

# Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations

# Rule Book



## Bicycle is a vehicle

The bicycle is a convenient and familiar vehicle in everyday life used for commuting to school and work and leisure, and people of all ages use it.

However, unless the bicycle is used correctly, it can become a hazardous vehicle that causes accidents, as incidents caused by discourteous bicyclists continue unremittingly, resulting in accidents that incur hefty compensations.

As such, Osaka Prefecture has enacted the “Regulations for the promotion of the safe and appropriate use of bicycles in Osaka Prefecture (Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations)” for promoting the safe and appropriate use of bicycles, preventing accidents, and preparing and protecting victims of accidents.

Road Traffic Act Article 2, Paragraph 1, 8 and 11.

A bicycle is a “light road vehicle” under the Road Traffic Act and is stipulated as a “vehicle” in the same class as automobiles and motorbikes.

# 1

## Liability protection is an obligation!

Under the Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, bicyclists must purchase liability protection to prepare for accidents and provide aid for the wounded party. (Mandatory)

Employers must purchase liability protection to compensate for damages caused by accidents during working hours.

(The regulations on liability protection came into force on July 1, 2016.)

### ●What is the liability protection stipulated in the regulations?

It refers to insurance or mutual aid that would compensate for the life or physical damage of other persons caused by bicycle accidents, just as personal liability insurance would.

For this reason, it is not accident insurance against the loss of personal life or physical damage.

### ●A case history of heavy liability claims

In some cases, people are liable to pay compensation in tens of millions of yen due to damages caused by bicycle accidents.

Minors are not exempt from compensation liability.

Amount of compensation	Rough outline of accident
95.21 million yen	An elementary school boy on his way home on his bicycle had a head-on collision with a walking woman. The woman suffered a fractured skull and remained comatose, and the boy's mother who was liable for the damage was ordered to pay compensation. (Kobe District Court, court ruling, July 4, 2013.)
92.66 million yen	A high school boy on his bicycle crossed the road diagonally and collided with a male office worker who had traveled in a straight line on the opposite lane. The male office worker suffered sustained disabilities, including the loss of speech function. (Tokyo District Court, court ruling, June 5, 2008.)
39.70 million yen	A junior high school boy rode his bicycle on a sidewalk without the light on and collided with a male office worker. The male office worker had a severe blow to his head when he tumbled and died. (Osaka District Court, court ruling, July 10, 2007.)

(Liability protection cover)

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations Article 12, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3

The Bicyclist (The Custodian in the case of minors) shall purchase liability protection.

The Employer shall purchase liability protection pertaining to the use of bicycles when their employees use bicycles in business activities.

# 2

## Let's check if you have bicycle insurance

There is a variety of bicycle insurance, and sometimes you are already covered without realizing.

Please check first whether you are already covered.

### ●The types of bicycle insurance

Some bicycle insurance is included in an automobile or fire insurance, some cover family members and not the policyholder, and there are corporate/group insurance policies such as mutual aid and PTA cover.

Insurance with the TS mark covers the body of the bicycle, so no matter who is riding the bicycle they are covered in the case of accidents.

For employers, there is insurance with the TS mark and premises liability insurance which indemnifies against bodily damage caused by the execution of work.

The types of bicycle insurance		Rough outline of insurances
Personal liability insurance	Insurance for bicycles	Cover against bicycle accidents
	Special form of automobile insurance	Special cover attached to an automobile insurance
	Special form of fire insurance	Special cover attached to a fire insurance
	Special form of accident insurance	Special cover attached to an accident insurance
Mutual aid		Zenrosai, public mutual aid, etc.
Corporate/group insurance	Corporate insurance	Cover for members of organizations.
	PTA insurance	Cover purchased through PTAs and schools.
Insurance with the TS mark		Cover for the body of bicycles.
Insurance attached to credit cards		Cover for credit card members.

### Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations website

<http://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/dorokankyo/osakajitensha/index.html>

(The Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, leaflet on bicycle insurance, and check list for bicycle insurance coverage are published.) \*Japanese only.

# 3

## Let's educate our children and employees to prevent accidents

To adhere to traffic rules and improve manners, it is essential to continuously educate children from a small age in homes and schools.

Employers should provide road safety training to employees.

### ● Road safety education starts at home

- Since children grow up observing their parents/guardians, let us follow the traffic rules and improve our manners.
- Let us discuss road safety with children on a routine basis.

### ● Road safety education from elementary school children to high school students

- As children enter elementary school, they expand their range of activities using bicycles and would increasingly act on their own away from their parents/guardians.
- Junior high and high school children are becoming involved in bicycle accidents or becoming offenders with increasing frequency.
- Let us teach them to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for riding a bicycle and improve their know-how and ability for predicting and avoiding dangers according to road and traffic conditions.

### ● Road safety education for employees

- Provide training to employees to reverify their care toward pedestrians, the effect of reflectors and the need for bicycle insurance.
- Raise their awareness toward road safety to prevent bicycle accidents.

(Road safety education by the heads of schools)

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, Article 8, Paragraph 1

The heads of elementary, junior high and high schools shall provide the necessary road safety education for the safe and appropriate use of bicycles to children and students.

(Road safety education by custodians)

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, Article 9, Paragraphs 1 and 2

The Custodian shall take courses on the safe and appropriate use of bicycles and provide the necessary road safety education for the safe and appropriate use of bicycles to minors in their custody.

The Employer shall provide the necessary road safety education for the safe and appropriate use of bicycles to their employees.

### Osaka Prefecture Police Road Safety Test website

[http://www.police.pref.osaka.jp/O3kotsu/kotsu\\_anzen/test/test.html](http://www.police.pref.osaka.jp/O3kotsu/kotsu_anzen/test/test.html)

(Once a month, road safety issues, answers, and explanations are published for elementary, junior high and high school children. Please use them for road safety education in the home and schools.) \*Japanese only.

# 4

## Let's wear life-saving helmets

The heads of children are larger than those of adults relative to their body size, and they tend to hit their heads when they fall.

Elderly people often die by injuring their heads in bicycle accidents.

For these reasons, the Road Traffic Act requires children under 13 and the Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations require adults over 65 to wear a helmet.

### Road Traffic Act, Article 63-1 1

The Custodian of children shall have children wear a bicycle helmet when the children ride bicycles or when they have a small child on a child bike seat.



A bicycle with two children on board

(Wearing of bike helmets)

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, Article 11, Paragraph 2

The Elderly shall wear a bike helmet when riding a bicycle.

# 5

## Use the bicycle lighting at night

Accidents frequently occur at night and intersections, so let us prevent them by improving visibility from others by equipping your bicycle with a front lamp and side reflectors.

### Vehicle lamps

Road Traffic Act, Article 52, Paragraph 1.

Osaka Prefecture Road Traffic Regulations, Article 10-1.

**Penalty: a fine of up to 50,000 yen.**

The front lamp shall be on when riding a bicycle at night (from dusk to dawn).

\*Front lamp: white or pale-yellow color that can identify objects 10 meters ahead at night.

Other people and cars can see me!



(Equipping of reflectors)

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, Article 11, Paragraph 1

The Bicyclist, Bicycle Rental Service and those who ride bicycles for a business purpose shall equip their bicycles with side reflectors when riding a bike for personal or business use at night.

# 6

## Make sure the brakes work

### Bicycle brakes

Road Traffic Act, Article 63-9, Paragraph 1

**Penalty:**

**a fine of up to 50,000.** The Bicyclist shall not ride a bicycle equipped with brakes that do not comply with the standards which may cause traffic risks.

Road Traffic Act, Article 63-10

**Penalty:**

**a fine of up to 50,000.**

The Police have the right to stop and inspect bicycles which they deem to be lacking in brakes that comply with the standards and order the Bicyclist to take emergency measures or cease the use of the bicycle.

# 7

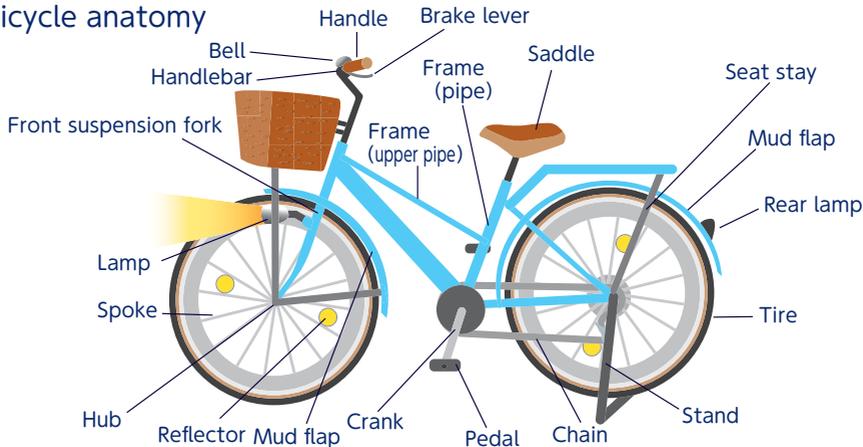
## Bicycles also need inspection and maintenance.

A bicycle is a vehicle.

To ensure the safety of your bicycle, inspect and maintain it just as you would a car.

Inspect your bicycle daily to check the tire pressure and brakes or have a bicycle shop carry out inspection and maintenance on a regular basis.

### ● Bicycle anatomy



(Inspection and maintenance of bicycles)

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations, Article 10, Paragraphs 1 and 2

The Bicyclist (The Custodian in the case of minors), Bicycle Rental Service and those who ride bicycles for a business purpose shall carry out the necessary inspection and maintenance of their bicycles for their safe and appropriate use.

# 8

## A course for ill-mannered bicyclists.

Bicyclists who are charged with “Unsafe Acts,” as set out in Paragraph 14 below, more than twice within three years must take a course in road safety. (Revised Road Traffic Act, June 1, 2015)

### ● “Unsafe Acts” in Paragraph 14

- ✓ Ignoring a traffic light.
- ✓ Violating a NO THROUGH ROAD.
- ✓ Not reducing speed on a pedestrian path.
- ✓ Ignoring a traffic division.
- ✓ Obstructing a pedestrian on a side strip.
- ✓ Entering a rail crossing when the crossing bar is down.
- ✓ Obstructing traffic on a right-of-way at an intersection.
- ✓ Obstructing a right-turning vehicle with a right-of-way at an intersection.
- ✓ A breach of duty to proceed safely at a rotary.
- ✓ Stop sign violation.
- ✓ Obstructing a pedestrian on a sidewalk.
- ✓ Riding a bicycle without brakes.
- ✓ Riding a bicycle while under the influence of drink.
- ✓ Violating the road traffic law.

9

# It is a traffic offense to ride a bicycle outside of designated areas.

## Traffic division

Road Traffic Act, Article 17, Paragraph 1.

**Penalty: up to three-month imprisonment or a fine of up to 50,000 yen.**

The Bicycle shall travel on roadways when the sidewalk and road are divided.

Bicycles must travel on the left side of the road!



## Ride on the left side

Road Traffic Act, Article 18, Paragraph 1.

The Bicycle shall travel on the left side of the road.

\*On roads where there are vehicular lanes, travel on the leftmost lane.

## Traveling on side strips for light road vehicles.

Road Traffic Act, Article 17-2, Paragraph 1.

The Bicycle can travel on a side strip on the left side of the road, except when doing so may significantly hinder pedestrian traffic.

This is a side strip.

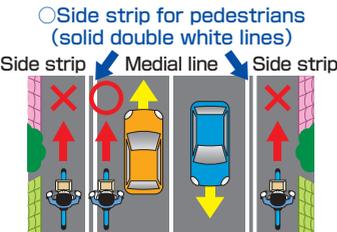
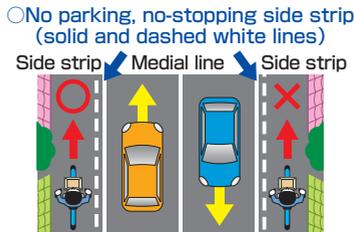
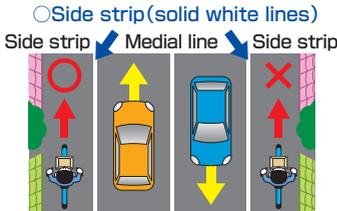
If there are people, get off the bicycle or ride on the roadway!



Road Traffic Act, Article 17-2, Paragraph 2

**Penalty: a fine of up to 20,000 yen or petty fine.**

Travel on a side strip at a speed and way which do not hinder pedestrian traffic.



Bicycles cannot travel on pedestrian side strips as illustrated.



You can either push your bicycle or ride it on the side strip-side of the roadway.

## There are traffic rules even on sidewalks where bicycles are allowed.

### Riding an ordinary bicycle on a sidewalk

#### Road Traffic Act, Article 63-4, Paragraph 1.

Article 26 of the Order of Enforcement of the Road Traffic Act.

Bicycles may travel on sidewalks in the following cases.

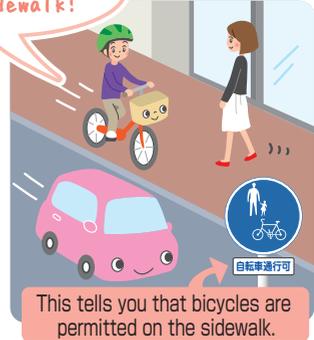
- When there is a street sign permitting bicycles on the sidewalk.
- When the bicyclist is:
  - A child under the age of 13.
  - An elderly over the age of 70.
  - A person with physical disabilities.
- When there are roadworks, when there are parked vehicles or when there is a large volume of traffic, and when it is unsafe to travel on the roadway.

#### Road Traffic Act, Article 63-4, Paragraph 2.

**Penalty: a fine of up to 20,000 yen or a petty fine.**

- Bicycles must travel next to the roadway when traveling on sidewalks.
- When traveling on sidewalks, bicycles shall travel at a reduced speed that would allow them to stop rapidly.
- Bicycles must momentarily pause when they may obstruct pedestrian traffic.
- Bicycles must travel on a designated lane for bicycles when there is one.

I can also ride on the sidewalk!



Ride along the roadway on a sidewalk!



# There are rules for crossing and riding at intersections.

## Crossing and riding at intersections

### Road Traffic Act, Article 63-6 and 7

If there is a bicycle crossing lane at or near an intersection, bicycles shall travel on the crossing lane.

Don't step in the pedestrians' way!



Pedestrians' crossings are for pedestrians, and unless there is no one crossing or there is no danger of hindering pedestrian traffic, you cannot ride your bicycle on pedestrians' crossings.

## Duty to comply with traffic lights.

### Road Traffic Act, Article 7.

**Penalty: up to three-month imprisonment or a fine of up to 50,000 yen.**

The Bicyclist shall comply with traffic lights when traveling on roads.

Road Traffic Act, Article 7 and Article 4, Paragraph 4. Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the Order of Enforcement of the Road Traffic Act.

**Penalty: up to three-month imprisonment or a fine of up to 50,000 yen.**

When the traffic light has pictographic symbols, the Bicyclist shall comply with the traffic light when it displays the 『歩行者・自転車専用 (for pedestrians/bicycles)』 sign.

Let's observe the lights!



歩行者専用  
自転車専用

This means it's for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## Momentary pause in designated areas.

### Road Traffic Act, Article 43.

**Penalty: up to three-month imprisonment or a fine of up to 50,000 yen.**

At intersections with a stop sign, the Bicyclist shall pause at the stop line and confirm the safety of the intersection.

Be sure to stop and check the left and right!



This means stop.

# 12

## A bicycle is for one person

### Restrictions to riding bicycles

Road Traffic Act, Article 57, Paragraph 2.  
Osaka Prefecture Road Traffic Regulations,  
Article 11

**Penalty: a fine of up to 20,000 yen or a petty fine.**

Only one person shall ride a two-wheeled bicycle, and a three-wheeled bicycle shall only be used by the number of people for which the vehicle is designed.  
However, when the Bicyclist is over the age of 16, he/she may:

- Ride with one child under the age of 6 in a child bike seat.
- Ride with two children under the age of 6 in child bike seats on a bicycle designed to carry two children.
- Ride with one child under the age of 4, tied securely on his/her back.  
(Except when two small children are carried on a bicycle designed for carrying two children.)

However:

- These rules do not apply in the event when another person other than the Bicyclist is riding a tandem bicycle together.

\*Ride bicycles designed for carrying two children safe by following its instructions, i.e., releasing the safety lock, etc.

Use safe bicycles designed for carrying two children that come with the SG or BAA marks which stand for Japan's safety standards.

Remember your child on the infant seat of your bicycle needs to wear a seat belt.



# 13

## Don't ride a bicycle while doing something else.

**Never ride a bicycle while doing the following for it is hazardous as it will distract your attention and you may lose balance!**

Road Traffic Act, Article 71-6  
Osaka Prefecture Road Traffic Regulations, Article 13.

**Penalty: a fine of up to 50,000 yen.**

- Ride a bicycle in a way that may obstruct vision or significantly affect stability, i.e., carry an umbrella, carry an item on your shoulder, or carry an article in your hand.
- Ride a bicycle while holding a cell phone to talk or email.
- Ride a bicycle while wearing earphones to listen to music at full blast (at a volume level that may prevent you from hearing an alarm, a siren of emergency vehicles, and police's caution regarding safe driving).



\*Regardless of volume, you may be in breach of "duty to ride safely."

Regulations pertaining to the promotion of safe and appropriate use of bicycles in Osaka Prefecture.

(Objectives)

Article 1 These regulations define the responsibilities of the Prefectural Government and bicycle (as stipulated in the Road Traffic Act (No.105 of 1960) Article 2, Paragraph 1-11-2. The same applies hereinafter.) users (hereinafter referred to as the “Bicyclist” ) , and define the roles of businesses, road safety organizations (hereinafter referred to as “Road Safety Organizations” ) and Prefectural Residents. They are aimed at having the parties mentioned above cooperating to prevent traffic accidents involving bicycles and protect the victims by ensuring the safety of bicycles on the road and establishing the regulations necessary for promoting the appropriate use of bicycles (hereinafter referred to as “safe and appropriate use.”)

(The responsibilities of the prefectural government)

Article 2 The Prefectural Government shall take measures to promote the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.

- 2 In taking the aforementioned measures, the Prefectural Government shall cooperate with businesses, Road Safety Organizations, Prefectural Residents, the national government, and local governments.
- 3 The Prefectural Government shall cooperate with relevant institutions to prepare a road and traffic environment for the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.
- 4 The Prefectural Government shall support activities pertaining to the safe and appropriate use of bicycles by Road Safety Organizations and Prefectural Residents.

(The responsibilities of bicyclists)

Article 3 The Bicyclist shall strive to ride th bicycle safely and appropriately by recognizing whether its use may cause traffic risks so that pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles (Refers to those stipulated in the Road Traffic Act, Article 2, Paragraph 1-9. The same applies hereinafter.) and motorized bicycles (Refers to those stipulated in No.10 of the aforementioned paragraph. The same applies hereinafter.) may travel on the road safely.

(The role of employers)

- Article 4 The Employer shall strive to deepen their understanding of the safe and appropriate use of bicycles, and independently and actively carry out activities of promoting the safe and appropriate use of bicycles through their business activities.
- 2 The Employer shall strive to cooperate with the Prefectural Government’s measures for promoting the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.

(The role of road safety organizations)

- Article 5 The Road Safety Organization shall strive to actively further activities of promoting the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.
- 2 The Road Safety Organization shall strive to cooperate with the Prefectural Government’s measures for promoting the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.

(The role of prefectural residents)

- Article 6 The Prefectural Resident shall strive to deepen their understanding of the safe and appropriate use of bicycles, and independently and actively engage in efforts pertaining to the safe and appropriate use of bicycles in their home and community.
- 2 The Prefectural Resident shall strive to cooperate with the Prefectural Government’s measures for promoting the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.

(Provision of information by bicycle retailers)

Article 7 Those whose business it is to sell bicycles (hereinafter referred to as the “Bicycle Retailer”) and those whose business it is to rent bicycles (hereinafter referred to as the “Bicycle Rental Service”) shall strive to advise their purchasers (hereinafter referred to as the “Purchaser”) and rentees (hereinafter referred to as the “Rentee”) to wear a helmet and provide them with the necessary information pertaining to the safe and appropriate use of bicycles.

(Road safety education by the heads of schools)

Article 8 The heads of elementary schools, junior high schools, compulsory education schools, high schools, secondary schools, special-needs schools, specialized vocational high schools, and advanced vocational schools with advanced courses (hereinafter referred to as “Schools”) stipulated in the School Education Act (Act No.26 of 1947) shall strive to provide road safety education necessary for the safe and appropriate use of bicycles to their children and students.

2 The Prefectural Government shall strive to advise on road safety education stipulated in the previous paragraph to those who have established or manage schools other than prefectural schools, and take other necessary measures.

(Road safety education by custodians)

Article 9 The custodian (Those with parental authority and guardians of minors who have custody of minors. The same applies hereinafter.) shall strive to take a course in the safe and proper use of bicycles and shall also provide road safety education pertaining to the safe and proper use of bicycles to minors in their custody.

2 The Employer shall provide the necessary road safety education pertaining to the safe and proper use of bicycles to their employees.

(Inspection and maintenance of bicycles)

Article 10 The Bicyclist (Excluding minors. The same applies in Paragraph 1 of Article 12.) , Bicycle Rental Service and those who ride bicycles for business shall carry out the necessary inspection and maintenance of the bicycles they use for their safe and proper use.

2 The Custodian shall carry out the necessary inspection and maintenance of the bicycles used by the minors in their custody for their safe and proper use.

(Fitting of reflectors and use of bicycle helmets)

Article 11 The Bicyclist, Bicycle Rental Service and those who ride bicycles for business shall equip their bicycles with reflectors on the sides if they ride bicycles at night or for business purpose.

2 The elderly shall wear a helmet and take the necessary precautions against the impact of bicycle accidents when riding a bicycle.

(Purchase of liability protection, etcetera.)

Article 12 The Bicyclist shall purchase liability protection (An insurance or mutual aid that would cover the loss of life and bodily damage caused to others in accidents involving a bicycle. The same applies hereinafter.) However, this shall not apply when others use the bicycle if they have liability protection.

2 The Custodian shall purchase liability protection when minors in their custody ride bicycles. However, this shall not apply when others ride the bicycle if they have liability protection.

3 The Employer shall purchase liability protection when their employees ride bicycles for business purpose.

4 The Prefectural Government and road safety organizations shall mutually collaborate to provide information on liability protection for the convenience of those intending to purchase liability protection.

(Verification of liability protection coverage, etcetera.)

Article 13 The Bicycle Retailer shall verify the Purchaser's liability protection coverage when they purchase a bicycle.

2 Should the Bicycle Retailer fail to verify liability protection coverage in the provision set forth in the preceding paragraph, they shall provide information on liability protection to the Purchaser.

3 The Bicycle Rental Service shall rent bicycles with liability protection to the Rentee.

(Conditions for motorists.)

Article 14 The Motorist and Motorized Bicyclist shall ride with adequate care to prevent traffic risks and accidents.

Supplementary provision

These regulations shall come into effect on the First of April 2016. However, conditions under Articles 12 and 13 shall be enforced on the First of July of the same year.

Osaka Prefecture Bicycle Regulations desk - Tel.: 06-6944-6736  
(Road Environment Division, Traffic and Road Office, Urban Improvement  
Department, Osaka Prefecture.) \*Japanese only.