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 For explanation of the law rating system, see <http://bikelaws.org/>

Rating is based on changes in H.B. 389, effective on 15 Sep 2006.  
 Previous rating was D

## Rating of Ohio Bicycle Traffic Laws with reform bill

**Ohio Bicycle Traffic Laws earn a rating of B (87 points).**

Note: A bicycle IS defined as a vehicle in Ohio.

A: 95 to 100 points (93-94 is A-, over 100 is A+)  
 B: 81 to 90 points (91-92 is B+, 79-80 is B-)  
 C: 67 to 76 points (77-78 is C+, 65-66 is C-)  
 D: 53 to 62 points (63-64 is D+, 51-52 is D-)  
 F: 39 to 48 points (49-50 is F+, below 37 points is F-)

Traffic Law Defects	
	Mandates riding wrong way (Automatic failing score) [-100]
	Mandates riding on sidewalk (creates failing score) [-80]
	Prohibits bicycles from all main streets (a “stealth” sidewalk law) [-80]
	Lower deduction if prohibition applies only where speed limit is above 50 mph [-30]
	Lower deduction if engineering study, alternate route & signs reqd. [-30]
	Mandates riding on sidewalk only for under age 16 [-30]
	Mandates riding on sidepath, shoulder or bike lane [-40]
	Lower deduction if applies only where sidepath is “usable” and signed [-25]
	Restriction only for under age 16 [-25]
	Lower deduction if includes UVC “far right” type exceptions [-20]
	Lower deduction if also includes CA “right turn authorized” exceptions [-15]
<b>-1</b>	Unlimited local “regulation of the operation of bicycles” (non-uniform laws) [-30]
	Lower deduction if allows only local sidepath ordinance. [-20]
	Allows local bicycle ban only on major highway [-15]
	Local authorities may mandate registration (rather than voluntary program) [-1]
	<b>§ 4511.07 Local traffic regulations.</b>
	(A) Sections 4511.01 to 4511.78, 4511.99, and 4513.01 to 4513.37 of the Revised Code do not prevent local authorities from carrying out the following activities with respect to streets and highways under their jurisdiction and within the reasonable exercise of the police power:
	<b>(8) Regulating the operation of bicycles; provided that no such regulation shall be fundamentally inconsistent with the uniform rules of the road prescribed by this chapter and that no such regulation shall prohibit the use of bicycles on any public street or highway except as provided in section 4511.051 of the Revised Code;</b> [Note: 4511.051 refers to freeways.]
	<b>Sec. 4511.711. (A)</b> No person shall drive any vehicle, other than a bicycle, upon a sidewalk or sidewalk area except upon a permanent or duly authorized temporary driveway. <b>Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting local authorities from regulating the operation of bicycles within their respective jurisdictions, except that no local authority may require that bicycles be operated on sidewalks.</b>
	“Shall ride within 3 feet of right edge of road” (or similar unsafe rule) [-25]

-10	<p>“Shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb”, with no exceptions [-20]  Reduced deduction (typically 10 pts) if includes all UVC exceptions or strong explanatory language in law or drivers’ manual to discourage misinterpretation “as far right as possible”</p> <p>The phrase” as close as practicable” in 11-1205 below is often misinterpreted by police as requiring riding as close as POSSIBLE to the edge of the road. Although the usual position of bicycles is near the right edge of the road, there are situations where this is unsafe and unreasonable. This provision encourages the novice cyclist's mistake of “hugging the curb”.</p> <p><b>§ 4511.55 Riding bicycles; motorcycles abreast.</b></p> <p>(A) Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway <b>shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable</b> obeying all traffic rules applicable to vehicles and exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction.</p> <p>This section does not require a person operating a bicycle to ride at the edge of the roadway when it is unreasonable or unsafe to do so. Conditions that may require riding away from the edge of the roadway include when necessary to avoid fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, surface hazards, or if it otherwise is unsafe or impracticable to do so, including if the lane is too narrow for the bicycle and an overtaking vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane.</p>
	<p>Mandatory helmet law that includes adult cyclists [-8]  Lower deduction if applies only to children under 12 [-3]  Additional deduction if law lacks strong “contributory negligence” exclusion [-10]</p>
	<p>Prohibits normal vehicular left turn [-10]</p>
	<p>“Shall ride single file” (no exceptions) [-10]  Lower deduction depending on exceptions [-5]</p>
	<p><b>Motor</b> vehicle restrictions that should not apply to bicycles: [up to -5]  (following too closely, racing, parking lights, tire tread depth, etc.)</p>
	<p>Irresponsible brake requirements (skid braked wheel) [-3]</p>
	<p>“Nuisance” safety equipment required (bell, front, wheel &amp; pedal reflectors, etc) [-2]</p>
	<p>Right-arm right turn signal not authorized [-2]  Unreasonable turn or stop signal requirement (continuous, or even if not safe) [-2]</p>
	<p>Authorizes bicycle-specific traffic control devices [-2]</p>
-1	<p>Lacks provision allowing bicycle access to freeway shoulders [-1]</p> <p><b>§ 4511.051 Prohibitions on use of freeways.</b></p> <p>No person, unless otherwise directed by a police officer, shall:</p> <p>(B) Occupy <b>any space within the limits of the right-of-way of a freeway, with:</b> an animal-drawn vehicle; a ridden or led animal; herded animals; a pushcart; <b>a bicycle</b>, except on a facility that is separated from the roadway and shoulders of the freeway and is designed and appropriately marked for bicycle use; a bicycle with motor attached; a motor driven cycle with a motor which produces not to exceed five brake horsepower; an agricultural tractor; farm machinery; except in the performance of public works or official duties.</p>
	<p>Slow vehicle “as close as practicable to the right-hand curb” [-1]  The provision below is often misunderstood to require driving as far right as possible and it fails to consider destination lane positioning (a driver not turning right should not be in a right turn lane).</p>

	Missing language “intent is to facilitate overtaking” in slow veh. rule	[-1]
	Other excessive or unnecessary regulation	[?]
<b>-2</b>	<b>Minor Defects (scored as a group)</b>	
<b>Y</b>	Lacks provision allowing preparing for left turn early	
	Lacks exception to no-passing zone rule for passing of slow vehicles	
	Lacks language prohibiting “points” for bicycle violations	
<b>Y</b>	“Give way to the right on audible signal”	
	Lacks cycling skills course for violators	
<b>Y</b>	Police without special training authorized to inspect bicycles	
	Lacks child seat or trailer language or allows child in backpack	
	Lacks language authorizing additional lights or reflectors	
<b>Y</b>	Lacks language saying riding two abreast does not impede traffic if no conflicting traffic	
<b>Y</b>	Poor definition of bicycle (not recognizing recumbents or trikes) (G) "Bicycle" means every device, other than a tricycle designed solely for use as a play vehicle by a child, propelled solely by human power upon which any person may ride having either two tandem wheels, or one wheel in the front and two wheels in the rear, <b>any of which is more than fourteen inches in diameter.</b>	
<b>Positive Factors (points added)</b>		
	Permits <u>and</u> requires motorists to merge into a bike lane before turning.	[+2]
<b>+1</b>	Expressly permits but does not require cycling on (non-freeway) shoulders.	[+1]
	Local authorities may reduce the fine for bicycling offenses	[+2]
	Language to discourage unsafe sidewalk riding	[+2]
	Other positive factors	[?]

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