

Maine Bicycling Laws

- Maine bicycling laws generally give bicyclists the same rights and responsibilities as motor vehicle operators. Bicyclists may use public roads, and they must obey traffic laws such as stopping at red lights and stop signs, yielding to pedestrians at crosswalks and yielding to traffic when entering a road from a driveway.
- Bicyclists must ride with traffic, not against it.
- Bicyclists are expected to ride on the right as far as is "practicable," but there is a variety of situations in which a rider may legally take a larger share of the travel lane, including: setting up for a left turn, proceeding straight where a right turn is also permitted, passing other vehicles, and to avoid obstacles or other unsafe situations.
- Bicyclists MAY ride on designated bike paths and in bike lanes, but they are NOT required to do so, even when such paths or lanes parallel a road. Bicyclists have a right to be on most roads in Maine, but may be prohibited from riding on divided highways and other roads as per local and state ordinances and rules. Bicyclists are not required to ride in shoulders or bike lanes in Maine.
- Bicyclists must have and use headlights at night, as well as rear reflectors and foot/ankle/pedal reflectors. They also must have functional brakes on their bikes.
- Cyclists under 16 must wear bike helmets.
- In most cases, sidewalk riding is allowed and legal unless specifically prohibited by a municipality/local ordinance. Please check with your local municipalities.
- Maine Motor Vehicle Laws Related to Biking:
 - Motorists must give at least three feet of clearance when passing bicyclists.
 - Motorists who are passing bicyclists proceeding in the same direction may not make a right turn unless they can do so with reasonable safety.
 - Motorists may cross the centerline in a no-passing zone in order to pass a bicyclist if it is safe to do so.
 - Motorists should not unnecessarily sound a horn. Honking your horn when approaching a bicyclist could startle them and cause a crash. Maine law states "a person may not unnecessarily sound a signaling device or horn". (Title 29A, Chapter 17, Section 1903)
 - Motorists may open car doors only after checking to see that it can be done safely, without interfering with traffic.