



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 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 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, on any track.



PROCEED WITH CAUTION

When crossing tracks, slow down, put your pedals parallel to the ground, lift out of your saddle, keep both hands on the handle bars, flex your arms and legs to absorb the shock, and 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 hills. 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 railway crossings. They may not be aware that cyclists often need to move into traffic to cross tracks at a safe angle.