

# State of Montana Bicycle Laws

[Link to the laws on the state website.](#)

**61-8-601. Effect of regulations.** (1) It is a misdemeanor for any person to do any act forbidden or fail to perform any act required in this part.

(2) These regulations applicable to bicycles shall apply whenever a bicycle is operated upon any highway or upon any path set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles subject to those exceptions stated herein.

**61-8-602. Traffic laws applicable to persons operating bicycles.** Every person operating a bicycle shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of any other vehicle by chapter 7, this chapter, and chapter 9 except as to special regulations in this part and except as to those provisions of chapter 7, this chapter, and chapter 9 which by their very nature can have no application.

**61-8-603. Riding on bicycles.** A person propelling a bicycle shall not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached thereto.

**61-8-604. Clinging to vehicles.** No person riding upon any bicycle, coaster, roller skates, sled, or toy vehicle shall attach the same or himself to any vehicle upon a roadway, but a bicycle trailer or bicycle semitrailer may be attached to a bicycle if that trailer or semitrailer has been designed for such attachment.

**61-8-605. Riding on roadways.** (1) As used in this section:

(a) "laned roadway" means a roadway that is divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for vehicular traffic; and

(b) "roadway" means that portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel, including the paved shoulder.

(2) A person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable except when:

(a) overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction;

(b) preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway; or

(c) necessary to avoid a condition that makes it unsafe to continue along the right side of the roadway, including but not limited to a fixed or moving object, parked or moving vehicle, pedestrian, animal, surface hazard, or a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.

(3) A person operating a bicycle upon a one-way highway with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as close to the left side of the roadway as practicable.

(4) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall ride in single file except when:

(a) riding on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles;

(b) overtaking and passing another bicycle;

(c) riding on a paved shoulder or in a parking lane, in which case the persons may ride two abreast; or

(d) riding within a single lane on a laned roadway with at least two lanes in each direction, in which case the persons may ride two abreast if they do not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic more than they would otherwise impede traffic by riding single file and in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(5) A bicycle, as defined in [61-8-102\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#), is excluded from the provisions of subsections (2) and (3).

**61-8-606. Carrying articles.** No person operating a bicycle shall carry any package, bundle, or article which prevents the driver from keeping at least one hand upon the handle bars.

**61-8-607. Lamps and other equipment on bicycles.** (1) Every bicycle when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with a lamp on the front which shall emit a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front. A lamp

emitting a red light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear may be used in addition to rear-facing reflectors required by this section.

(2) Every bicycle when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with an essentially colorless front-facing reflector, essentially colorless or amber pedal reflectors, and a red rear-facing reflector. Pedal reflectors shall be mounted on the front and back of each pedal.

(3) Every bicycle when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with either tires with retroreflective sidewalls or reflectors mounted on the spokes of each wheel. Spoke mounted reflectors shall be within 76 millimeters (3 inches) of the inside of the rim and shall be visible on each side of the wheel. The reflectors on the front wheel shall be essentially colorless or amber and the reflectors on the rear wheel shall be amber or red.

(4) Reflectors required by this section shall be of a type approved by the department.

(5) Every bicycle shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

(6) Every bicycle is encouraged to be equipped with a flag clearly visible from the rear and suspended not less than 6 feet above the roadway when the bicycle is standing upright. The flag shall be fluorescent orange in color.

**61-8-608. Bicycles on sidewalks.** (1) A person operating a bicycle upon and along a sidewalk or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give audible signal before overtaking and passing any pedestrian.

(2) A person may not ride a bicycle upon and along a sidewalk or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk where the use of a bicycle is prohibited by official traffic control devices.

(3) Except as provided in subsections (1) and (2), a person operating a vehicle by human power upon and along a sidewalk or across a roadway upon and along a crosswalk has all the rights and duties applicable to a pedestrian under the same circumstances.

**61-8-609. Bicycle racing -- when lawful.** (1) Bicycle racing on a highway is prohibited except as authorized in this section.

(2) Bicycle racing on a highway is lawful when a racing event is approved by state or local authorities on any highway under their respective jurisdictions. Approval of bicycle highway racing events will be granted only under conditions that assure reasonable safety for all race participants, spectators, and other highway users and that prevent unreasonable interference with traffic flow.

(3) By agreement with the approving authority, participants in an approved bicycle highway racing event may be exempted from compliance with any traffic laws otherwise applicable if traffic control is adequate to assure the safety of all highway users.