

Road Bike Etiquette

By Jill Evans Kryston, Etiquette Consultant

Q: Summer is a time of sharing the road with bicyclists. Can you provide safety guidelines for those of us who train for the triathlon and enjoy this pastime?

A: Much frustration exists between motorists and bicyclists. Motorists are often impatient with cyclists whom they view as arrogant and in their way. On the other hand, inattentive drivers generate fear and anger among bicyclists. The rules of the road apply to all drivers regardless of the vehicle driven. For safe travel both parties must yield to one another while sharing the road.

Road bike etiquette tips:

- Be aware of your surroundings - don't distract yourself by chatting with a fellow biker or by listening to an ipod.
- Learn to use appropriate hand signals for turning and stopping.
- Know the rules of the road and obey all traffic signs and signals - it is arrogant and unsafe to blow through red lights and stop signs.
- Yield to pedestrians - they always have the right of way.
- Never ride against traffic.
- Ride 6 to 18 inches from the right shoulder or curb.
- Be careful in busy areas and when entering an intersection - you have little protection in the case of an accident.
- Try to ride with one or more persons - there is safety in numbers.
- Ride single file on highly traversed roads - don't impede the flow of traffic.
- Wear bright clothing during the day and reflective clothing at night to maximize safety.
- Diffuse potentially volatile situations with motorists by not responding to obscenities and obscene gestures - a cyclist will always lose in confrontations.

Motorist etiquette tips:

- Be aware of your surroundings - keep an eye out for cyclists, especially around corners, at intersections, and when making a right hand turn.
- Slow down and use caution when passing a cyclist - move as far left as possible.
- Look around before opening your car door when parked along a street.
- Do not honk your horn at a cyclist - the sudden loud noise may distract and cause them to lose control of their bike.

Both cyclists and motorists are responsible for using good judgment. Patience, respect, and common courtesy go a long way towards improving safety and pleasure while traveling the roadways.

Email your etiquette questions to Jill at: information@DefiningManners.com or mail to: P.O. Box 1703, Shavertown, PA 18708.

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