

What you can do to improve traffic safety in Arlington

1. *When you drive*

Each year, there are hundreds of crashes involving motor vehicles in Arlington.

Be observant and considerate: Pay attention to your driving. Stop to use your cell phone. Watch for pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles.

Slow Down: The speed limit is 30 mph in most of Arlington. State law (M.G.L Ch. 90, section 17) calls for motorists to drive at a “reasonable and proper” speed. In many cases, this is less than the posted speed limit.

Obey Signs and Traffic Signals

Share the Road with Pedestrians

- Yield to pedestrians in marked crosswalks (IT IS THE LAW).
- When entering or exiting a driveway, yield to pedestrians on the sidewalk.
- When someone else is stopped on a multi-lane road, don’t pass him or her until you have made sure they have not stopped for a pedestrian.

Share the Road with Cyclists

According to State law (M.G.L Chapter 85, section 11B), cyclists have the same right to use Arlington streets as do motorists.

- When turning left, check carefully for, and yield to, all opposing traffic, including cyclists
- Don’t cut across a cyclist’s path to turn right
- Check for approaching cyclists before opening your car door.

2. *When you walk*

By walking instead of driving, you are helping to reduce Arlington’s traffic and parking congestion. Thank you!

Look Carefully before Entering the Roadway: This applies to both Arlington streets and the Minuteman Bikeway. Motorists and cyclists can’t stop instantaneously. Town bylaws require pedestrians to yield to drivers (both motorists and cyclists) when entering a roadway at a location other than a marked crosswalk.

Be Visible when Walking at Night: Motorists can’t see as well as you think they can. The use of light-colored (or better yet, reflective) clothing will make you much more visible and safer.

3. When you ride

By riding a bike instead of driving, you are helping to reduce Arlington's traffic and parking congestion. Thank you!

Obey Traffic Laws: Under State law, with very few exceptions, cyclists are expected to obey the same laws as motorists (M.G.L Chapter 85, section 11B). This includes yielding to pedestrians in marked crosswalks, and observing traffic signals.

Learn Proper Riding Technique: There is more to riding a bike safely in traffic than what you may have learned when you were six years old. Proper riding technique includes riding on the right side of the road (with traffic), using a headlamp at night, and staying a safe distance from hazards such as opening car doors. A properly fitted helmet will help prevent serious head injury in case of a fall.

Other resources

Rules of the Road:

State traffic law is primarily in Chapters 89 and 90 of Massachusetts General Laws. Laws pertaining specifically to cyclists are primarily in Chapter 85, section 11B.

Arlington Traffic Rules:

<http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/town/pd/trafficrules/trafficrules.htm>

Minuteman Bikeway Guidelines:

<http://www.minutemanbikeway.org/Pages/guidelines.html>

On-Street Bicycling:

“Don't be a Road Hog/Don't be a Road Warrior,” City of Boston brochures, directed to motorists and cyclists, on sharing the road.

<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/transportation/roadhog.asp>,

<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/transportation/roadwarrior.asp>

Street Smarts, by John Allen. A tutorial directed to cyclists. Available from Rubel Bikemaps and in Robbins Library. Online version at

<http://www.bikexpert.com/streetsmarts/index.htm>

Organizations in Arlington:

Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee: <http://www.abac.arlington.ma.us>

Walking in Arlington: <http://www.walkinginarlington.org>

Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee: <http://www.tac.arlington.ma.us>