



# SKILL-BASED ACTIVITY

## Rules of the Road

### Timeframe

**Beginner:** 45 minutes  
**Intermediate:** 35 minutes  
**Advanced:** 25 minutes

### Objective

At the conclusion of this activity the student will be able to:

1. Describe key concept of safe riding, as measured by participation in peer discussion about Rules of the Road. (Cognitive)
2. Demonstrate exceptional or reliable performance of Rules of the Road during the Chaos Corners activity as measured by the Rules of the Road rubric. (Psychomotor)
3. Demonstrate exceptional or reliable social behavior as measured by the social behavior rubric. (Affective)

### National Standards

Standard 2  
 Standard 3  
 Standard 4

### Equipment

- Helmets
- Head barriers
- Bicycles
- Bicycle pump
- Allen wrench
- Red floor tape
- Cones, domes, polyspots or chalk to mark riding course
- *Bike Tips for Youth* handout (optional)  
[www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/bicycles/pdf/8024a\\_YouthTips.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/bicycles/pdf/8024a_YouthTips.pdf)

### Teacher Overview

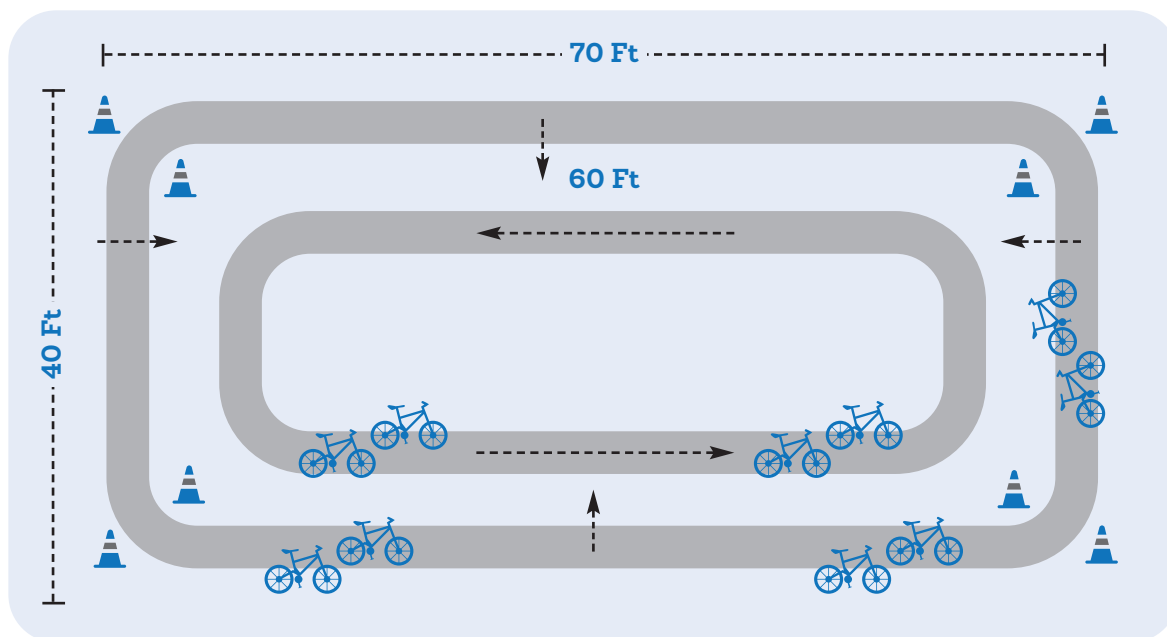
This activity provides further discussion about Rules of the Road for bicycles. The Chaos corner course and activity is used to enable students to apply rules of the road while on their bicycles. The riding portion of this activity supports why these rules are important to have and follow.

### Preparation

1. Designate a riding course that enables the teacher to see the students at all times. This will enable students to ride throughout the class period, even when they are not performing skills.
2. Set up a Chaos Corners course, using cones, chalk or field paint, to indicate where the student will perform the skill and the teacher will conduct the assessment. This area should also serve as a teaching station in which the skill will be demonstrated for the students and where students will return when instructed.
3. Mark out a large rectangle approximately 70'x40'.

4. Practice the Rules of the Road activity on the Chaos Corners course before demonstrating to students.
5. Identify the bicycle laws specific to your state or local jurisdiction.
6. Make appropriate number of copies of *Bike Tips for Youth* handout (optional).

**Diagram: Rules of the Road Course**



### Directions

1. Introduce this activity using the following prompt:  
*Today, we will be learning more about the Rules of the Road for bicyclists and why it is important to follow them.*
2. Use the following sample questions to prompt students' thinking about the content in this activity. All questions are **True or False**

**Q: A bicycle is a vehicle when it is on the road.**

**A: True:** Any time you ride a bicycle on the road, your bicycle is considered a vehicle (and you are considered the driver of a vehicle). As a vehicle, you have the same rights and the same responsibilities as motorists. This class will be your first driver education class and we will discuss safe bicycle driving skills. Although bicyclists have the same rights as a vehicle when on the road, it is important to remember that in a crash, the bicyclist is more likely to be injured than the motorist. Therefore, as a bicyclist, it's important to always look out for the other guy; it's always better to be safe than sorry. When a bicyclist dismounts and walks, he/she is considered a pedestrian and must follow the rules of a pedestrian.

**Q: I should obey traffic lights when riding my bicycle on the road.**

**A: True:** Because a bicycle is a vehicle, you must obey all traffic signs and signals. This means that when there is a stop sign or red light, the bicyclist must come to a complete stop and should place one foot on the ground. The bicyclist should not proceed until he has looked left-right-left for traffic and there is no traffic or it is your turn to safely go. This is a skill you should have learned as a pedestrian and it applies as a bicyclist and motorist.

**Q: I should ride my bicycle facing traffic.**

**A: False:** Because a bicycle is a vehicle, you must ride on the right side of the road in the same direction as traffic. This is safer than riding facing traffic because you can act like a vehicle and your actions are more predictable.

**Q: I can keep riding my bicycle when I hear a siren from an emergency vehicle.**

**A: False:** Because a bicycle is a vehicle, when you hear a siren from an emergency vehicle (e.g., police, fire, emergency), you must pull over to the side of the road on the right and stop to allow the emergency vehicle to pass safely.

**Q: While bicycling, I should always hand-signal turns or stops.**

**A: True:** Because a bicycle is a vehicle, you must signal your intention to turn or stop by using hand signals. Because bicycles do not have brake lights, it is important to signal your intentions of slowing down or stopping. This is especially important if you are riding with a group of bicyclists. The left hand is safest to perform these signals for a number of reasons:

- The right hand controls the rear brake and allows a rider to signal and apply the brakes, without the danger of being thrown over the handlebars.
- Motor vehicle drivers may not recognize or expect to see turn signals being made with the right hand.

**Q: I only need to look straight ahead when riding my bicycle.**

**A: False:** It is critical to always know what is going on around you, in all directions, when riding a bicycle. Because bicycles do not have rear view and side view mirrors to see what is going on (unless they are purchased and worn by the bicyclist), it is important for the bicyclist to scan in front, to the right, to the left and to the back. The skill of scanning is also used to safely change lanes. We will practice how to safely scan in all directions while riding a bicycle in another lesson.

**Q: I should always ride as fast as I can when I am riding my bicycle on the road.**

**A: False:** Vehicles should obey posted speed limits because these are the speeds at which a driver can control a vehicle on a particular road and allow for safe stopping. A bicyclist should always maintain a controlled speed. This is important because it enables a rider to maintain control of the bicycle and safely stop. It actually requires more skill to ride a bicycle very slowly.

**Q: I should have a light on my bicycle if I am riding at night.**

**A: True:** Riding a bicycle at night can be very dangerous and is discouraged. The biggest danger is not being seen by other vehicles. Vehicles are required to have headlights and taillights to help with visibility. This is true for bicycles as well. When riding at night, a bicycle should have a battery-powered headlight and a red rear reflector, in addition to normal reflectors. (Each state may have different laws as to what types of lights are required on bicycles when ridden at night.)



3. Complete the Helmet Fit and ABC Quick Check (#4-10) if have not been completed as part of the current day's lesson; otherwise proceed to (#11.)
4. Divide students into groups of two or three.
5. Instruct students to fit helmets and have partner(s) check if the helmet is fitted correctly.
6. Instruct students to retrieve bicycles according to number assigned.
7. Instruct one student to complete the ABC Quick Check while the partner observes to ensure that the check was completed properly and to provide prompts if an item was missed. Switch roles.
8. Instruct pairs to proceed to the riding area to meet teacher after students have successfully completed the helmet fit and ABC Quick Check.
9. Inspect helmets and instruct students to proceed on the riding course for the 'Check' of the ABC Quick Check and when finished return to the teaching station.
10. Explain and demonstrate skills to students on the Chaos Corners course reinforcing the following points. Riders should:
  - Ride inside the rectangle area anywhere they would like.
  - Stay inside the boundaries and not run into anyone else, and
  - Ride continuously.
11. Line students up in pairs, with their bicycles outside of the large rectangle.
12. Add students into the rectangle by twos every five seconds.
13. Allow students to ride for five minutes.
14. Move cones in 10 feet from one of the rectangle's shorter sides to make the riding area smaller, so it is now 40' x 60'.
15. Allow students to ride for 2-3 more minutes.
16. Move cones in again.
17. Continue until area is slightly congested for riding, but students are still able to maneuver safely. This will depend on the size of the class.
18. Typically, as the area becomes smaller, students will begin to ride in a circle without any communication.
19. After three minutes, conclude activity and debrief with students by asking the following questions.

**Q: What happened when everyone first started riding and the area was large?**

**A:** Any of the following:

  - Plenty of room to move around
  - Could ride wherever
  - Other answers may be accepted.

**Q: What happened when the area got smaller?**

**A:** Any of the following:

- Harder to ride where you wanted
- Needed to communicate more
- Got nervous
- Other answers may be accepted.

**Q: Why did everyone start riding in the same direction?**

**A:** Any of the following:

- Because it felt safer
- To become predictable
- Other answers may be accepted.

**Q: How does what happened in Chaos Corners apply to riding with traffic?**

**A:** Any of the following:

- It is safer to be predictable
- Had a better idea of what other riders/drivers would do
- Other answers may be accepted.

**20.** Prepare and provide copies of Bike Tips for Youth handout(s) for take home. (optional)  
[http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/bicycles/pdf/8024a\\_YouthTips.pdf](http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/bicycles/pdf/8024a_YouthTips.pdf)

#### Assessment

1. All students should participate in group discussion about Rules of the Road conversation.
2. Assess performance of Rules of the Road activity on the Chaos Corners course of each student using the following rubric:

#### PERFORMANCE RUBRIC: RULES OF THE ROAD

Exceptional	Reliable	Inconsistent	Struggling/ Survival
Student is committed to riding safely during activity; Student reliably maintains a safe speed and distance, without reminders from the teacher.	Student is committed to riding safely during activity; Student maintains a safe speed and distance during activity, but may need a reminder/prompt from teacher	Student is somewhat committed to safe riding, particularly when a teacher prompts appropriate riding behavior; Student will maintain a safe speed and distance during the activity, with reminders and supervision.	Student is unable to participate in the activity due to unsafe behavior; Student lacks control of his bike and balance, so that riding in this activity is unsafe for all involved.

3. Assess the performance of social behavior for each student using the following rubric.

## PERFORMANCE RUBRIC: SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Exceptional	Reliable	Inconsistent	Struggling/ Survival
<p>Student is respectful toward classmates, teacher, and equipment;</p> <p>Student receives and uses feedback from teacher and peers in a courteous manner;</p> <p>Student participates fully, without teacher prompting or supervision;</p> <p>Student is able to work cooperatively and productively with classmates, including during peer assessments;</p> <p>Student perseveres, even through difficult skills/activities, and maintains a positive attitude;</p> <p>Student is committed to learning;</p> <p>Student is committed to engaging in cycling in a safe manner, and keeping all classmates safe during the cycling unit.</p>	<p>Student is respectful toward classmates, teacher, and equipment;</p> <p>Student receives and uses feedback from teacher and peers in a courteous manner;</p> <p>Student participates fully, but needs some teacher prompting and/or supervision;</p> <p>Participates in most class activities at an appropriate and productive level;</p> <p>Student is most often able to work cooperatively and productively with classmates, including during peer assessments;</p> <p>Student is able to work hard and not get frustrated with setbacks;</p> <p>Student is committed to learning;</p> <p>Student is committed to engaging in cycling in a safe manner, and keeping all classmates safe during the cycling unit.</p>	<p>Student may not always be respectful toward classmates, teacher, and equipment;</p> <p>Student may listen to feedback from teacher or peers, but may not attempt and/or have difficulty applying it;</p> <p>Student requires some teacher supervision, but does exhibit some self-control at times;</p> <p>Student demonstrates the ability to work cooperatively and productively with classmates, but may need teacher direction or supervision;</p> <p>Student participates in most class activities;</p> <p>Student is willing to try, but may get frustrated with setbacks, and pout and/or verbalize frustration;</p> <p>Student may fluctuate between riding safely and unsafely at times.</p>	<p>Student may struggle with being respectful toward classmates, teacher, and equipment and/or show anger and/or blame others for cycling mishaps;</p> <p>Student does not listen to feedback from teacher or peers, and does not attempt to apply it;</p> <p>Student requires ongoing supervision and does not ride safely;</p> <p>Student may be unprepared and show very little interest in learning or the activity;</p> <p>Student becomes frustrated easily and may quit participating.</p>

## Safety



1. Follow the 2-2-2-2 Rule (2 wheels on the ground; 2 feet on the pedals; 2 hands on the handlebars; 2 fingers on the brake levers) while riding the bicycle.
2. Use the rear brake only to stop the bicycle, until the skill level advances to be able to safely use the front brake.
3. Instruct students to ride the bicycles on the designated course.
4. Instruct students to keep at least three-bicycles-lengths between each rider.

## Differentiating Instruction

### Adapted and Beginner

- Consider having students walk through this activity, instead of riding bicycles, for safety reasons.

### Intermediate and Advanced

- Progression to a smaller sized area can occur more quickly.

## Best Practices



1. Provide a discreet opportunity and safe environment for students to share information pertaining to their ability and comfort level for riding a bicycle.
2. Always complete the Helmet Fit and ABC Quick Check at the beginning of every class in which the students will be riding. The use of peers/partners to practice, inspect, and correct each other will make the most efficient use of class time and reinforce bicycle safety skills. This should not replace teacher assessment.
3. Review the three-bicycles-length rule to promote safe riding. The three-bicycles-length rule is a reminder of keeping a safe distance between bicyclists while riding single-file. To help maintain proper spacing, have a marker on the course that allows students to see when it is their turn to go. When the first rider gets to the marker, the next student may start riding.

