



*Think once,
Think **twice**,
Think Bicycology top-tips!
(it's not rocket science, thankfully!)*

- 1.** Have top control skills...become expert at riding one-handed (practice a figure of 8). Use your gears efficiently to prolong their life, and that of your knees, to allow you to zip away from stationary positions.
- 2.** Ensure the bike fits you well; slight bend in leg when pedal at longest extension, brake levers in a position so your hands rest comfortably on them (be kind to your wrists!) and if you choose to wear a helmet make sure it is fitted correctly. Inform yourself about the pros and cons of wearing a helmet (see: www.cycletraining.co.uk for links to the arguments).
- 3.** Plan for any manoeuvres well in advance to allow plenty of time to get in the right position and scan the road for potholes etc. to avoid sudden swerves.
- 4.** See, be seen, communicate! Ride in a good visible position (at least a car door distance from parked cars), don't weave into gaps (you disappear), and get good eye contact with other road users (it humanises them and you know if they have seen you). At junctions, either make sure you can get to the front of the traffic and be visible, or remain in your place in the queue – in the centre of the lane.
- 5.** Before turning, look, signal (if there is someone to signal to) and look again in the direction that you are turning to see that your signal has been accepted. Again, give yourself plenty of time to do all this.
- 6.** Get into the habit of overtaking traffic on the right-hand-side. It is just as fast and you'll avoid being cut up by left turning vehicles. This is one of the most common causes of serious accidents, as drivers are not always in the habit of using their left mirror, and larger vehicles such as lorries have a substantial blind spot.

7. In wet weather person-hole covers (a.k.a. man-hole covers pre political correctness!) and drains become very slippery. Avoid turning on them and if you do ride over them do so confidently and in a straight line.

8. If you are involved in an accident, the adrenalin often prevents rational thinking.

Remember to;

- Take witnesses details
- Take details of driver and vehicle
- Report any accident resulting in injury to the police (it is illegal not to)
- Take time to check yourself and your bike for damage (it may not be immediately apparent)

Membership of organisations such as the C.T.C (www.ctc.org.uk) provides free access to legal advice and may include 3rd party insurance.

9. Keep tyres pumped nice and hard (less punctures, more energy efficient, faster, steering more responsive, tyres last longer), check your brakes, use a bell, and listen to your bike; strange noises usually indicate a problem.

10. The most common response of motorists after an accident is 'I didn't see you'. To combat this think of wearing a high-vis waistcoat or suchlike, have working lights at night – flashing mode doubles battery life (rechargeable batteries, of course). But remember it is the position that you ride in the road which is the main element of being seen (see point 4).

Consider complementing these tips through some on road training – see www.ctc.org.uk for National Standard accredited instructors in your area.

