

RIDING BICYCLES ON SIDEWALKS




Riding a bicycle on the sidewalk may seem safer than riding in the street because of the greater separation from cars for portions of the trip; but most often it's not. The major problem is most trips require crossing driveways and intersections and those areas can be very dangerous for bicyclists riding on the sidewalk. Motorists' main attention is focused on traffic in the roadway, and even when they scan the sidewalks for movement, they usually don't look very far down the walkway because they are only anticipating pedestrians moving at relatively slow speeds.

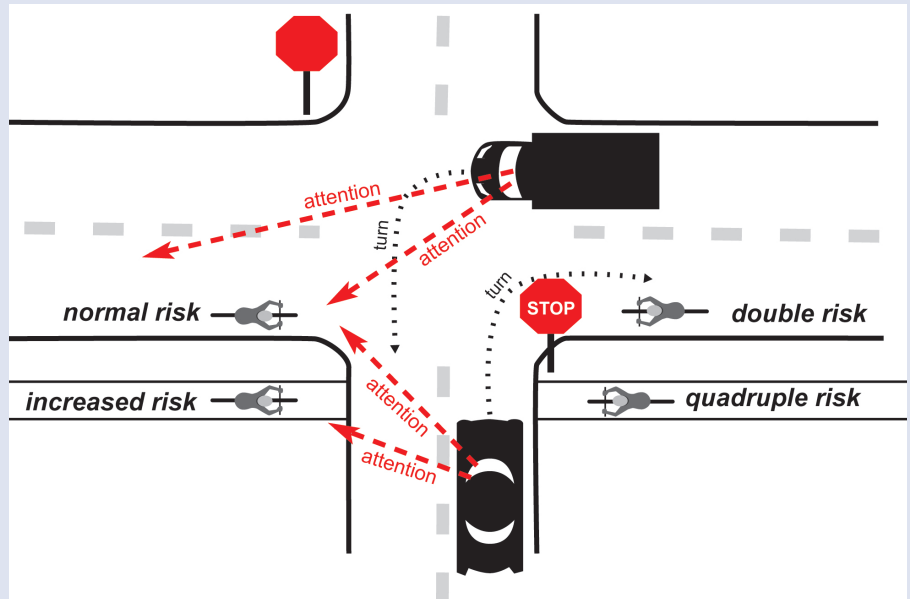
Sidewalk bicyclists are more likely than roadway bicyclists to be obscured at intersections by parked cars, buildings, fences, and shrubbery; their stopping distance is much greater than a pedestrian's, and they have less maneuverability.

In addition to the hazards of motor vehicles at intersections (including driveways), sidewalks also present bicyclists with conflicts with pedestrians, joggers, skateboarders, roller skaters, and people in wheelchairs, along with fixed objects such as parking meters, utility poles, signposts, benches, trees, hydrants, and mailboxes.

The risk is particularly high for bicyclists traveling against the normal traffic flow. Motorists normally scan for traffic traveling in the lawful direction of street travel; wrong-way traffic is easily overlooked. **Shared use of the roadway in the same direction of travel leads to fewer conflicts and fewer accidents.**



Bicycle Riding Prohibited on Public Sidewalks within the Central Business District
 Central Business District Boundary



Riding on the sidewalk is illegal in many places. In the City of Reno, it is illegal to ride a bicycle on any sidewalk within the central business district (see map to left) or where signs prohibit it. In the City of Sparks, it's illegal to ride a bicycle on sidewalks in business districts and for people older than 15 to bicycle on the sidewalk in any district.

Anyone riding on a sidewalk should do it slowly and extra carefully, be ready to stop immediately if necessary, and ride in the same direction as traffic flow whenever possible. Be courteous and remember to yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and to give an audible signal before overtaking and passing any pedestrian.