law, anyway.

2. Honk. Get a loud horn and USE IT whenever you see a car approaching (or waiting) ahead of you and to the right. If you don't have a horn, then yell "Hey!"

3. Slow down. If you can't make eye contact with the driver (especially at night), slow down so much that you're able to completely stop if you have to.

4. Ride further left. Notice the two blue lines "A" and "B" in the diagram. You're probably used to riding in "A", very close to the curb, because you're worried about being hit from behind. But take a look at the car. When that motorist is looking down the road for traffic, he's not looking in the bike lane or the area closest to the curb; he's looking in the MIDDLE of the lane, for other cars. The farther left you are (such as in "B"), the more likely the driver will see you.

The Wrong-Way Wallop



You're riding the wrong way (against traffic, on the left-hand side of the street). A car makes a right turn from a side street, driveway, or parking lot, right into you. They didn't see you because they were looking for traffic only on their left, not on their right.

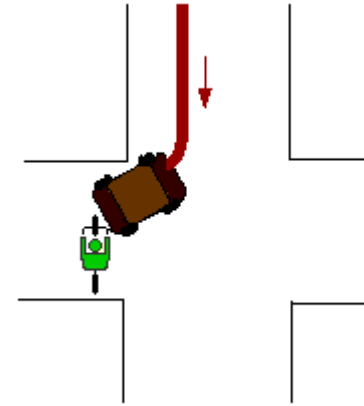
How to avoid it:

Don't ride against traffic. Ride *with* traffic, in the same direction.

Riding against traffic may seem like a good idea because you can see the cars that are passing you, but it's not. Here's why:

1. Cars which pull out of driveways, parking lots, and cross streets (ahead of you and to the left), which are making a right onto your street, aren't expecting traffic to be coming at them from the wrong way. They won't see you, and they'll plow right into you.
2. How the heck are you going to make a right turn?
3. Cars will approach you at a much higher relative speed. If you're going 15mph, then a car passing you from behind doing 35 approaches you at a speed of only 20 (35-15). But if you're on the wrong side of the road, then the car approaches you at 50 (35+15), which is 250% faster! Since they're approaching you faster, both you and the driver have lots less time to react. And if a collision does occur, it's going to be ten times worse.

The Crosswalk Slam



You're riding on the sidewalk and cross the street at a crosswalk, and a car makes a right turn, right into you. Cars aren't expecting bikes in the crosswalk, so you have to be VERY careful to avoid this one.

How to avoid it:

1. Get a headlight. If you're riding at night, you should absolutely use a front headlight. It's required by [law](#), anyway.

2. Slow down. Slow down enough that you're able to completely stop if necessary.

3. Don't ride on the sidewalk in the first place. Crossing between sidewalks can be a fairly dangerous maneuver. If you do it on the left-hand side of the street, you risk getting slammed as per the diagram. If you do it on the right-hand side of the street, you risk getting slammed by a car behind you that's turning right. You also risk getting hit by cars pulling out of parking lots or driveways. These kinds of accidents are hard to avoid, which is a compelling reason to not ride on the sidewalk in the first place.