

Bicycling Laws in Washington State -2022

RCW	Code Description
46.04.071	A Bicycle is defined as a human powered device with 2 wheels bigger than 16 inches.
46.61.050	Bicycles must obey traffic lights and stop signs (as well as all other traffic control devices)
46.61.110	Vehicles passing bicycles shall allow at least 3 feet of distance
46.61.126	Bicycles & Pedestrians must follow traffic laws
46.61.160	Bicycles cannot ride on some limited access highways
46.61.190	The Safety Stop allows cyclists to treat stop signs as yields if there is no oncoming traffic
bikes forbidden:	SR 520, I-405, I-90 (exit 0 to exit 17), I-5 (Lakewood to Marysville), parts of 18, 518, 522 & 599 and a few others.
46.61.261	A bicycle must yield to a pedestrian on a sidewalk or crosswalk.
46.61.700	Parents are responsible for kids obeying bike laws
46.61.710	Mopeds and gas powered bikes & scooters are not allowed on sidewalks or trails.
46.04.169	Electric-assist bicycles permissible with no more than 1,000 watts of power and maximum speed of 20mph with or without assist.
46.61.710	Electric-assist bicycles allowed on sidewalks and trails but maybe locally forbidden.
46.61.723	Fully electric powered bikes are not allowed on sidewalks or trails.
46.61.750	Bicyclists riding on roads must obey all traffic laws.
46.61.750	Bicyclists may be ticketed for violating traffic laws
46.61.750	Traffic laws apply on bicycle trails too.
46.61.755	Bicycles have all the same RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES as cars.
46.61.755	A bicycle is a vehicle on the road or a pedestrian on the sidewalk
46.61.758	Must signal turns with left hand (right=up, left=out, stop=down). But Right hand signal for right turn is an acceptable substitute.
46.61.760	Only one person per bicycle seat.
46.61.765	Clinging to vehicles is illegal
46.61.770	Ride as far to the right as is safe and practical except when turning or passing.
46.61.770	Bicycles are not required to use a bike lane or shoulder.
46.61.770	Bicycles can and should use turn lanes
46.61.770	Bicycles can ride on the left (with the traffic flow) on one way streets.
46.61.770	Can ride 2 abreast, not more.
46.61.770	Can legally take the lane if necessary.
46.61.775	Must have at least one hand on the handlebars at all times
46.61.775	Cannot ride carrying anything with both hands while riding.
46.61.780	Bikes must have brakes
46.61.780	At night, bikes must have white light on front, red reflector on the back.
46.61.780	Steady or flashing red rear light may be used in addition to the reflector.
46.61.790	Legal to bicycle drunk, but police may impound bicycle if you are too drunk.
47.36.025	New and updated traffic signals must detect bicycles.

Some state laws for cars which are useful for bicyclists to know

RCW	Code Description
46.04.197	A Highway is defined as the width of every public roadway between property lines.
46.04.500	A Roadway is defined as a highway excluding sidewalk & shoulder.
46.04.670	A Vehicle is defined as a device capable of being moved upon a public highway.
46.04.670	Bicycles are defined as vehicles.
46.61.115(b)	It is OK to pass cars on the right if safe & there's space for bicycle traffic
46.61.125(1)(d)	Car must yield to oncoming bicycle if passing.
46.61.135(3)	Illegal to go left around traffic circles.
46.61.185	Vehicle turning left must yield to all oncoming vehicles going straight
46.61.205	A car on a private road or driveway must yield to all vehicles approaching.
46.61.235	Illegal to pass a car stopped for a pedestrian or bicycle.
46.61.261	Car must yield to bicycle on sidewalk
46.61.400	Max speed: 25 MPH on city streets, 50 on county roads, 60 on state highways
46.61.425	May go slow & impede traffic if necessary for safety.
46.61.425	May exceed speed limit briefly to pass slow vehicle.
46.61.427	Must pull out where safe if five or more vehicles delayed on a 2 lane hwy.
46.61.445	Due care is required!
46.61.500	Driving in willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property
46.61.606	Cars can't drive on sidewalk
46.61.620	Check before opening car door. Don't leave car door open.
46.61.667	Driver may not hold a cellphone to their ear. (effective Jul 1 08)
46.61.668	Driver may not send, read or write text message except in emergency.
46.61.670	Illegal for car to drive with 2 or 4 wheels off pavement.