



Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

Support for Philadelphia High Schools

Due to recent Philadelphia School Districts budget cuts; the district has increased the distance for students eligible for funded transportation from 1.5 to 2 miles. The Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia would like to be a resource for any school encouraging biking as an alternative mode of transportation for their students.

How to Classes

- **Urban Riding Basics** provide guidance for biking in the city through helpful tips on everything from Philadelphia and Pennsylvania bike laws; proper bike safety measures, bike maintenance, and convenient biking gear.
- **Fix a Flat** class teaches simple “do it yourself” flat fixing skills such as basic wheel anatomy, and tube patching.

We can provide class scripts and train teachers who would like to deliver these lessons. If there is no one in the school who feels confident enough to teach these lessons, we can help recruit volunteer instructors.

Route Planning

- BCGP will help students map out the safest routes to school by identifying bike lanes, street sharrows, and other bicycle related facilities to make their commute to school safe, easy, and fun.
- BCGP can also assist students in starting Bicycle Trains, which are a group of students biking to school, stopping at predetermined stops along the route to pick up other students.

Bicycle Security

- Identify neighborhood schools needing bike racks and work with the school district to get racks installed where needed.
- Consult with schools on the best practices for setting up indoor bike rooms so that students can store bikes safely.

Affordable biking

- Identify discounts for students needing bike maintenance or bike safety equipment such as helmets.



Included in this resource guide is a cost comparison between biking and public transportation. Overall the cost of biking for a year is significantly cheaper than a year’s worth of SEPTA TransPasses or tokens.



Guide to Urban Bicycling for Philadelphia High School Students

Clothing & Gear:

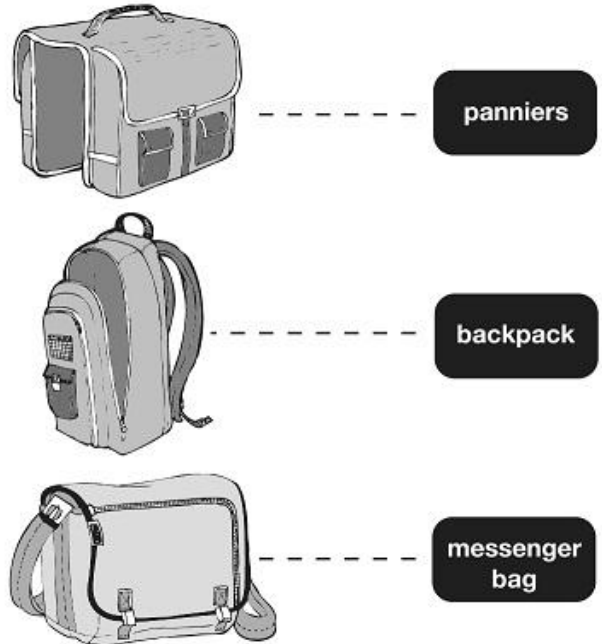
-You can commute in whatever clothes you usually wear. Just be sure to roll up your right pants leg if it is baggy or gets in the way of the chain.

-You also do not need special gear to ride a bike. All you need is a bicycle, helmet, and lights. Beyond that, a simple basket or bag to carry whatever you need that day.

Panniers: Provide larger storage area without straining your body, and make for a more comfortable ride. Downside: they are more expensive and require a rack on your bike.

Backpack: Cheap and easy to carry off-bike. Downside: an overloaded bag can strain your back or impair balance, or make your back sweaty.

Messenger bag: You'll look super cool, it's easy to access while on-bike, and you can have a stable ride. The downsides are sweaty backs, less stable, and not designed for walking around.

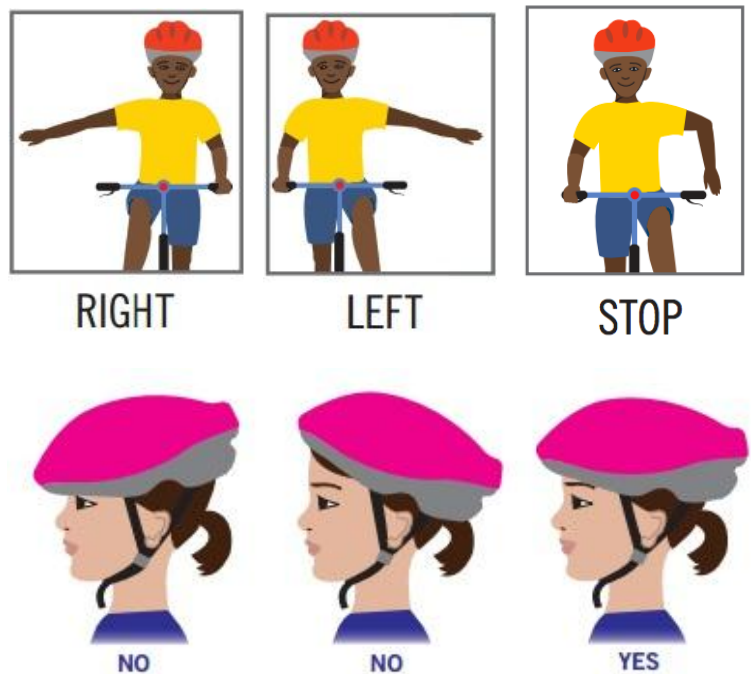


Safety:

-Be visible: By law in Philadelphia all bicycles need a white front light and at least a red back reflector.

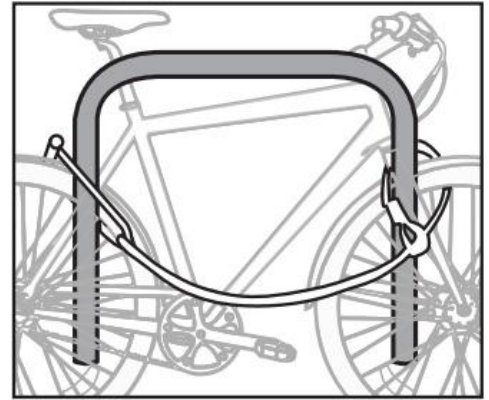
-Signal clearly: Use hand signals to indicate your approaching turn to bicyclists and cars behind you.

-Wear your helmet correctly: A helmet can protect your head from impact and save your face from road burn should you experience a crash. A correctly fit helmet should be snug, level, and secure on your head. Adjust both ear straps so that they form a V directly under earlobes (eliminating side to side movement) and tighten the chin strap so only two fingers can squeeze between your chin and the strap. Some helmets come with a radial dial on the back of the helmet; this can be adjusted so that it fits snugly around your cranium.



Bicycle Parking:

No bike is impossible to steal, but proper locking can greatly increase the security of your bike. Use a U-lock and leash to lock your bike so that your frame and both wheels are secured. Lock to official bike racks, street signs with signs on top. Do not lock to trees, fences, or signposts without signs on top, bike racks that are loosely secured to the cement, or on private property. Always bring your bike inside overnight.



Safe, Legal Riding:

- A bicycle is a legal vehicle. Bicycles traveling on roadways have all the general rights and duties of drivers of other vehicles. ALWAYS ride with traffic, obey all traffic signals, and use hand signals to indicate turning, slowing, or stopping.

-Sidewalk riding is illegal in Philadelphia if you are over 12 years of age, and it is also unsafe. Walk your bike on the sidewalk.

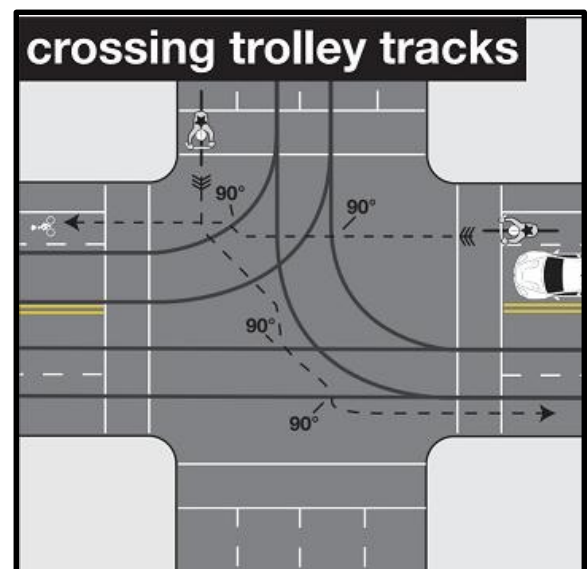
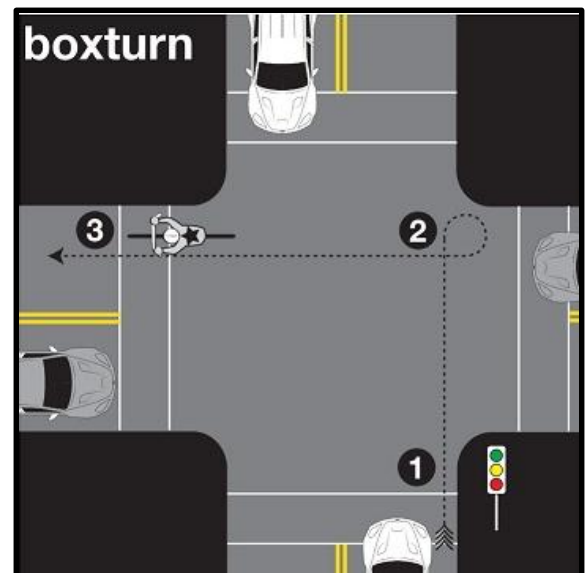
- It is illegal to wear headphones while riding a bicycle in Philadelphia. It is also unsafe because you cannot hear your surroundings—all your senses are important when you're riding!

- Car drivers don't want to hit you—you must be visible and predictable and allow cars to pass safely. Ride in a straight line, make eye contact, position yourself properly in the lane (where a car's right wheel goes), and stay at least four feet away from car doors.

-Turn like a motor vehicle: merge to the left after looking over your shoulder and signaling, then make the turn. If you prefer, make a "box turn," crossing using the crosswalk in two directions to form a right angle.

-Trolley tracks: cross at a perpendicular angle; be especially careful if roads are wet.

-Bike lanes and right turns: when you approach an intersection and there is traffic to your left, be aware that cars might cut you off by turning right.





Smart Money: Biking v. Transit

The School District of Philadelphia will no longer provide transportation funding for high school students who live within two miles of their neighborhood school. So, how are you supposed to get to school without a TransPass? This might be a good time to try bike commuting. For most people, two miles is a totally manageable bike commute, in all kinds of weather. Bike commuting has an initial investment cost, but once you have what you need, it's really cheap to maintain. What you really need is: a bike, a U-lock with cable, and a helmet.

The price of a bike can range a great deal. To get to school, you should be able to get a bike that costs under \$100. Helmets can range a great deal, too! Be sure to get a helmet that's certified by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Although it may seem like a good idea to buy a used helmet, avoid this option because you can never be sure if that helmet has been through a crash in the past. Once you have the bike, you'll need to maintain it. That can be almost free if you do the work yourself (Neighborhood Bike Works in West Philly is a great place to start), or you can pay a mechanic to do the work for you. If you're paying for the services, count on about \$60-\$75 annually for maintenance.

Weekly TransPass: **\$24** (\$3.62/valid day=**\$18.10**/school week if purchased through the School District)

Monthly TransPass: **\$91**

Single cash fare: **\$2.25**

Token: **\$1.80**

Transfer: **\$1.00** (not included in calculation)

For the purposes of calculation, the initial investment on a bicycle and necessary supplies includes a bicycle (\$100), a helmet (\$30), and a u-lock (\$50) = **\$180**. That amount increases to \$190 after five months, representing minor necessary purchases (inner tubes and/or brake pads). If you already own a bike, helmet, and/or reliable lock, that number might be closer to \$0! We recommend having your bike checked out by a mechanic before you start commuting.

