Safe streets take Street Smarts.

www.cityofnewhaven.com/streetsmarts
What is Smart Cycling?

With thousands of active cyclists on city streets, New Haven is working hard to be a bike-friendly community for cyclists of all ages and skill levels.

In response to the growing number of cyclists on the streets and trails, the Smart Cycling Handbook was developed by the City of New Haven’s Street Smarts campaign, in partnership with bicycling advocates, law enforcement officials and local leaders. All contributors had one common goal: to encourage cycling in New Haven while promoting safety and traffic education.

Cyclists have rights to the road, but they also have obligations — to the motorists, pedestrians, and fellow cyclists around them. This is a guide for how to be a safe, respectful cyclist, and how to become involved with the New Haven biking community.

Biking is environmentally-friendly, good for our health, and is fun for people of all ages. The cycling community is dedicated to working together on many projects, such as the Smart Cycling Handbook, to ensure that those who choose to cycle can do so safely and enjoyably.
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There are lots of reasons to ride a bike, whether it’s for your daily commute or for a weekend ride with friends. Here are ten reasons New Haven cyclists say they love cruising the roads:

1. **Faster Travel.** For in-city trips that are only a few miles round trip, biking is probably faster than either walking or driving (especially considering how long it takes to park!).

2. **Convenient Parking.** Most of the time, you can lock your bike up right outside the front door of your destination. And bike parking is free.

3. **$0 Per Gallon.** The more you bike, the less you spend your cash on gas—and the less you’re dependent on oil.

4. **Biking is Green.** Motor vehicles are responsible for 31% of carbon dioxide emissions in the U.S. If you’re looking to lower your carbon footprint and help keep the air clean, remember that bikes have zero emissions!

5. **Get Fitter.** Regular exercise, like biking, can improve your health, shrink your waistline, and even relieve stress.
But according to the CDC, only 52% of Connecticut residents get recommended daily physical activity. An easy way to get 30 minutes of daily exercise in? Swap the car for biking or walking—you burn about 110 calories per mile.

6. **Save Money.** Buying and maintaining a bike is cheaper than buying and maintaining a car.

7. **Safety in Numbers.** Studies show that where there are more cyclists, biking is safer—and when streets are safer, more people begin to ride. It’s a cycle that you can help perpetuate!

8. **Recreational Riding.** Biking on trails, in parks, and around town on a beautiful day is a great way to spend free time with family and friends.

9. **Meet People.** 42.5 million Americans ride bikes. Joining local cycling clubs, meeting with bike advocacy groups, or taking part in group rides are some great ways to make friends in the community.

10. **It’s FUN!** People simply enjoy being active, being outdoors and being with friends. Bottom line, most people who bike regularly do it because it’s fun.
New Haven’s cycling infrastructure is constantly evolving. This map reflects the current state of bike lanes (as of August 2010), shared lane markings, trail systems, and recommended bike routes, which should help you plan your trips around the city. Other great resources are Google Maps Bike Directions (go to maps.google.com > click “Get Directions” > click the bicycle icon) and the Elm City Cycling Bike Map (www.elmcitycycling.org/bikemap).

For a state-wide bicycle map, check out the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s at: www.ct.gov, search: bicycle map

Map source: Brian Tang, Elm City Cycling
In order to foster a cycling culture where people in New Haven can bike safely and enjoyably, it’s important for cyclists to lead by example. Here are the road rules that are broadly accepted by seasoned New Haven cyclists:

**Same road, same rules.** The League of American Bicyclists’ motto is, “Cyclists fare best when they act and are treated as drivers of vehicles.” So pretend you’re driving a car and follow signs, obey traffic signals, ride with traffic, and use lights at night.

**Pedestrians always have the right-of-way.** Always.

**Don’t bike on the sidewalks.** Being on the sidewalk makes you less visible, you’re more likely to be hit at an intersection or driveway, and your speed can put pedestrians in peril. **Also, it’s against the law.** If you need to be on the sidewalk to get to where you’re going, dismount and walk your bike until you want to use the road again.

**Wear a helmet.** 90% of cyclists who were killed in 2008 were not wearing helmets. So invest and put it to use!
Never pass on the right. When cars in your lane are stopped at a red light or a stop sign, it’s dangerous to pass them on the right in order to get to the front. It puts you in a turning driver’s blind spot. Be safe, and wait behind the column of cars until it’s your turn to proceed through the intersection (unless there is a designated bike box painted at the crosswalk).

Ride predictably. Ride in a straight line, avoid weaving in between traffic, use hand signals, and don’t make sudden changes in direction.

Watch out for the “door zone.” Drivers exiting their parked cars may not notice you when they swing open the door. So when you’re biking alongside parked cars, give yourself four feet of space away from the car doors to avoid getting “doored” - even if this means biking outside of a bike lane.

Be vigilant. Even if you have the right of way, don’t assume motorists see you.

Don’t drink and bike. Almost 25% of bikers killed in 2003 had a blood alcohol level higher than the legal limit. Being alert and able to react quickly is crucial to safe riding.
Smart & safe cycling means knowing the state and local bicycling laws. Here’s a brief explanation and summary of the city and state rules.

YOUR RIGHTS ON THE ROAD:
General Statues of Connecticut (CGS) § 14-212(c)
Motorists must give right-of-way to cyclists, and must be careful to avoid collisions.

CGS § 14-232
When passing a bicyclist, drivers must give the biker three feet of space on all sides. That means a car should give you adequate room on the sides while passing, and in front of you after passing so that you’re not endangered.

CGS § 14-242(f)
After passing a cyclist, a driver may not make a right turn until the cyclist is given ample space.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE ROAD:
New Haven Code of Ordinances (NHCO) § 29-10
You may not ride on the sidewalks. (Note: this is usually not enforced for young children who are learning how to ride.) Why? Studies show that because sidewalk bikers are less visible in intersections and driveways, they’re at least twice as likely to be injured or involved in a collision than those biking on the street with regular traffic.

CGS § 14-286(a), NHCO § 29-6
Always ride in the rightmost lane that goes in the direction you are traveling. Move in the direction of traffic, and always obey the traffic signals & signs.

CGS § 14-286(b)(c)
Clinging to a moving vehicle or attaching to a car is not allowed.
CGS § 14-286(d)
Helmets are required for anyone 15 years old and younger who is riding on a bicycle (whether they’re pedaling or riding in a trailer).

CGS § 14-286(b)(b)
When riding with others, you’re allowed to ride either single file or two abreast. However, the law states that you shouldn’t ride side-by-side if it “impedes the normal and reasonable movement of traffic.”

CGS § 14-286(b)(e)
You must keep at least one hand on the handlebars at all times. You are not allowed to carry a “package, bundle, or other article” which would prevent you from having both hands on the handlebars.

CGS § 14-286(b)(d)
You are not allowed to carry any passengers on your bike, unless the bike’s equipped for more than one person (like if you have a tandem bike, or an attached trailer for a child).

CGS § 14-286(c)
Use hand signals when making a turn, stopping, or merging. Let others on the road know what to expect and how to accommodate.

**STREET SMART TIP:** Here in New Haven, you could actually be fined $90 to $125 for:
- Biking on the sidewalk
- Riding against traffic
- Failing to stop at a stop sign
- Failing to stop at a red light
- Carrying extra passengers on your bike
Biking on the road is much safer than most people realize! If you bike according to the rules of the road and encourage others to do so, cycling is just as safe as walking or driving. By taking basic precautions and practicing basic skills, biking on the road can be an enjoyable activity for cyclists of all ages & abilities.

ON-STREET BIKE LANES. Some roads have a painted lane for cyclist use only. While bike lanes are great, remember that you’re still sharing a street and intersections with motorists, so watch out for cars that might turn into your path. Remember to bike at least 3 feet from parked cars, and be alert when maneuvering out of the bike lane, for example, to turn left.

SHARED LANE MARKINGS. Many of the city’s roads are not wide enough for dedicated bike lanes—but by biking wisely and always being aware of your environment, it is simple to share the traffic lanes with drivers.

Sharrows: A shared lane marked with an arrow (aka, a “sharrow”) is a multipurpose road marking that:

- shows cyclists where to bike so that they’re four feet from parallel-parked cars;
• shows when it’s a good idea for cyclists to take the whole lane on narrow roads;
• alerts drivers of lanes where they can commonly expect bicyclists;
• encourages drivers to pass bicyclists in a safe manner;
• reduces the incidence of wrong-way biking.

Sharrows are there to show what lane you should ride in if you plan on going straight—even if it means not necessarily riding as far to the right as possible, and even if it means taking up most of (or all of) the lane.

BIKE ROUTES. Sharing the road is easier on streets that are designated bike routes—these roads typically have more bicyclist traffic, often have wider lanes and/or shoulders, have slower traffic, and are marked with “Share the Road” signs, which help alert drivers to bicyclists’ presence.

STREET SMART TIP: One of the biggest mistakes novice commuter cyclists make is taking the same route that they would if they were driving. But all roads are not created equal for cyclists.

Try to figure out routes with bike lanes, road sharing signs, and other characteristics that are good for bikers. Use online bike maps, or befriend someone in a local cycling club and get their input!
OFF-STREET BIKE TRAILS. These trails are in place for the enjoyment of bicyclists, pedestrians, and other non-motorized users (like rollerbladers or skateboarders) in a car-free environment. But remember to share with other trail users. Ride on the right side except to pass, and give a friendly verbal warning (“On your left!”) if you’re going to pass anyone. And keep your eye out for posted signs.

GENERAL MANEUVERING ADVICE. Whether your travel route has bike lanes, is a marked bike route, or is a traditional shared street, here are some recommended biking habits that will help you minimize the risk of getting in a crash:

If the road is very narrow, take the whole lane. If it’s not wide enough for a car to safely travel side-by-side with you, or if you’re avoiding riding too close to parked cars, take up the whole lane by riding in the middle until the road widens. Don’t hug too close to the curb so you can give yourself room to maneuver or to avoid hazards.
Watch for turning cars. Don’t allow cars to turn into your path. Take up the whole lane if you think there might be a turning conflict or you think you might not be visible.

Two options for left turns. You can turn left from the left-hand lane (just like a car would), or you can cross the intersection, reorient with traffic heading in your desired direction, and proceed when the light turns green.

Watch your wheel on train tracks. You want to cross over tracks with your wheel as perpendicular to the tracks as possible—otherwise, your tire can get caught in the groove, which is dangerous for the rider. Either orient yourself so you ride perpendicularly, or dismount and walk over the tracks.

In a roundabout, take the whole lane. You want to make sure entering drivers can see you when you’re circulating, so ride in the middle of the lane until you exit. (Or, you can dismount and use the crosswalks like a pedestrian.) Roundabouts are designed to slow down traffic, so bicyclists can feel comfortable traveling in the circle.
Cyclists are required by law to indicate when they’re making a turn, just like cars have to use their blinkers. Here’s how to signal like the pros (you’re viewing the figure from the back):

- **RIGHT TURN**
  - OR
  - **LEFT TURN**
  - **STOP**
EQUIPMENT REQUIRED BY LAW: These state & city requirements are in place to both prevent accidents, and to protect you if you’re in one.

**Helmet**: Required for riders younger than 15, and highly recommended for everyone else. A small investment can save your life (a good helmet can cost as little as $20).

**Front Light**: A headlight that emits a white light helps you see the roads, and it helps other road users see you. If you plan on biking in the dark, this is required by law.

**Reflectors**: Your bike needs to have a reflector on the back (usually comes standard, under the seat) & sides (usually comes standard, attached to the spokes). These are so cars can see you, no matter which side of you they approach.

**Working Brakes**: According to the law, you must be able to stop in 25 feet or less.
RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT: While these aren’t required, buying some of these accessories for your bike may make your ride safer, more comfortable, and more enjoyable:

Red Rear Light: When you buy your front light, it usually comes in a package with a rear light that blinks red. Go ahead and attach it below your seat—this will make you even more visible.

Sturdy Lock: Most bikers get a U-lock—i.e., not a cable lock. Bike thieves can easily snip through a cable, whereas U-locks are considerably more resilient.

Bike Pump: You’ll want to have one of these at home so your tires stay fully inflated (which will make them last longer).

Basket: You can attach a basket to the handlebars, or to a rack that sits above your rear tire. It’ll help keep your hands free and take weight off your back!

Bell or Horn: If you have something on your bike that can make noise you can alert cars, pedestrians, or other cyclists of your presence. (This is actually required in some other states!)

Mirror: You can attach one of these to your handlebars, which makes it easier to check behind you before changing lanes or making turns.
SAFETY, COMFORT & STYLE TIPS: After you’ve equipped your bike, don’t forget to equip yourself! None of these are required by law, but seasoned cyclists consistently recommend these additions:

- Wearing bright-colored, reflective clothing will help drivers notice you.
- Sunglasses can protect your eyes against wind, sun glare, and small objects (like bugs or gravel).
- Pant clips, which wrap around your ankle, keep the loose-hanging ends of your pants from getting caught in your gears. (See left.)
- Lightweight rain gear can easily fit in a backpack or purse, and can protect your clothes and your stuff if there’s a sudden downpour.
- Wearing good shoes that will stay on while you pedal will protect your feet if you wipe out, and will keep your toes warm when temperatures drop.
- A good pair of biking gloves can improve your grip, make your hands more comfortable, keep your fingers warm, and protect you if you crash.
- Keep your phone on you in case of an emergency—but don’t use it while you’re actually riding. Distracted biking can be just as dangerous as distracted driving.
In 2008, more than 700 bicyclists were killed in crashes with motor vehicles—of those who were killed, 91% were not wearing helmets. **Learn to embrace the helmet hair!**

So how do you wear a helmet so it’s effective in preventing head injury? You want to make sure it fits snugly around your head and under your chin (so it won’t shift out of place if it takes a blow). Then, secure it so the helmet fits squarely on top of your head, and does not tip backward or forward. You can see more detailed fit tips at [www.helmets.org/fit](http://www.helmets.org/fit).

And if you’ve been in a crash while wearing your helmet, **replace it**. Even if you can’t visibly see any problems, a helmet with a crack in it won’t do its job.
LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS. Riders of all ages and skill levels can take courses in Smart Cycling from the League of American Bicyclists. The course options range from learning commuter cycling skills to safe riding techniques to bicycle maintenance. There are more than two dozen certified cycling instructors in Connecticut alone. Check out: www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/

YALE UNIVERSITY. Transportation Options offers a Smart City Cycling Skills class (equivalent to the League of American Bicyclists intro course). The course is geared toward learning New Haven streets, and is taught by New Haven cyclists. For more info, visit: www.yale.edu/transportationoptions/alternatives/smart-city-cycling.html

BIKE WALK CT. Bike Walk Connecticut offers League of American Bicyclists courses as well as its own original ones, including classes specific to women, seniors, teens, commuters, and even traffic engineers. For info and to register, visit: www.wecyclect.org/education

NEW HAVEN PARKS, RECREATION & TREES. For those who want to take their biking skills off the road, the City of New Haven Department of Parks, Recreation & Trees also offers mountain biking clinics. To learn how you can sign up, check out: www.cityofnewhaven.com/parks/outdooradventure
Here are some rough suggestions for obtaining the perfect bike fit. But ultimately, your frame size and adjustments all depend on your body proportions, the type of bike you ride, and—most importantly—your comfort preferences.

**FRAME SIZE.** A bike’s frame is measured as the length of the seat tube (from the pedal to where the seat post is attached). You’ll be most comfortable with a frame that’s proportional to your height and inseam.

Suggested frame size depends on the type of bike you ride (road vs. mountain vs. BMX), your gender, your age (adult vs. child), your height, and your leg length. You can use an online frame size calculator (such as at www.ebicycles.com/bicycle-tools/frame-sizer), or ask for the advice of a bike shop employee.

**SEAT HEIGHT.** When you pedal, you want to be able to almost fully extend your legs—that way, you generate the maximum amount of power per revolution. When you sit on your seat, you should be able to touch the ground with your toes. If your feet are flat
on the ground, the seat should be higher; if you can barely reach, the seat should be lower.

You can also adjust the tilt of your seat; the angle you want completely depends on whatever feels comfortable to you.

**HANDLEBAR HEIGHT.** Adjust these for whatever height feels comfortable for you. If your back hurts while you ride, make them a little higher; if you’re trying to bike faster, make them a little lower (for better aerodynamics).
Many of us get from place to place using multiple modes of transportation. If your commute involves both bike and public transit segments, you should become familiar with the bike rules of the transit you use.

**CT TRANSIT & YALE SHUTTLE.** All New Haven city buses and Yale Shuttle buses are equipped with bike racks on the front, which can accommodate up to 2 bicycles. Check out CT Transit’s site for step-by-step instructions for how to load a bike correctly: [www.cttransit.com/pdfs/NewRider/bikes_on_board.pdf](http://www.cttransit.com/pdfs/NewRider/bikes_on_board.pdf)

**MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD.** To bring your bike on Metro North, you first need to buy a permit—it’s a $5, one-time purchase that never expires. Bikes are allowed only on off-peak & weekend trains. There also are some restrictions regarding the number of bikes allowed per car, whether you can bring bikes on holidays, etc. (The exception is for folding bikes; these can be brought on any train at any time.) You can read the MTA rules & regulations and apply for your permit at MTA’s site: [www.mta.info/mnr/html/mnrbikepermit.htm](http://www.mta.info/mnr/html/mnrbikepermit.htm)

**AMTRAK.** There are currently no East Coast-based
Amtrak trains that allow bikes on board. Some do allow folding bikes as carry-on baggage. For details, visit: www.amtrak.com, search: bikes.

SHORE LINE EAST. Bikes are allowed on all Shore Line East trains that operate east of New Haven (between New Haven and New London), free of charge. Trains going west of the city (between New Haven and Grand Central) are typically subject to the same bike rules that apply to Metro North trains, i.e., bikes only on off-peak and weekend trains. For cyclists traveling as a group, call ahead to ensure availability: www.shorelineeast.com

BUS LINES. Most Peter Pan bus lines allow bikes to be stowed in the checked bag space. Greyhound buses do not allow bikes (unless they’re disassembled and boxed up). Before you book your ticket, call the company and ask about their bikes-on-board policy for your specific trip.

STREET SMART TIP: If you use public transit often for your commute, or if you regularly travel by train or bus, think about investing in a folding bike. There are generally no restrictions, no fees, and it’s less cumbersome.
Your bike is a machine. **Like any machine, your bike needs to be cared for frequently and thoroughly.** Try to catch problems early so you don’t get stranded mid-ride!

**PRE-RIDE:** Do the ABC Quick Check, a simple five-step daily routine popularized by the League of American Bicyclists. It’s an easy way to make sure your bike is rideable before taking it out.

**A is for Air.** Make sure your tires are fully inflated (the recommended tire pressure is printed on the sidewall). Check for any damage to the tire.

**B is for Brakes.** Inspect the brake pads (replace if there’s less than 1/4” of pad left), make sure the pads don’t rub into the tire and squeeze your levers to make sure the brakes are connected.

**C is for Cranks, Chain & Cassette.** See if the crank bolts are tight and the chain is in good shape. Make sure the chain doesn’t skip on the cassette.

**QUICK is for Quick Release.** Make sure your hub, brake, and seat quick releases are engaged.

**CHECK is for Check It Over.** Look for any loose, broken, or
rusty parts. Take a quick ride to make sure derailleurs and brakes are in good shape.

WHEN TO GET A TUNE-UP: With a little know-how and a couple of tools, there is some bike maintenance you can do at home. But some is best done by a professional. Bike shop employees have specialized tools, years of experience, and valuable skills. **FREE safety inspections are usually available at any of your local bike shops!**

**STREET SMART TIP:** The rule of thumb for when to get a tune-up? Either once a year or every 2,000 miles, whichever comes first. So if you average more than 5.5 miles per day (or 38.5 miles per week), you may want to think about tuning up a couple times a year.

How often you need to tune up depends on the condition of your bike, where you ride, and how often you ride. If your bike’s been in storage for a while, bring it in—especially if you’ve been storing your bike outdoors. **Don’t leave your bike out in the rain!**

Also, get a tune-up if you’ve just been in a crash. Even if it doesn’t look like anything’s wrong, make sure a pro looks over your bike for any underlying problems. (And don’t forget to replace your helmet!)
STREET SMART TIP: There are some extremely helpful maintenance demos on www.parktool.com/repair. Some of the procedures may be too tough for a novice mechanic, but if you have some repair experience and the right tools, you may be able to DIY.
If you’re in a crash (or if you witness a crash), it’s important to make an accident report and to get the driver’s info. You may not realize you’ve been injured or your bike is damaged until it’s too late to gather the info you need to make a case.

STREET SMART TIP: Of all the places on the roads you’ll encounter, most bicycle-car accidents occur in intersections, when a right-turning or left-turning car enters into a cyclist’s path. So be alert of turning cars and proceed cautiously at busy intersections.

AT THE SCENE:

1. Stay calm and non-confrontational.
2. Call 911 so an officer can take an accident report. If anyone is injured, also request an EMT.
3. By law, both you and the driver must remain at the scene until the police arrive.
4. Get the name, license plate, insurance information, phone number & address of everyone involved in the crash. Get the names and phone numbers of as
many witnesses as you can.

WHEN POLICE ARRIVE:

1. Give a detailed, accurate account of what happened for the officer’s accident report. Get the officer’s name, badge number, and precinct. Ask how you can get a copy of the final report.

2. If you’ve got a camera, take some photos of the scene, including any damages or injuries.

3. If you’re hurt, go with the EMT. Don’t delay getting medical attention—you can always get a copy of the accident report later. Ask someone to lock up your bike, or ask the police to hold onto it.

AFTER THE CRASH:

1. Get your bike thoroughly inspected at a bike shop in case there’s damage that you can’t easily see. Replace your helmet.

2. Call a lawyer if you think you need help getting a reasonable settlement for damages or medical attention.

3. Don’t talk to the driver’s insurance company until you’ve spoken to a lawyer.
New Haven has made great strides in the past twenty years in becoming a friendlier, safer place for bicyclists. But New Haven, like any urban center, is not free of crime. **Here’s some advice straight from the New Haven Police Department about how to deter bike theft.**

**PREVENTIVE DOCUMENTATION:** The best thing you can do to protect your bike is to lock it up securely or keep it indoors. But even that doesn’t guarantee complete bike security.

As soon as you buy a bike, here’s what you should do:

- Record the serial number. (See the image to the right for common serial number locations)
- Take photos of your bike.
- Do something that “personalizes” your bike, like putting on a sticker, that will make it identifiable.

These preventive steps will help police track down your bike if it ever gets taken. Without a picture, serial number, and personalized touches, it’s nearly impossible for NHPD to know what to look for and, if found, to prove it was yours in the first place.

**Register your bike.** Now that you know your serial number, you should register your bicycle in the National Bicycle Registry. When police nationwide recover stolen bikes, they check
this registry to locate its owner. Both the NHPD and the Yale Police Department will register your bike in this database for free as long as you submit the form: 
www.cityofnewhaven.com/police/forms.asp or www.yale.edu/police/crime.html

IF YOUR BIKE IS STOLEN: If your bike was taken from its parking spot, call the police department’s property theft line (203.946.6316) and give them all the info about where you last had your bike, as well as a full description (including photos, serial number, and whether or not it’s registered). If it’s an emergency or if you actually witness someone stealing a bike, call 911.
WHERE TO LOCK UP: Locking your bike thoroughly and consistently is essential to keeping your bike yours. NEVER leave your bike unattended and unlocked, not even for a minute. A thief can easily speed off on your bike in seconds.

BEST PLACES TO LOCK UP

- **Indoors.** Ideally, you should keep your bike inside your home, apartment, or office when you’re not out and about—this keeps it protected both from weather and from thieves. But keep in mind, most fire codes forbid you from leaving your bike in a public hallway.

- **Public Bike Racks.** These are commonly located outside commercial properties, on school campuses, and in downtown New Haven.

- **Parking Meters.** Bikes park for free on all New Haven parking meters! Make sure your bike is oriented parallel to the curb, and that it’s not blocking the sidewalk for pedestrians. (It’s better to lock up to a meter rather than to a sign post—with a couple of common tools, someone can remove the bolts on the sign.)

- **Parking Garages.** Many garages around the city have free indoor bike parking, sometimes even guarded by an attendant. (Some may charge for overnight parking.) Talk to an attendant near your home or office.
• **Metro Bike Station.** People working in City Hall or in nearby downtown businesses can apply to use the City’s indoor bike facilities at 200 Orange St for free. In addition to indoor bike racks, there are lockers and bike maintenance tools for you to use. Contact the City’s Department of Transportation, Traffic & Parking to apply for a key card: (203) 946-8075.

• **Your Employer or School.** Many businesses (and campuses) have indoor bike racks and locker rooms for employee bike commuters. For example, Yale-New Haven Hospital has a locker room and showers for its bike commuters. Ask an administrator, or ask neighboring companies if they have bike facilities.

• **Union Station.** Union Station is the number one destination for New Haven bicyclists, and the station tries to accommodate the demand. There’s free indoor bike parking in the glass case, next to the garage elevators (on the north side of the station). You can leave your bike overnight, but if left more than 30 days your bike will be removed. There is also ample outdoor public bike racks and meter poles at Union Station.

**STREET SMART TIP:** Don’t lock your bike on private property (like fences or stair railings) that you don’t own; the property owner has the right to remove your bike.
HOW TO LOCK UP: Bike thieves know which bikes (or bike parts) are easy to swipe, and which ones are too secured to bother with. Here’s the equipment you need to deter theft, and how to use it correctly.

**MAIN LOCK.** Buy a U-Lock or a sturdy chain lock. They’re affordable and are proven to deter bike theft. Most bikes that are stolen have cable locks or no locks at all.

**TIRE LOCK.** If you’re locking your bike for a long period of time, use a long leash to make sure both wheels are secured. Another good protective measure? Making sure all of your quick-release hardware is replaced with locking skewers. Check with your local bike shop to get the equipment and for help installing it.

**SEAT LOCK.** Either buy a short leash to secure your seat to the frame or buy locking skewers to replace your current quick-release hardware.
Secure your seat with locking skewers or with a chain lock.

If you have any unsecured accessories like a seat, headlight, or basket, lock’em up or take’em with you.

Secure your back tire with locking skewers, or wrap a long cable leash through tire and back through the U-lock.

Make sure your U-lock secures both the frame and one tire to the pole or bike rack.
New Haven has several great oases for recreational cycling. There are places that will take you on paved trails or on dirt roads, up challenging hills or on easy flat terrain. Here’s a brief breakdown of the city’s most popular cycling spots.

**EAST ROCK PARK:** This is a favorite cycling destination that attracts many people to New Haven. Entrances to the park are located on English Dr, State St, and Davis St. There is one trail that’s open to cars (Davis St), but the other ones are off-limits to motorists. You can also find some unpaved trails that are perfect for mountain bikers. Depending on which route you take, it’s around 1.0 to 1.7 miles to the park’s summit. [www.cityofnewhaven.com](http://www.cityofnewhaven.com), search: east rock

**FARMINGTON CANAL TRAIL:** This bike/pedestrian/non-motorized users-only trail currently begins near downtown

**STREET SMART TIP:** Want to request a city bike rack to be installed? Want to make a suggestion for bike lane locations? Are there unsafe riding conditions on your route? Submit a report at [www.seeclickfix.com/new-haven](http://www.seeclickfix.com/new-haven). Each post is sent to the appropriate people in City Hall, to the area’s alderperson, and to other community groups who are able to address the request.
New Haven, north of the Grove St Cemetery. There are plans to extend it from Science Park through Downtown, and connect it to Long Wharf Pier. The trail is continuous for 14 miles until Cheshire; while the trail will one day span 84 miles (ending near Northampton, Mass.), the trail past Cheshire is under construction. The ride might get bumpy at some of the unfinished parts—but if you’re looking for a long ride that’s free of cars, this is a great getaway.

www.farmingtoncanal.org

EAST COAST GREENWAY: One day, the Farmington Canal Trail will be a part of the East Coast Greenway, a trail system that could eventually run continuously from Key West, Florida to Brunswick, Maine. Approximately 20% of the greenway is currently on off-road, traffic-free trails, with another 20% currently under development. To find trails in nearby states (there are segments currently in Rhode Island, New York, and Massachusetts) or to help make the greenway happen, visit www.greenway.org/

WEST ROCK RIDGE STATE PARK: The main road is open to motor vehicle traffic as well as to road cyclists (the entrance
for this path is on Wintergreen Ave), but there are also lots of dirt side trails for mountain bikers. Depending on where you start, it’s about 1.0 - 1.3 miles to the top, where you’ll be greeted with an aerial view of New Haven’s Westville neighborhood. www.ct.gov, search: west rock

EDGECWOOD PARK: While not as spacious as either of the Rocks, Edgewood is a little easier to reach because it’s in the middle of the city. There are bike lanes on some of the roads going to the park, and there’s a 1.2-mile road that goes through the park that’s closed to motor vehicles. Because the trail isn’t inclined like the East and West Rock trails, Edgewood is a great place for younger riders to learn. However, bikes aren’t allowed on the secondary trails—you’ll just have to lock up and explore these areas by foot! www.cityofnewhaven.com, search: edgewood park

STREET SMART TIP: New Haven is rife with green spaces that are awesome recreation destinations—so even though you might not be able to bike through these areas, it’s worthwhile to bike to them, park your bike, and walk around. Take a look at the New Haven Green Map for some good adventure ideas. www.cityofnewhaven.com/maps
NEW HAVEN
College Street Cycles
252 College St.
(203) 865-2724
www.collegestreetcycles.com

The Devil’s Gear Bike Shop
151 Orange St.
(203) 773-9288
www.thedevilsgeargear.com

GREATER NEW HAVEN
Amity Bicycles, 18 Selden St.
Woodbridge, CT

Chapman’s Orange Bicycle, 284 Boston Post Rd.
Orange, CT

Cheshire Cycle & Repair, 471 West Main St.
Cheshire, CT

Tony’s Bikes & Sports, 108 Broad St.
Milford, CT

Zane’s Cycles, 330 East Main St.
Branford, CT
Getting Involved

STREET SMARTS, www.cityofnewhaven.com/streetsmarts
The focus of the Street Smarts outreach campaign is on traffic safety education, community involvement in making streets safe, and encouraging walking and cycling as safe travel modes. Visit the website to learn more about the mission, to learn how to volunteer, and to take the Safe Driver/Safe Cyclist pledges.

ELM CITY CYCLING, www.elmcitycycling.org
ECC is a New Haven-based nonprofit that actively advocates for making the city friendlier and more accessible to cyclists, pedestrians and other users of non-motorized transportation. ECC holds a monthly public meeting at City Hall (165 Church St.) the second Monday of every month at 6:00 pm. They also organize frequent group rides and Bike To Work Breakfasts.

CHAINBREAKERS, ladychainbreakers.blogspot.com
Chainbreakers is a New Haven collective that works to build a feminist bike culture in the city. The group meets once a month for a potluck and bike maintenance workshop on the second Tuesday of every month at 810 State St.

SEE CLICK FIX, www.seeclickfix.com/new-haven
Report non-emergency issues in your neighborhood (like debris in a bike lane, or a pothole on your route, or a place you would like the city to install a bike rack). Every comment is
tagged based on your description and location of the problem, and is sent to the appropriate City officials, alderperson, etc.

**BIKE WALK CONNECTICUT**, www.wecyclect.org
The organization advocates for a safer and more attractive place for walking and cycling at the state level. They’re based in West Hartford, but those living anywhere in CT can get involved with their efforts.

**NEW HAVEN SAFE STREETS COALITION**, www.newhavensafestreets.org
The coalition aims to raise awareness about traffic safety issues to promote more livable, walkable, bikeable, and economically vibrant streets for all road users.

**YALE BIKE BUDDIES**, bikebuddies.wordpress.com
Bike Buddies connects people who commute by bicycle to Yale University. New riders who want to learn how to commute get paired up with mentors; experienced riders can simply find others with whom they can enjoy the ride.

**CRITICAL MASS**, criticalmass.wikia.com/wiki/Main_Page
On the last Friday of every month at 5:30 pm, bicyclists meet at the New Haven Green to celebrate cycling and to assert cyclists’ right to the road.

**OTHERS**: Go to www.bikeleague.org > Resources > Find It. This gives you advocacy groups, cycling clubs, bike shops, classes, instructors, and events in your area.
Helpful Links

City of New Haven Department of Transportation, Traffic & Parking
www.cityofnewhaven.com/trafficparking

Yale University Transportation Options
www.yale.edu/transportationoptions

League of American Bicyclists
www.bikeleague.org

National Coalition for Complete Streets
www.completestreets.org

Bikes Belong Coalition
www.bikesbelong.org

Connecticut Department of Transportation
www.ct.gov/dot

United States Department of Transportation
www.dot.gov

Park Tool Repair Help
www.parktool.com/repair
This Smart Cycling Handbook is brought to you by Street Smarts and the City of New Haven, Department of Transportation, Traffic & Parking. The mission of Street Smarts is to make our streets friendlier toward pedestrians, cyclists and motorists through traffic safety, advocacy and education.

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Safe streets take Street Smarts.

www.cityofnewhaven.com/streetsmarts