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## What Is Safe Cycling?, Blog 1

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# Keeping Our Cyclists & Pedestrians Safe



Courtesy of Wix

**Safety Is  
Our #1  
Priority**



Courtesy of Wix

**Making  
Sidewalks  
Safe For  
Everyone**



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**Knowing  
Your &  
Their  
Rights**



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## About Us

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### Valerie Russo

A VCU senior majoring in Advertising and Business, with the hopes to one day work as a social media and marketing manager for a Virginia based company.

### Hunter Berry

A VCU junior studying Mathematical Science with a concentration in biomathematics and is planning to attend a graduate program following graduation in 2017.

### Shawn Rodis

A VCU junior majoring in biology whose goal is to teach a biology course in either middle or high school.

During the Fall 2015 semester, we participated in a course offered at Virginia Commonwealth University related to bicycle safety with the UCI Road World Championchips coming to the United States for the first time since 1986. Based on our backgrounds, we decided to make this website as an informative place for individuals to learn about the dangers of riding a bicycle on the sidewalk.



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## Quick Facts



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### On The Street

While on the street be aware of various obstructions including: unpredictable pedestrian movements, limited visibility, and the limited design speed of sidewalk, road work or sidewalk work being completed, pedestrians, sharp corners, and large volumes of pedestrians on sidewalks.

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### Signage

While biking on the street, be cautious of all road signs involving stops and yields.

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### Your Bicycle

It is important while biking at night to have your bicycle equipped with reflective gear to be visible to drivers and pedestrians.

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### A Driver's Rights

Drivers are okay to pass cyclists as long as they are three feet away from them.

SR



Courtesy of Wix

### The Law

Most sidewalk riding is regulated and enforced by the local jurisdiction's authority rather than a state legislature.

Before riding be sure to check your local laws before riding on the sidewalk.

HB



Courtesy of Wix

### Richmond, Virginia

Richmond, Virginia, especially downtown, is definitely a place to be careful while cycling. Always be in the line of sight by pedestrians and motorists and pedestrians for the highest possible level of safety.

SR



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## So, what did we find?

### Why Some Bikers Think It's Okay

[April Streeter](#) argues that there are mass transportation vehicles on the street that pose a threat to cyclist safety. Bikers are vulnerable to buses' sudden lane changes or stops. She also argues that street lights do not change for bikers at an intersection, because they are not heavy enough to trigger sensors necessary for those lights to change.



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Courtesy of Wix

### Sidewalk Dangers

Sidewalk cycling is discouraged for the safety of pedestrians and motorists. This is mostly due to the common expectation of pedestrians and motorists because they typically see cyclists on the road rather than on sidewalks. If the unexpected is spotted at last minute by either group, injury or even death is possible for all groups. The speed and visibility of cyclists significantly increases this risk hence why sidewalk cycling is discouraged.



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Courtesy of Wix

### Sidewalk vs. Road

The communication director, Liz Murphy, of [The League of American Bicyclists](#) recommends riding on the road versus the sidewalk for safety from obstructions, pedestrians, limited visibility, and limited speeds of sidewalks. Also, her [research](#) includes a chart defining all 52 states rights and laws while riding on the sidewalk. Virginia's 46.2-904 permits that the rights and duties of a cyclist while on a sidewalk is that equal of a pedestrian, must yield to pedestrians, must signal verbally, and localities may prohibit.



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## Weather Conditions

**Research** conducted in Japan studied weather conditions in relation to the swerve a cyclist would have to make around a pedestrian while on the ride walk. The results are staggering, while raining a pedestrian carrying an umbrella resulted in the cyclist's swerve significantly widening and increasing the risk of crashes. This reinforces the reasoning for why sidewalk riding is highly dangerous for cyclists.

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# How can we help?



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## Designate Bike Lanes

Create a [site!](#)

**Research** shows that a big fear cyclists have about biking in the street is when their bike lanes immediately come to an end.

In Richmond along Leigh street, bikers have a whole lane that is immediately cut off as it gets closer to the fan, leaving riders with nowhere to go and at risk for accident. Extension and development of designated bike lanes results in more space on the road for drivers, and on the sidewalk for pedestrians. Some **research** shows it's even safer to ride in a bike lane than it is on the street.

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## Be Cautious

Cyclists may find themselves in a situation where they are not able to use a designated bike lane or other designated area. Pedestrians and motorists can help by being more understanding and more aware of these situations. Being more accomodating towards cyclists can go a long way with safety.

SR

## Be Aware Of Surroundings

After researching this topic over several weeks, pedestrians and cyclists which are more aware of the dangers around them or created by them could assist in eliminating the crashes caused by obstacles found on streets and roads.

When cyclists are able to ride on the road, the obstacles significantly decrease as well as crashes. If more people were always aware of their surroundings without being distracted with things such as cell phones, i.e. a very bad idea, there would be less dangerous conditions for everyone.

HB

