

Defensive Riding

- Obey the rules of the road. At night, when you are not as conspicuous, it is especially important to act in a safe and predictable manner to avoid conflicts with other cyclists and motorists.
- Cycle defensively. Watch out for joggers, walkers, other cyclists and cars — and make sure they know you're there. Watch cars closely, and be ready to get out of their way.
- At night it's harder to see road hazards and to anticipate the moves of drivers. You can't see where they're looking, and you are much harder to see.
- Slow down from your daylight speed. To make sure drivers see you when you're stopped, flash your lights by twitching your handlebars back and forth.
- Night Blindness: Don't bike at night if your vision is worse than 20/40 with glasses or contacts, or if you can't read far-away signs or addresses.
- Cars approaching with headlights on high beam can dazzle a rider, so be prepared.
- Most bike crashes and injuries occur while cars are making a right hand turn at intersecting streets. Take extra caution in this situation, especially at night when visibility is reduced.

Nevada Bicycling Manual

Proper lighting is not only the law, but is critical for safe night riding. For other bicycling issues, the Safe Pedaling in Nevada (SPIN) Pocket Guide is a must read. It covers current laws and is filled with safe riding tips. Get a copy from the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (775) 684-7479 <http://www.ots.state.nv.us>.

**Be Smart!
Be Seen!**



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- ODOT Transportation Safety Division
- RTC Smart Commute Options
- City of Reno Police Department
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CYCLING AT NIGHT



Riding at night can be as enjoyable as riding during the day — it just takes a little more awareness. When riding at times with low levels of natural light (including dawn, dusk, and night) a cyclist must stay alert and be properly equipped to be seen.

Appropriate bike lights and reflectors can help protect you against crashes, injury, and even death. Although only three percent of bike rides happen at night, over

half of all cyclists killed are hit while riding at night without lights. Riding without the proper equipment can be expensive too — tickets in the Reno/Sparks area run between \$70 to \$145. Nevada law requires the use of a front light and reflectors on the back and sides of the bike.

While only 3% of bike rides take place at night, over ½ of all cyclists killed are hit when riding at night without lights.

Nevada Law

- Lights and reflectors are required by Nevada law during limited visibility conditions, and when riding at night. These allow motorists to see you from the front, sides and rear.
- The headlight must be a white light visible at least 500 feet to oncoming traffic. That isn't much considering a car's headlights can be seen for 3,000 feet!
- A red reflector on the back of the bicycle must be visible from at least 50 to 300 feet to traffic approaching the bike from the rear.
- Reflective material must be visible from both sides of the bicycle for 600 feet to traffic approaching the bike from the side, or a lighted lamp visible from both sides from a distance of at least 500 feet may be used instead.

Headlights

- There are two common types of battery powered headlights available for bikes — halogen or LED.
- Get the best light you can afford. Consider this — do you want to be seen, or do you want to be seen and to see? If you ride on dark streets or paths, you should consider a bright light that emits enough light to see the road in front of you.
- Consider lights that can use rechargeable batteries. In the long run you'll save money and throw away fewer toxic batteries. Carry spare bulbs and batteries, or a spare flashlight, for times when your batteries die, or your usual lighting fails.



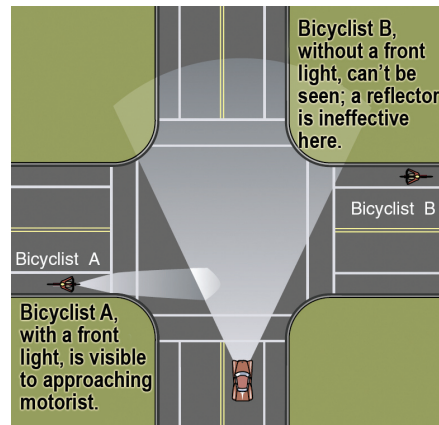
- Finally, most lights can be attached or removed from a bracket within seconds. While this is easy for you, it is also easy for thieves. Be sure to take your light with you when parked in a public place.

Rear Lights and Reflectors

- Supplement your legally required reflector by adding an LED light. For added safety most LED lights have a flashing pattern.
- Considering the low cost of LED rear lights, and that batteries can last hundreds of hours, it's a cheap investment in your safety. Your local bike shop has many models to choose from to fit your needs.
- If you only have a rear reflector, get one at least three inches wide. Be sure it is pointed straight back to catch the eye of oncoming traffic. Reflectors work only if they're clean, so remember to wipe them off!



- Spoke reflectors are an inexpensive way of ensuring you can be seen by traffic approaching from the sides. But remember — they are not a substitute for the head light and rear reflector. You could also consider a pair of bike tires with reflective sidewalls.



Vehicle headlamps often do not illuminate the cyclist's reflectors, creating a danger at intersections. A headlamp on the bicycle is much more visible to drivers in these locations.

High Visibility Clothing

- Whether you're biking, walking, or jogging in limited light conditions, white or light colored clothing is best for visibility.
- The best garments include reflective panels. Bike shops sell jackets, shirts, vests, and other garments with reflective materials that slip over your ordinary cycling clothing.
- You can also purchase reflective anklets, tape, and stickers which are cheap and weigh virtually nothing.

Plan Ahead



- Know your route. The dark may conceal potholes, rough pavement, or other hazards.
- Avoid poorly-lighted streets and paths when possible.
- If you must ride on unfamiliar streets or paths, do so with increased caution and adequate lighting to illuminate your course.
- Allow plenty of time to reach your destination. The more attention you pay to what is happening around you, the better your chances of not getting hurt.