

**RED TRAFFIC SIGNALS:** A bicyclist facing a red signal at an intersection, after stopping as required, for not less than 45 seconds, is allowed to proceed cautiously through the intersection before the signal turns green if no other vehicles are present at the intersection to actuate the signal. The bicyclist shall yield the right-of-way to any vehicular traffic proceeding through a green signal at the intersection. *[346.37(1)(c)4]*

**E-BIKES:** An electric bicycle shall be considered a vehicle to the same extent as a bicycle. *[346.806] 349.18 (4) (a)* The governing body of a municipality, county, [or DNR] may by ordinance prohibit the operation, with the power unit in operation, of electric bicycles on bikeways, as defined under *s. 84.60 (1) (a)*, under its jurisdiction. *[340.01(a)(b)(c)]*

- **CLASS 1 E-BIKES** limited to 20 mph
- **CLASS 2 E-BIKES** limited to 20 mph, throttle without pedal assist
- **CLASS 3 E-BIKES** limited to 28 mph with pedal assist. No person under the age of 16 years may operate a class 3 electric bicycle. A person under the age of 16 years may ride as a passenger on a class 3 electric bicycle that is designed to accommodate passengers.

[wisconsinbikefed.org](http://wisconsinbikefed.org)

[info@wisconsinbikefed.org](mailto:info@wisconsinbikefed.org)

414-626-1540



# WISCONSIN BICYCLE LAWS



*[Numbers in brackets refer to State Statutes]*

**VEHICULAR STATUS:** The bicycle is defined as a vehicle. The operator of a vehicle is granted the same rights and subject to the same duties of the driver of any other vehicle. *[346.02(4)(a)] [340.01(5)]*

**LANE POSITIONING:** Always ride on the right, in the same direction as traffic. Ride as far to the right as practicable, safe and reasonable (not as far as possible).

*346.80(2)(a)] lists a few situations when it is not practicable to ride all the way to the right:*

- When overtaking and passing another vehicle traveling in the same direction;
- When preparing for a left turn;
- When reasonably necessary to avoid unsafe conditions, including fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards or substandard width lanes (lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and a motor vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane).

**USE OF SHOULDERS:** Bicycles may be ridden, but are not required to ride on the shoulder of a highway, unless prohibited by local authorities. *[346.05(1m)] (see also Lane Positioning)*

**ONE WAY STREETS:** Bicycles on a one-way street with two or more lanes of traffic may ride as near the left or right-hand edge or curb of the roadway as practicable. (In the same direction as traffic) *[346.80(2)(b)]*

**RIDING TWO-ABREAST:** Riding two abreast is permitted on any street as long as the normal and reasonable movement of traffic is not impeded. When riding two abreast on a two or more lane roadway, you both have to ride within a single lane. *[346.80(3)(a)]*

**HAND SIGNALS:** The operator of a bicycle shall give the signal continuously during not less than the last 50 feet traveled before turning. A signal by the hand and arm need not be given continuously if the hand is needed in the control or operation of the bicycle. The operator of a bicycle may use either hand and arm to signal. *[346.34,35]*

**PASSING:** A motorist passing a bicyclist in the same lane is required to give the bicyclist at least 3 feet of clearance, and to maintain that clearance until safely past. *[346.075]* A bicyclist passing a stopped, parked, or moving vehicle is required to exercise due care when passing *[346.80(2)(c)]*

**DRIVERS OPENING DOORS:** No person may open any door of a motor vehicle located on a highway without first taking due precaution to ensure that his or her act will not interfere with the movement of traffic or endanger any other person or vehicle (including bicycles). *[346.94(20)]*

**USE OF SIDEWALKS:** Riding on sidewalks is illegal in Wisconsin except when expressly permitted by local ordinances *[346.94(1)]*. Where bicycles are allowed to be operated on sidewalks, bicyclists must yield to pedestrians and give an audible warning when passing pedestrians traveling in the same direction. *[346.804]* Municipalities that do permit riding on sidewalks may restrict the practice by age, speed, type of property, and/or type of bicycle. Check local restrictions before riding on sidewalks. At intersections and other sidewalk crossings, a bicyclist on the sidewalk has the same rights and duties as pedestrians *[346.23, 24, 25, 37, 38]*

**BICYCLING AT NIGHT:** Requires at least a white front headlight and a red rear reflector. The white front light must be visible to others at least 500 ft away. The red rear reflector must be visible to others between 50 and 500 ft away. A lamp emitting a steady or flashing red light visible from a distance of 500 ft to the rear may be used in lieu of the red reflector. *[347.489(1)]*