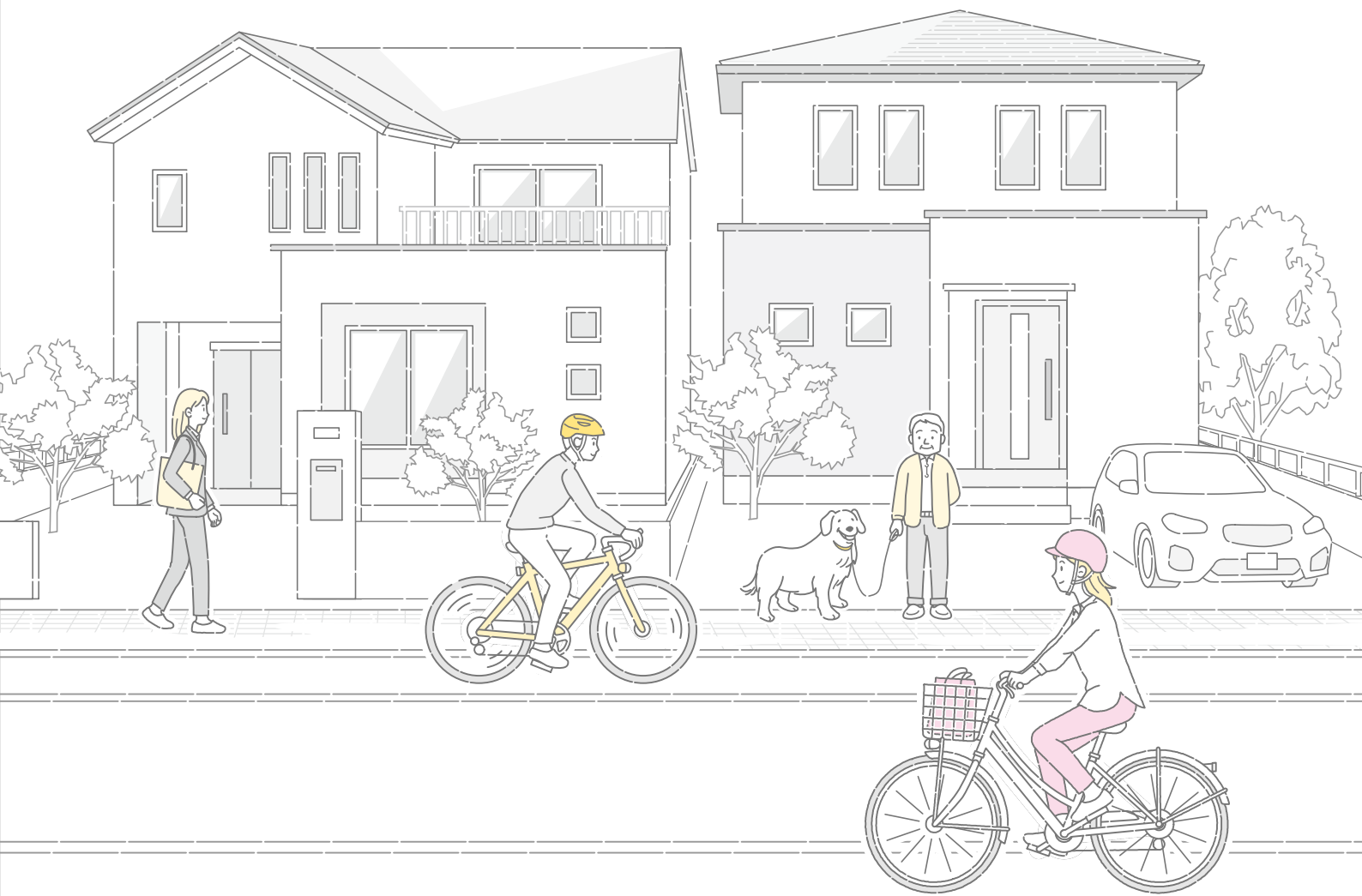


- Ride your bicycle safely to prevent traffic accidents -

Understand the rules  
in your daily life.



**Kumamoto City × Kumamoto Prefectural Police**



Download from here ▲

# For riding a bicycle

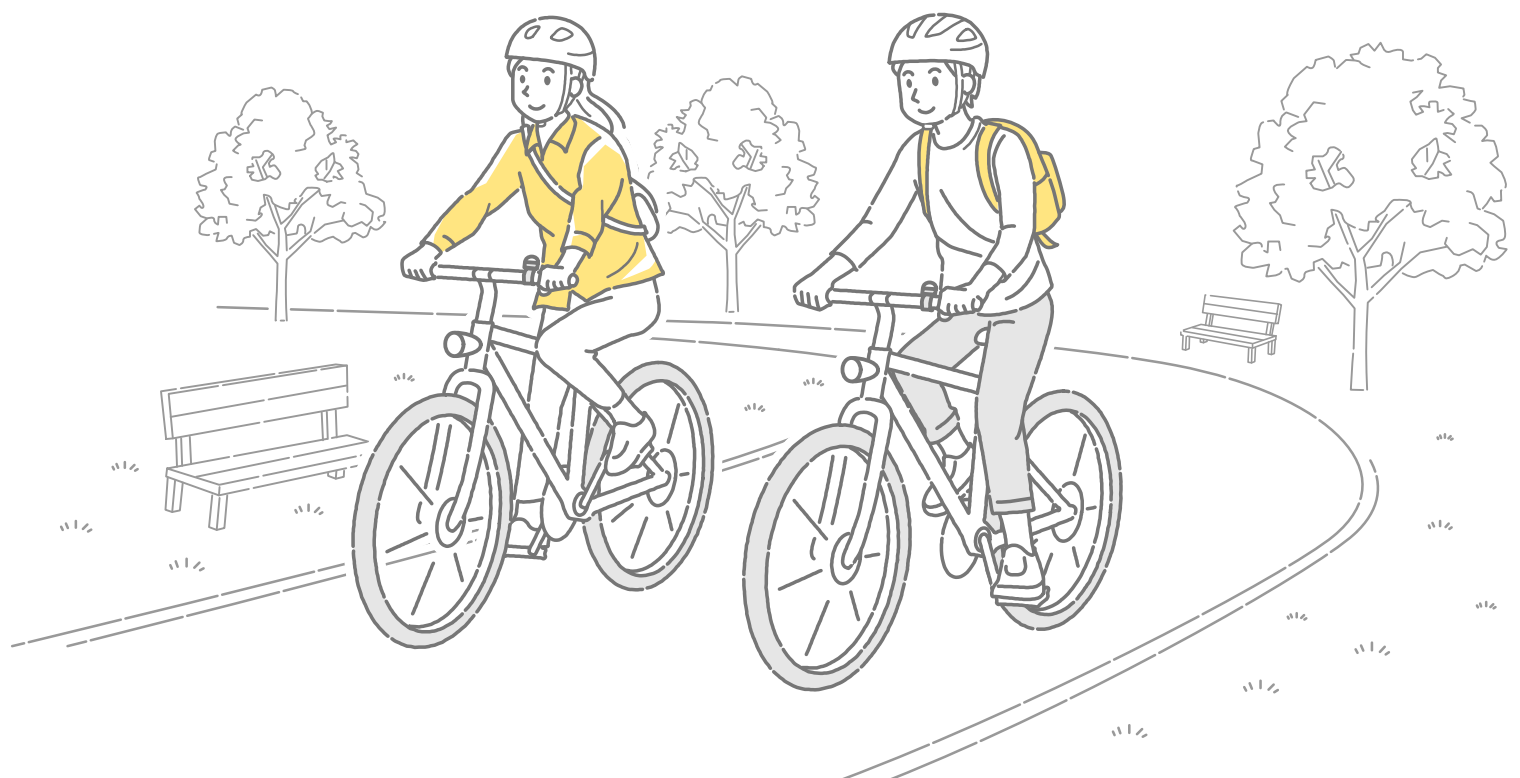
Unlike cars, riding a bicycle does not require a license, so bicycles are used by everyone from children to the elderly throughout Kumamoto City as an easy means of transportation. In recent years, use of bicycles has gained worldwide attention not only as a means of transportation, but also as a contributor to quality of life (QOL)\*.

Bicycles are an environment-friendly means of transportation that does not emit CO2 emissions. Bicycles also play a role in promoting a healthy lifestyle and building community togetherness. The use of sport-type bicycles and shared bicycles is also expanding.

However, while bicycle use is expanding, bicycle traffic etiquette and traffic accidents involving bicycles remain major concerns. In fact, according to National Police Agency statistics, while the number of overall traffic accidents has been decreasing year by year, the number of traffic accidents involving bicycles has remained around the same level.

This booklet, in cooperation with the Kumamoto Prefectural Police, summarizes the basic rules for riding bicycles safely. Please read this booklet thoroughly and use it not only to protect yourself from traffic accidents, but also to ensure your family and people around you ride bicycles safely and comfortably.

\*Quality of Life (QOL) ... An index that expresses the degree of satisfaction in living a life, and a concept that measures whether each day is fulfilling and life is both physically and mentally fulfilling

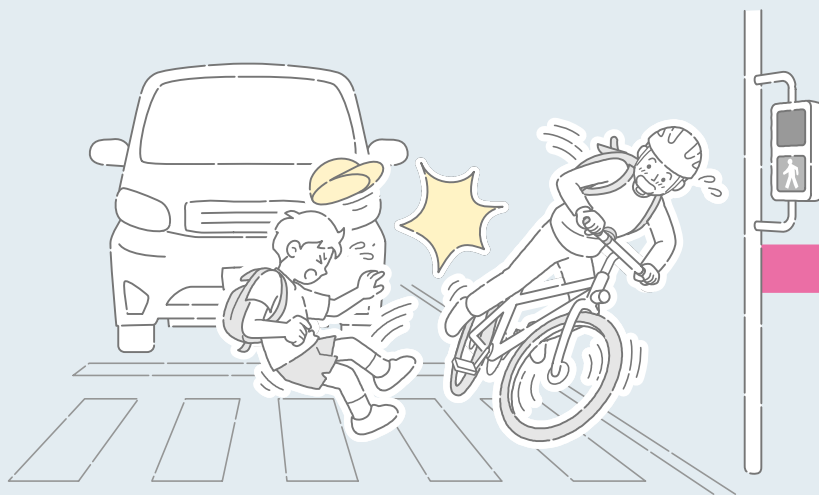
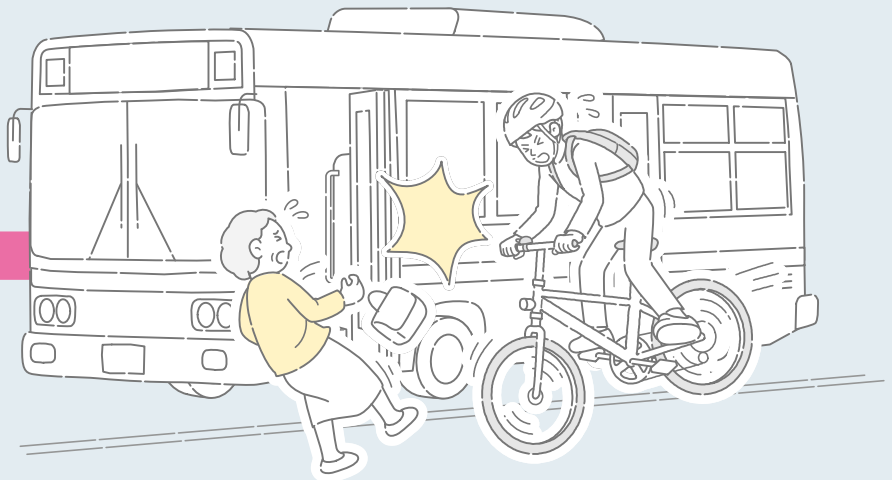


# Traffic Accident Cases

The following are actual traffic accidents that have occurred in Kumamoto Prefecture. If traffic rules had been correctly followed, these traffic accidents could have been prevented.

## case.1 [Near a bus stop]

A bicyclist riding on a sidewalk collided with a bus passenger just getting off a bus.

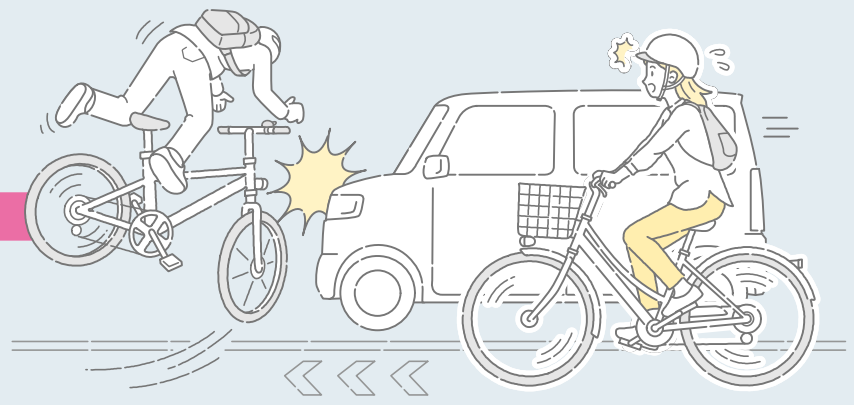


## case.2 [At a crosswalk]

A bicyclist riding through a narrow space next to a car that had stopped in front of a crosswalk collided with a pedestrian who was crossing the road.

## case.3 [Straight road]

A bicyclist riding on the right-hand side of a road collided with a car head-on.



## Action in case of a traffic accident

Even if it is a minor traffic accident, always first report it to the police. Even if you don't notice it immediately after an accident, you may discover your physical condition has deteriorated later on. If the accident is not reported to the police, proof of the accident will not be issued and the accident may not be covered by insurance, etc.

First-aid  
for the injured person

Ensure safety at a traffic  
accident site

Report to the police  
(dial 110)

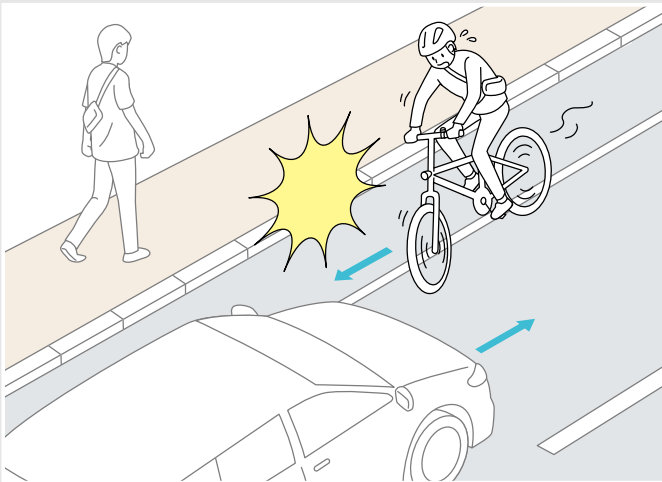
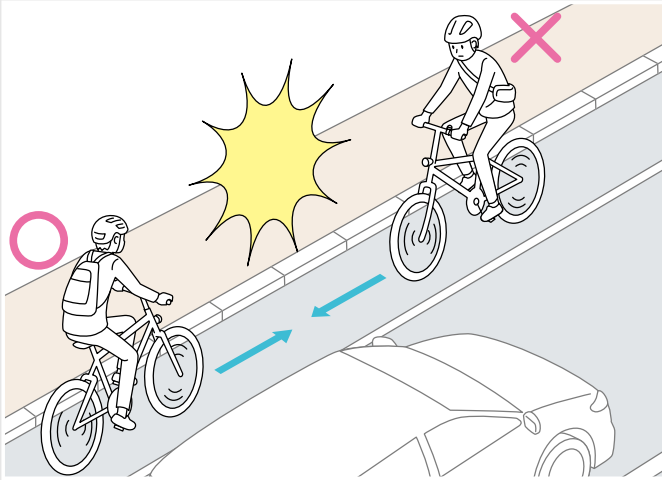
Obtain and confirm  
contact information  
(Name, address,  
phone number)

Road Traffic Act, Article 72 (Failure to take necessary action) Imprisonment for up to one year or a fine of up to 100,000 yen

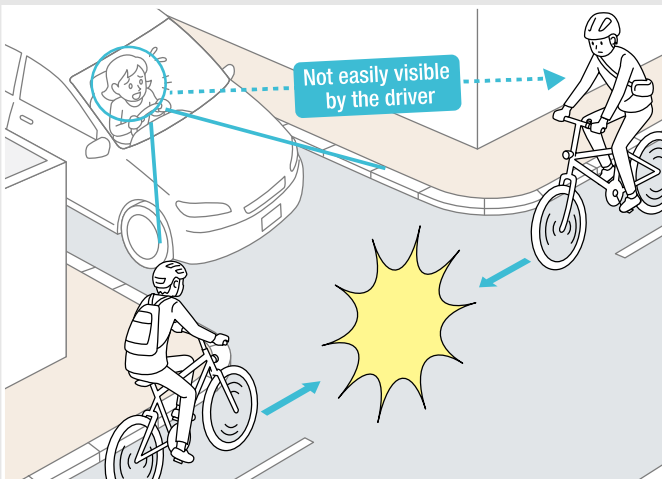
# Ride on the left-hand side of a road

As a general rule, you must ride a bicycle on the left-hand side of a road.

Riding on the right-hand side of a road creates the risk of colliding with an approaching car head-on.



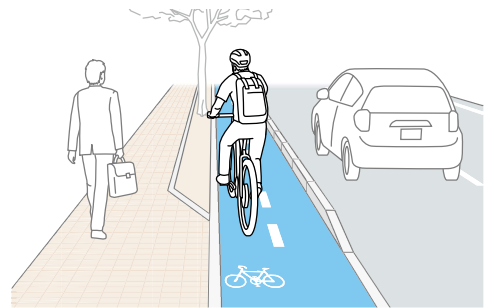
Riding on the right-hand side of a road may not be noticed in time by a driver, making it much more likely that you will be involved in a traffic accident.



The left-hand side of a road means “the left edge of a road other than the sidewalk, road shoulder, etc.” When riding on a road with no sidewalk, carefully watch out for pedestrians as they will also be walking on that road. In recent years, roads with colored indications and roads with symbol markings, such as those shown below, have been established.

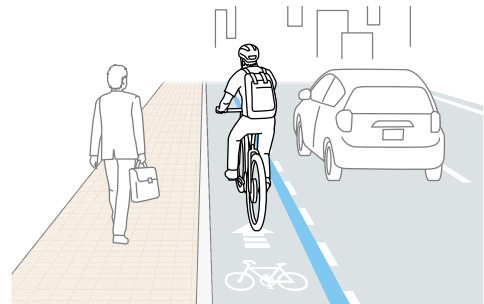
## Bicycle path

The part of a road that has been designated from the sidewalk and road by a curb or other structure and that is only available for bicycles. If there is a bicycle path, bicyclists must ride on the bicycle path.



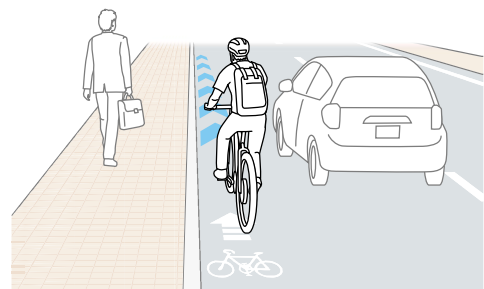
## Lane designated for use by bicycles (bicycle lane)

The lane of a road that has been designated from the sidewalk and road with road markings, etc., and that is only available for bicycles. Cars and motorcycles are not permitted to pass through.

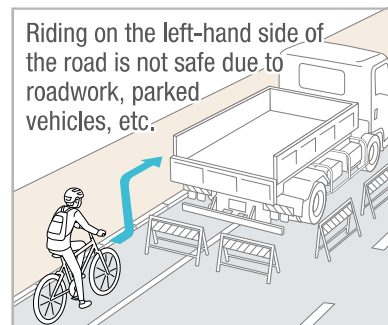
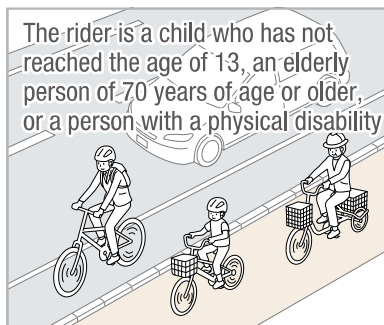


## Arrow markings (arrow type road surface markings)

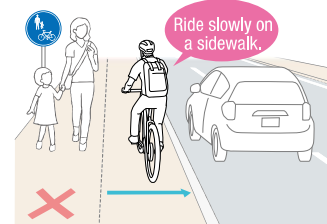
Markings to indicate the location of bicycle traffic and the direction of travel. This is not designated for use by bicycles only, so watch out for cars when passing through.



Riding on a sidewalk is permitted in the following exceptional cases.



When riding on a sidewalk, give priority to pedestrians and ride slowly on the part closer to the road.



## How to cross an intersection

When riding on a road, obey traffic lights for cars, and when riding on a sidewalk, obey traffic lights for pedestrians.

If there is a bicycle crossing lane, bicyclists on the road must ride in that crossing lane.

### When turning right at an intersection

**Intersection without traffic lights**

Cross to the other side while riding on the left-hand side of the road, and then turn to the right after ensuring safety.

**Intersection with traffic lights**

Cross to the other side at the first traffic light, and cross once again at the second traffic light. (Two-stage right turn)

### Intersection with designated traffic lights for pedestrians and bicycles

**With designated traffic lights**

Obey designated traffic lights for pedestrians and bicycles, regardless of whether on the sidewalk or road.

**Without designated traffic lights**

Those on the sidewalk must obey traffic lights for pedestrians and those on the road must obey traffic lights for cars.

In Kumamoto City, like other cities, many traffic accidents occur at intersections. Pay close attention to nearby pedestrians and cars and take care to ensure safety while riding.

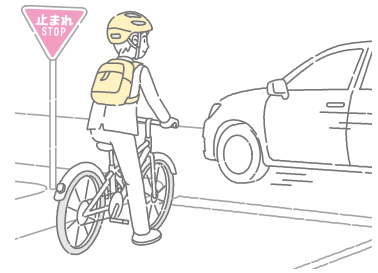
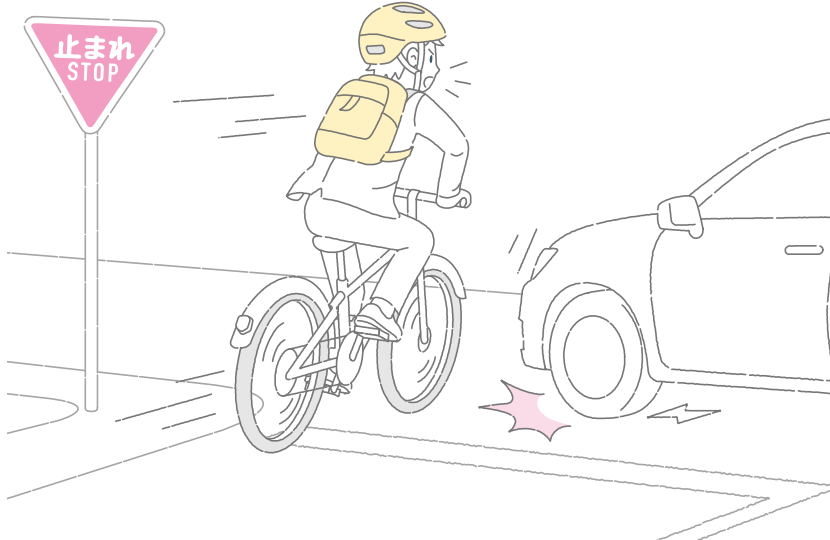
The police are strengthening their enforcement efforts in bicycle traffic instruction and patrol!

Kumamoto Prefectural Police's mascot "YUPPI"





# Do the following riding habits apply to you?



## Fail to stop briefly

Bicycles and cars are in the same group.  
You are obligated to stop.

[Road Traffic Act, Article 43]  
Imprisonment for up to three months or  
a fine of up to 50,000 yen



## Distracted riding

Riding while using a smartphone or earphones, or holding an umbrella is also dangerous.

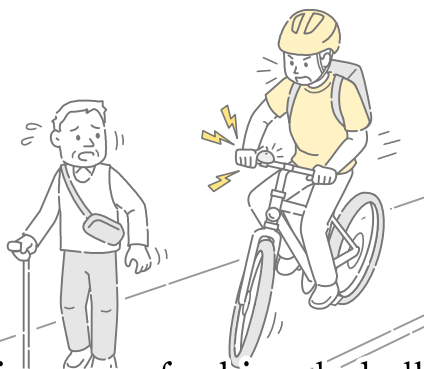
[Road Traffic Act, Article 71]  
Fine of up to 50,000 yen  
[Kumamoto Prefectural Road Traffic Regulations, Article 11]



## Failure to turn on bicycle light

A lack of visibility from cars increases the risk of being involved in a traffic accident. An inability to visually perceive the road environment creates extreme danger.

[Road Traffic Act, Article 52]  
Fine of up to 50,000 yen  
[Kumamoto Prefectural Road Traffic Regulations, Article 12]



## Abusive use of a bicycle bell

Ring a bicycle bell indiscriminately violates the Road Traffic Act. When riding on a sidewalk, priority must be given to pedestrians and safe speeds must be used for riding.

[Road Traffic Act, Article 54]  
Fine or petty fine of up to 20,000 yen

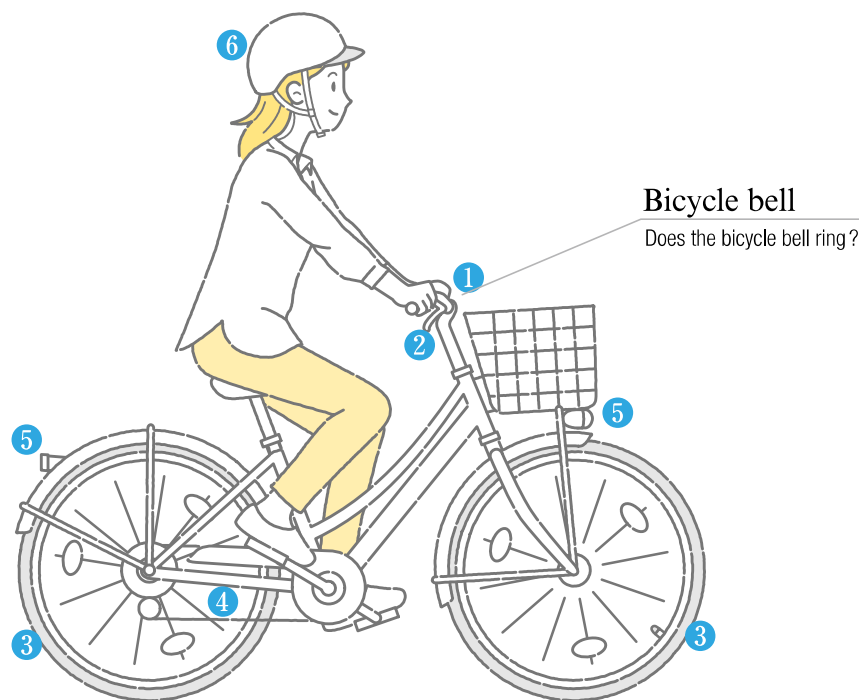


## Drink and ride

Like cars, drinking and riding is prohibited. Walk the bicycle.

(Drunken riding)  
[Road Traffic Act, Article 65]  
Imprisonment for up to five years or a fine of up to 1,000,000 yen

# Inspection points



## 1 Handlebar

Does the handlebar wobble?  
Are the grips loose?

## 2 Brakes

Do the front and rear brakes work well?  
Do the levers have a certain amount of play (room for movement)?  
Do the brakes squeak?

## 3 Tires

Do the tires have sufficient air?  
Has the rubber deteriorated?  
Is there any foreign object such as wire stuck on them?

## 4 Chain

Does the chain have rust on it or lack lubrication?  
Has the chain stretched so that it will easily come off?

## 5 Lights

Attach not only a headlight, but also a taillight or reflector to enhance visibility from behind.

● **Headlight** ... The color of the light must be white or pale yellow, and the light must have the function of making it possible to notice an obstacle to traffic located at 10 meters ahead at night.

● **Taillight** ... The color of the light must be orange or red and the light must have the function of making it possible to notice the light from 100 meters behind at night (taillight is not required if an orange or red reflector is attached to the rear).

● **Reflector** ... Attach it in a position visible from behind, and also from the front and sides (such as spokes). Regularly check that reflectors have not deteriorated.

## 6 Helmet

Have you forgotten to wear a helmet?  
Is the chin strap loose?

Check that there is no wobbling and that there are no loose screws.  
Have your bicycle inspected once a year by a bicycle safety maintenance shop  
(Jitensha Anzen Seibiten).

Ordinances of Kumamoto Prefecture and Kumamoto City(\*) obligate bicyclists to purchase liability insurance, etc.  
There are various types of insurance, so please purchase insurance that suits you and your family's needs.

TS Mark insurance	This is insurance for bicycles that have been inspected by a bicycle safety maintenance mechanic. The period of validity is one year, however, if a bicycle is inspected and maintained by a safety maintenance mechanic, the insurance may be renewed.
Personal liability insurance	This is insurance attached with a special clause to voluntary insurance such as automobile insurance and fire insurance
Bicycle insurance	Insurance designated specifically for bicycle accidents

Participation requirements and coverage vary depending on the type of insurance.  
Please contact your insurance company for more information.

\*Kumamoto Prefectural Ordinance on Promotion of Safe and Correct Use of Bicycles / Kumamoto Municipal Ordinance on Safe Use of Bicycles and Parking Measures

# Wear your helmet in the correct manner

Because a municipal ordinance and the revised Road Traffic Act are now in effect, all riders, regardless of age, must make an effort to wear a helmet.

Wearing a helmet correctly greatly reduces fatality rates in traffic accidents.

There are many kinds of helmets on the market, so why not find one that you like?

## Number of traffic accidents involving a bicycle

In Kumamoto City, a few hundred bicycle accidents occur annually.

(Number of accidents / year)

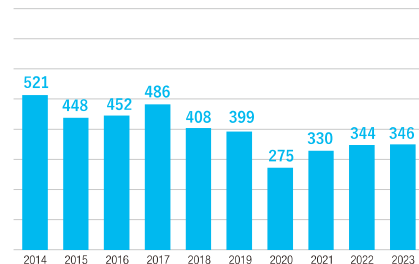
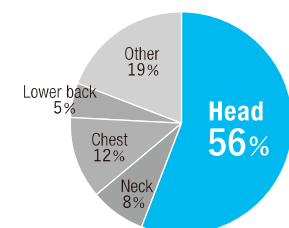


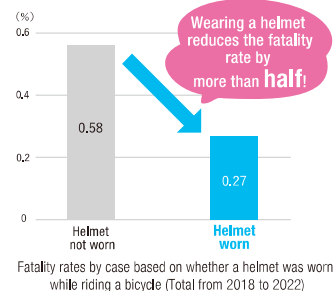
Chart Trends in the number of traffic accidents involving bicycles in Kumamoto City  
Source: Kumamoto Prefectural Police

## Importance of wearing a helmet

The part of the body for which a fatal injury is most likely to occur at the time of a bicycle accident is the head. According to data, wearing a helmet reduces the fatality rate by half.



Main parts of the body for which a fatal injury occurred while riding a bicycle (part for which a fatal injury occurred)  
(Total from 2018 to 2022) Source: "National Police Agency's website"



Fatality rates by case based on whether a helmet was worn while riding a bicycle (Total from 2018 to 2022)

## How to wear a helmet correctly



### ① Correct angle for wearing a helmet

In order for a helmet to perform its intended function, it must be worn at the correct angle.



### ② Evenness left and right

Adjust the angle so that the helmet rim will sit just above your eyebrows (make sure your forehead is not exposed). Also check that it is not tilted to the right or left.



### ③ Adjustment of the chin strap

Adjust the length of the chin strap with only enough room for one or two fingers between the chin and the strap. Fasten the buckle firmly.



### ④ Final check

Make sure that the strap is not loose or twisted around the ears.



## Municipal bicycle parking lots for use

Bicycles cannot be parked in municipal bicycle parking lots for seven or more consecutive days. If a bicycle is found to have been parked for seven or more consecutive days, it will be removed (cleared away) to a storage location.

Please obey rules when using a municipal bicycle parking lot.

### ■ Main municipal bicycle parking lots

Kumamoto Station, Kami-Kumamoto Station, Nishi-Kumamoto Station, Shin-Suizenji Station, Tokaigakuen-Mae Station, Musashizuka Station, and Kengun (shopping street, electrical substation)

For other municipal bicycle parking lots, please see the city website.



## Five rules for safe bicycle riding

- ① As a general rule, ride on the left-hand side.  
Sidewalks are for exceptional cases.  
Priority must be given to pedestrians.
- ② Obey traffic lights and stop as required at intersections, and check for safety.
- ③ Make sure to keep your bicycle light on at night.
- ④ Do not drink and ride.
- ⑤ Wear a helmet.



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