

How to ride safely through traffic in Denmark on two wheels



BIKING RULES

FOR DENMARK

**Always observe the traffic regulations
– the penalties are severe.**

**Even if you aren't stopped by the police, you
will often be put in place by other people, because
Danes don't suffer fools gladly when it comes to
traffic – particularly on the cycle paths.**

**To help prevent you getting into awkward
or unpleasant situations, here are the most
important rules**

- 1. Cyclists indicate their intention
by means of hand signals:**
 - Hand signal to the left: left turn
 - Hand signal to the right: right turn
 - Hand signal upwards: stopping
- 2. When turning left at an intersection a cyclist may
not use the turning left lane for cars, but must cycle
across the intersection, stop (indicating this in ad-
vance by means of a raised hand), then ride in the
desired direction when the lights turn green again.**
- 3. Cycling against the flow of traffic is forbidden.**
- 4. If a bus stops at a bus stop, cyclists have to stop
until the bus doors have closed again. Bus passen-
gers who cross the cycle path when boarding and
alighting have priority, unless there is a bus island.**
- 5. Pavements/sidewalks are no-go areas for cyclists.
If there is no bike path, you must ride on the road.**

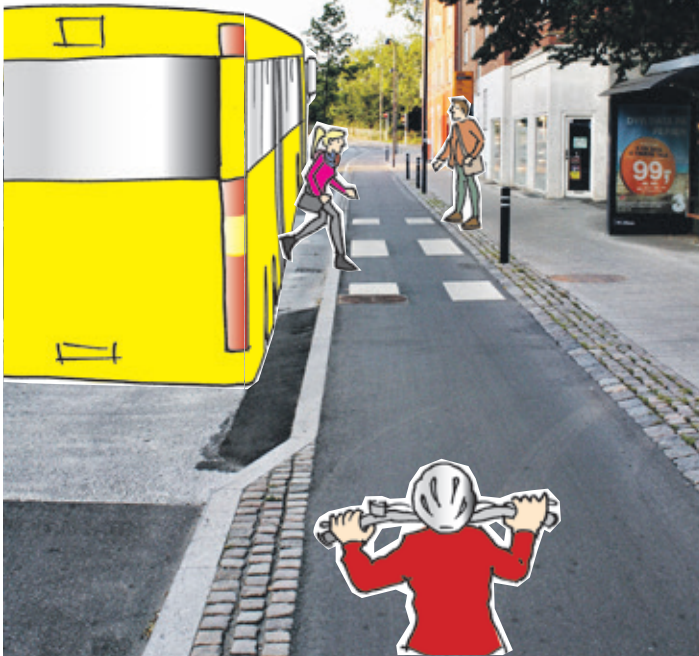
Similarly, cycle paths are out of bounds to pedestri-
ans, and if you are walking alongside your bike, you
must do so on the pavement.

- 6. Obey the red light at intersections even when you're
on a bike. If there are no cycle traffic lights at the
road junction, it is the car traffic lights that apply to
cyclists, and not the pedestrian ones.**
- 7. When riding your bike you must have both feet on
the pedals and at least one hand on the handlebars
at all times.**
- 8. Cycle helmets are not compulsory, either for chil-
dren or adults.**

The following components of your bicycle must be in good working order:

- Front and rear light. However, you will notice that only very few cycle lights are strong enough to light up the road, and are really only “alibi” lights, allowing the cyclist to be seen. Lights are often set to flashing mode to improve visibility, particularly in the dark winter months.
- Reflectors must be fitted to the wheels, or the tyres must have built-in reflector strips.
- The cycle must be fitted with a white reflector at the front and a red reflector at the rear.
- The cycle must have functioning brakes, both on the front and rear wheel...
- ...and a bell!

Who must stop here?



There are different rules as to who must stop depending on how the bus stop is designed.

If the passengers get off onto the bike lane cyclists must stop and let them pass. In this case, cyclists must also stop for people boarding the bus.

On the other hand, passengers are not allowed to gather on the bike lane and are required to leave the lane as quickly as possible. There are usually no problems relating to alighting, however, if there are a lot of passengers wanting to board the bus they are likely to stand on the bike lane. In this case, there is not much to do other than to wait.

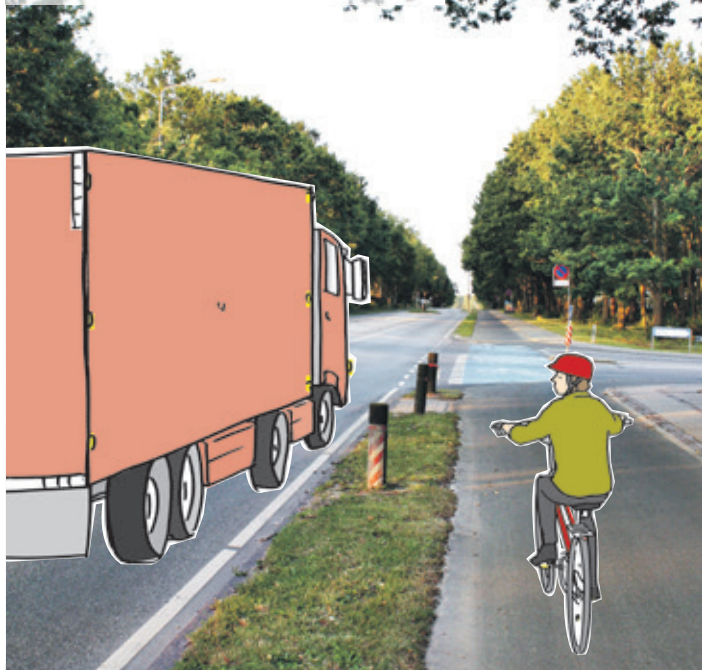
and here?



If the bus stop has a platform or an island that the passengers use during alighting or boarding, then it is the passengers/pedestrians who must wait for the coast to be clear before crossing a bike lane.

As a cyclist, however, it is a good idea to be aware of potential dangers when passing a bus stop with an island seeing that some passengers do not know that they are the ones who must stop and await a clear coast.

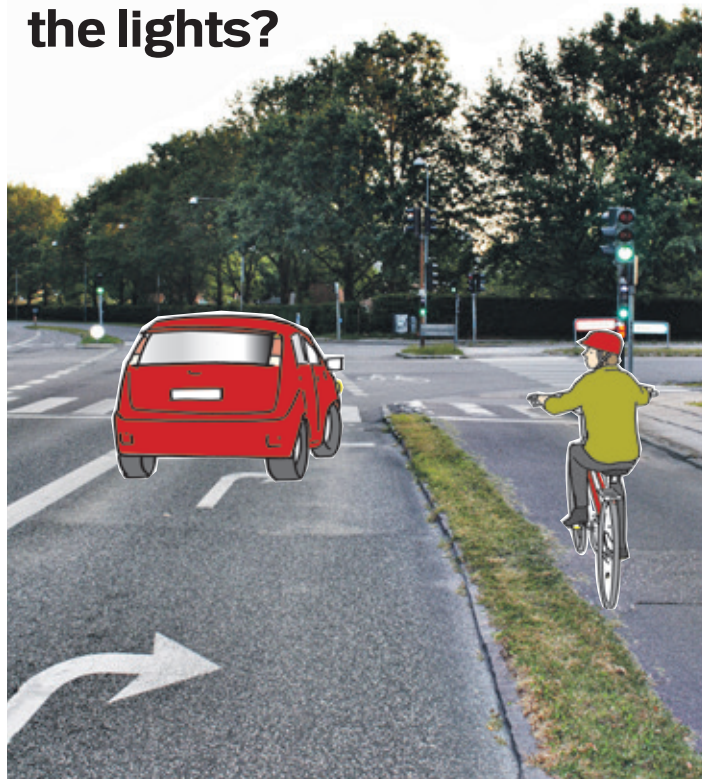
Is there anything here in particular to watch out for?



When continuing straight ahead in an intersection the turning cars pose a big risk. All cars have blind spots and drivers turning left or right may not see you.

Right-turn accidents involving trucks happen frequently in Denmark so be extra careful hereof. The victims of such accidents are mostly women.

What about the lights?



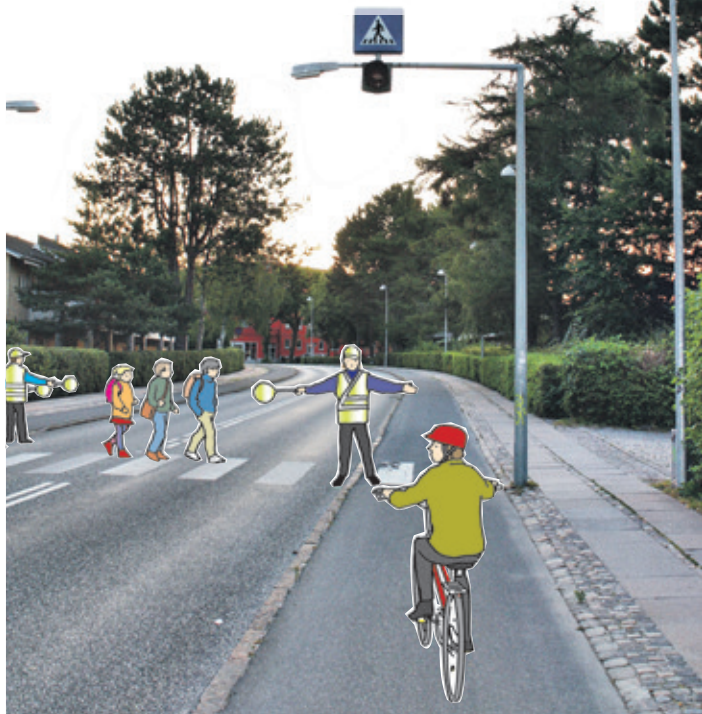
All moving traffic including cyclists must obey traffic lights at an intersection. The pedestrians have their own lights portraying persons.

However, there are a few exceptions seeing that some lights have arrows indicating that you may turn left or right even though cars going straight ahead are held back by a red light. Cyclists are not allowed to obey a green light arrow pointing left; however, they are allowed to turn right at a green arrow pointing right.

Bus signals are made of a white horizontal or vertical line and are only used by public transport busses.

There may also be separate signals for bicycles. They are subsequently smaller than normal signals and they have a reflecting bike on the top. If there is such a signal bicycles must obey them.

Who must stop here and who is the girl in yellow?



It is a good idea to pay attention to and possibly slow down when approaching a pedestrian crossing with no light regulations. If a pedestrian seems to want to cross the road all vehicles including bicycles must stop or slow down so that he or she may cross the road safely.

In the near of schools you are likely to meet safety patrols during the morning. They consist of older students at the nearby school who are trained to help the younger ones cross the road at a pedestrian crossing or an intersection. They are wearing yellow vests or rain covers with reflectors and are likely to carry a "lollipop" with reflectors in their hand.

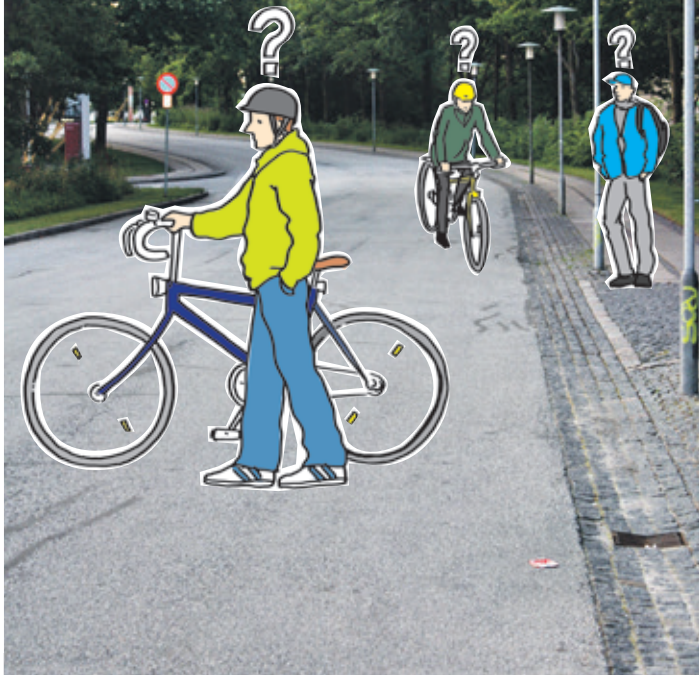
Do you know how to turn right?



When turning right it is important that you warn other road users about your intentions and that you do so in good time. You signal a right turn by stretching your hand to the right side.

At an intersection you must hold back for pedestrians crossing the road and you are not allowed to turn right on a red light in Denmark.

Where must you be?



Cyclists must stay on the bike lane and it must be on the right side of the road. In case there is no bike lane cyclists must stay in the far right side of the road. Some places have two-way bike lanes. There is a small bike lane on each side and you must remain on the right side hereof. If there is a two-way bike lane it must be used.

It is not allowed to ride on the sidewalk, pedestrian crossing or other places made for pedestrians. If you get off your bike and walk alongside it you are now a pedestrian and must walk on the sidewalk.

Pedestrians must, in turn, stay off both the road and the bike lanes unless they are crossing them.

Do you know how to turn left?



Cyclists are not allowed to turn left but must ride through the intersection and stop at the opposite side and wait for the light to turn green. In this case you must remember to signal full stop by holding your hand in the air.

However, you may signal a left-turn – the hand to the left – and continue to the left if the coast is clear.

At normal traffic junctions you must follow the same rules and ride all the way to the corner, though in this case it happens frequently that cyclists simply turn left without stopping. However, you must still make sure the coast is clear. Cyclists are not allowed to use the cars' left turn lane and must use the bike lane if there is one.

What safety equipment does the bicycle need?

Rear-facing lights

The rear-facing light must be visible from a distance of 300 metres and from the side. The rear-facing light must be red and is allowed to blink, though only 120 flashes per minute. Cycle lights must be switched on from sunset to sunrise or during the day if visibility is bad.

Bell

The bell must have a clear sound and be fitted on the handlebars. It is not allowed to replace the bell with other types of signaling devices.

Headlights

The headlights must be visible from a distance of 300 metres and from the side. The headlight must shine white, bluish or yellowish. It is only allowed to ride a bike with blinking headlights if it flashes white or bluish and flashes at least 120 times per minute. It is not allowed to have yellow blinking headlights as they can be confused with alarm lights or yellow blinkers on the cars. Headlights must be switched on from sunset to sunrise or during the day if visibility is bad.

Reflector on the rear of the bicycle

The bicycle needs a red reflector on the rear.

Reflector on the front of the bicycle

The bicycle needs a white reflector that is visible from the front.

Reflectors on the wheels of the bicycle

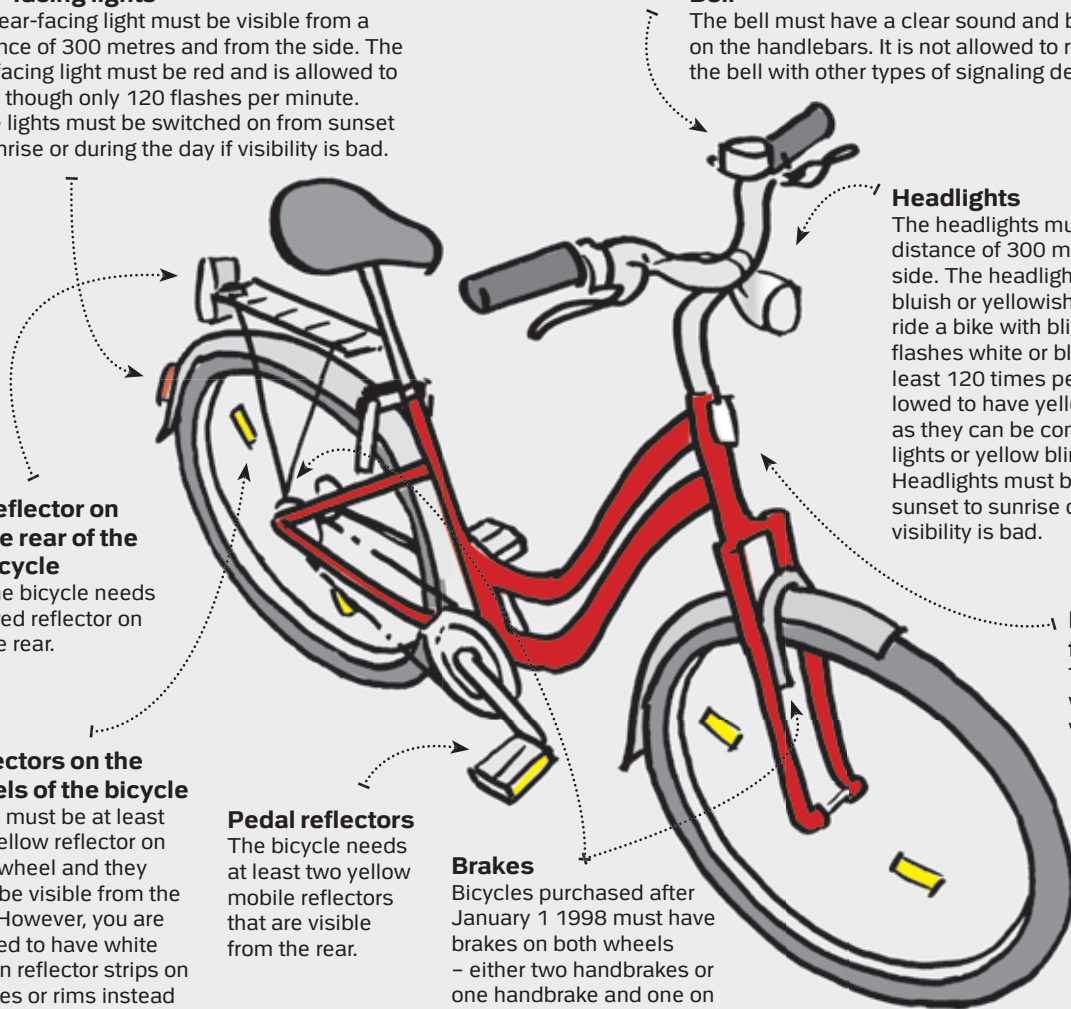
There must be at least one yellow reflector on each wheel and they must be visible from the side. However, you are allowed to have white built-in reflector strips on the tires or rims instead of the yellow reflectors.

Pedal reflectors

The bicycle needs at least two yellow mobile reflectors that are visible from the rear.

Brakes

Bicycles purchased after January 1 1998 must have brakes on both wheels – either two handbrakes or one handbrake and one on the back wheel.



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