



Rail Safety Tips for Cyclists

If you are a cyclist, you are bound to come across train tracks at some point—and tracks pose particular challenges for bikes. Follow these simple tips to ensure you stay safe on your next ride—it could save your life.



USE DESIGNATED RAILWAY CROSSINGS

Always cross railway tracks at designated crossings. Never ride on the gravel service roads or green spaces alongside tracks—it is both illegal and dangerous. Remember, trains can come at any time, in either direction, on any track. Look for signs and markings along roads and bike paths warning that you are approaching a railway crossing, and get ready to stop.



STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN FOR TRAINS

At a crossing, slow down, look both ways and listen for approaching trains; proceed only if you are sure it is safe to do so. If a train is approaching, or if railway warning signals are activated, stop behind any gates or stop lines—or no closer than 5 metres from the nearest rail—and wait for the train to pass. Cross only after the warning signals have ceased and you are certain no other trains are approaching, from either direction, and on any track.



PROCEED WITH CAUTION

When crossing tracks, slow down, put your crank arms (the part attached to pedals) in a horizontal position to the ground, keep both hands on the handle bars, lift out of your saddle, flex your arms and legs to absorb the shock, and then coast straight over the tracks. You can also put one foot down and push yourself over the tracks. On busy roads, or on wet tracks (or if the crossing is rough), you can choose to dismount and walk your bike across tracks to play it safe.



PLAN AHEAD

Plan your crossing. Establish your lane position early so you can cross the tracks at a 90-degree angle, or as close to it as possible. Do a shoulder check and use hand signals to make sure motorists, pedestrians and other cyclists know your intentions. Beware of tracks at the bottom of a hill. If you pick up speed, you'll need more room to manoeuvre and may have less traction as a result of accumulated gravel and dirt—so slow down.

REMEMBER:

- Trains are wider than the tracks. They can extend on both sides by as much as 1 metre—so keep your distance.
- Metal tracks are slippery, so coast straight over them when crossing on your bike. Wheels can also skid if you pedal hard or don't cross at a right angle.
- Beware of motor vehicles and pedestrians also using the crossing. They may not be aware that cyclists often need to move into traffic to cross tracks at a safe angle.

Know the Signs and Signals

FLASHING RED LIGHTS

STOP when flashing. DO NOT proceed until the lights stop flashing. If the lights begin flashing after you start crossing the tracks, keep going.

CROSSBUCK

YIELD if a train is approaching. Trains always have the right-of-way.

LOWERING GATES AND FLASHING RED LIGHTS

A train is approaching (even if you don't see it yet). DO NOT proceed until the lights turn off and the gates go up. It's illegal and dangerous to go around lowered gates.

MULTIPLE TRACKS

Multiple tracks are present. Multiple tracks may mean multiple trains. Wait until you can see clearly down the tracks in both directions before proceeding.



PAVEMENT MARKINGS

A large "X" and a wide white line on the road mean you're approaching a railway crossing. Stay behind the white stop line while waiting for a train to pass. No stop line? Stop at least 5 metres from the nearest rail.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SIGN (ENS)

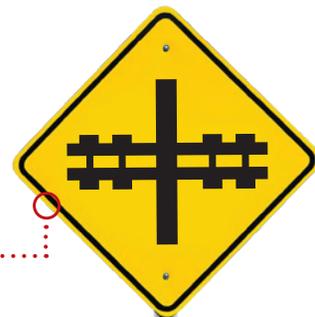
This is the first phone number to call if a vehicle is stuck or stalls on the tracks (this number may also be found on the signal house). You can also dial it to report people, vehicles or debris on the tracks, as well as damaged signs or signals, or obstructed views. The mile post and subdivision listed on the sign will help the railway to identify your location.

LOW GROUND CLEARANCE CROSSING

Raised crossing ahead. If you drive anything low to the ground — like a bus, truck, sports car or trailer — you're at risk of getting hung up on the tracks. DO NOT proceed until you know your vehicle will clear the tracks.

ADVANCE WARNING

Slow down, look, listen, and BE PREPARED TO STOP. Typically, this is the first sign you see when approaching a railway crossing.



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