

Riding tips:

1. Don't look directly at headlights. If you do, it'll wreck your "night vision" for a while.
2. Don't count on anyone seeing you. They may be drunk or have bad eyesight.
3. Be ready to hit the brakes or pull a quick turn if someone heads your way.
4. Pay special attention to cars coming toward you and cars on side streets. Either can be dangerous.
5. On well lit roads, check your mirror now and then. Nothing - but nothing - sneaks up on a good rider!
6. On dark roads, watch your shadow when cars come up from the rear. If the car moves left to pass, your shadow will move right. If your shadow stays in front of you, LOOK OUT! The car is coming right at you!
7. Be especially careful riding on dark high speed roads. And don't ride on one if you don't have to. That's where lots of Florida cyclists get killed.

Stuff to think about:



Like it or not, at night you'll have to deal with car drivers who've been drinking...

Some will be really drunk and barely able to stay on the road. If you see one of the jokers coming down the road, get out of the way fast! Then get the license number and call the police.

Other drivers will only be a "little under the influence". These are harder to spot but just as deadly.

Drinking alcohol cuts down people's night vision. They can't see as well so you'll need to be really visible.

Remember: After 9 PM, one out of five car drivers is at least a little bit drunk. After midnight, two out of every five are!

ABCDEFOUR

As people get older, their eyes get weaker...

By the time your 26 years old, you'll have lost half the night vision you had as a kid of 13. When your 39, you'll have only one fourth of what you had at 13.

The point: older people can't see as well in the dark as young people can. That's why you need to help drivers out by using good lights and reflectors!



Nighttime riding is about fifteen to twenty times as risky as daytime riding...

In Florida, over half the cyclists killed on the road are hit after dark. But most riding happens during the day. Few cyclists killed were using lights or good reflectors.

For more information

We've got all kinds of bike riding info. If you want more, write to us:

State Pedestrian/Bicycle Program
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS 82
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450
(850) 487-1200

Local Distribution Courtesy of:

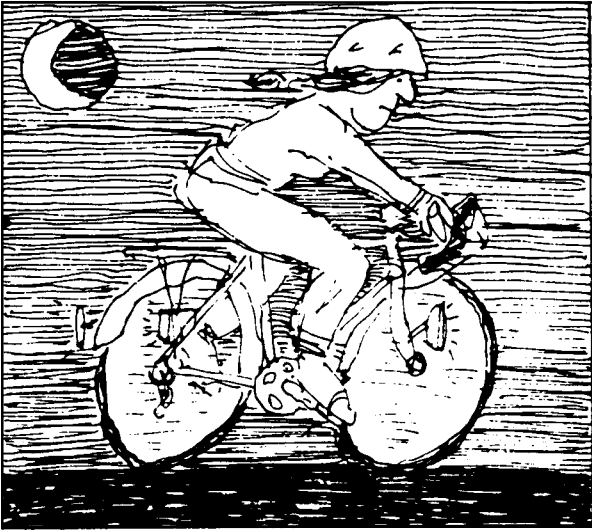
How to ride at night...

and stay alive!



Tips for adult bicyclists

Riding at night is for people who know what they're doing and who have the right equipment. It's not for the B Team.



What do you need?

Get the best lights and reflectors you can afford. Go to a real bike shop and ask for advice.

Here are some basics:

Headlight: You need a good headlight to ride at night. Get one that will light up the road so you can see potholes and gravel.

Tail light: A bright tail light is required by Florida law, and must be used in addition to a red reflector.

Other lights: check out the Belt Beacon (tm) and the leg lights. There good for extra protection.

Red rear reflector: Get a big one and mount it low (like where the rear hub hooks to the frame).

Pedal reflectors: Put these on each pedal. They're great because they move and catch the driver's eye.

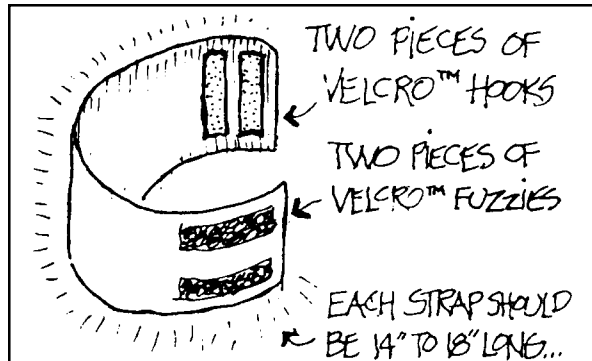
Reflective clothes: Get reflective pants straps (they also keep your pants out of the chain!).

You can also buy reflective vests or sew reflective material on jackets, pants or shirts. Put the stuff low down (rather than up on your shoulders) so car headlights will pick it up sooner.

About reflective sew-on material: You can get reflective material at a fabric store.

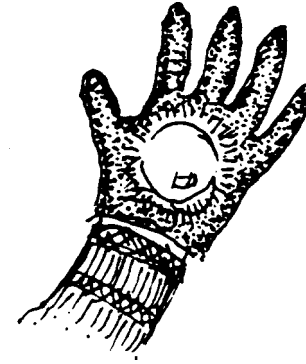
Look for Reflexite(tm) (really shiny plastic) or Scotchlite(tm) (sort of dull looking in daytime but lights up well at night).

Wearing "white at night" is good, but not good enough. Add retroreflective materials for best visibility.

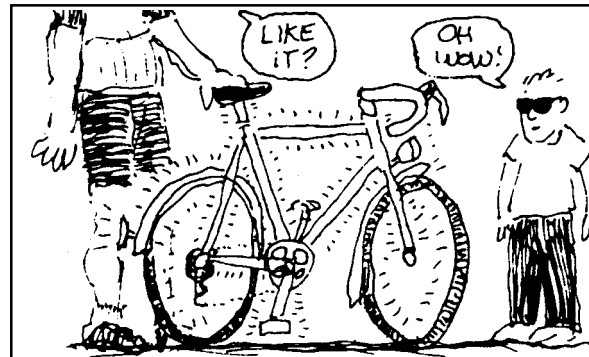


Super idea #1: Get about three feet of two or three inch wide Reflexite (tm) or Scotchlite (tm), about 12 inches of Velcro(tm) and sew up a couple of Super Pants Straps.

These will do a great job of keeping your pants out of the chain and will light up like torches at night! Check out the sketch.

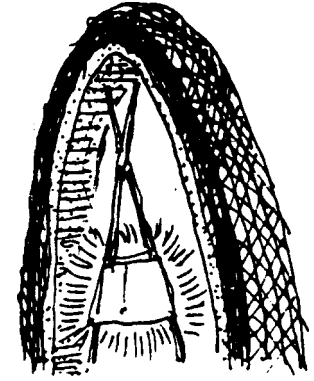


Super idea #2: Get a couple of two inch "Reflexite" circles from a fabric store and sew them on the backs of your riding gloves. Then when you hold your arm out to signal a turn, flip your hand back and forth. Presto: You've got TURN SIGNALS!

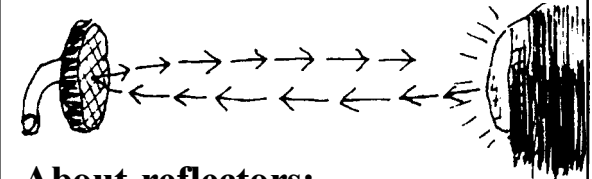


Super idea #3: Get some reflective tape from a bike shop or car parts store. Go wild with it, putting it on frame, fenders, pedal crank arms and wherever you want.

You can get it in lots of colors so get creative! Tip: white reflective tape should face forward and red should face back.



Super idea #4: For some great wheel reflectors, wrap a piece of reflective tape between two spokes from opposite sides of each hub. Make two per wheel. These things will flash motorists coming from behind or ahead!



About reflectors:

- The lower a reflector is, the sooner it will be lit up by headlights. That's good!

- A reflector has to face the light. If it's not straight, it won't work.

- Truck drivers may not see your reflectors very well. They sit up high and their headlights are down low.

- Rear reflectors up under the saddle or above the rear break are no good; they'll get covered with dirt from the tire.