

E-Bikes: Is Your Child Ready?



SERIOUS
ABOUT
SAFETY
MDOT
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

Check Your Child

AGE CHECK: Are they 12+?

Under 12 years: E-bikes are not recommended.

12-15 years: Old enough for a Class 1 or 2 e-bike, but not Class 3.

SKILL CHECK: Can they ride a regular bike confidently and brake smoothly?

JUDGMENT CHECK: Will they follow the rules of the road/trail and avoid risky choices?

Example: speeding, using their phone (texting/calling/scrolling), or friends pushing limits

EQUIPMENT CHECK: Helmets are required for all riders under 16 and are recommended for everyone. Does your child's helmet have a CPSC, ASTM, or MIPS bicycle helmet safety label?

BIKE CHECK: Does the e-bike fit them (reach brakes, feet stable, easy control)? Does the e-bike have a class rating (1,2, or 3) sticker and a UL battery rating sticker?



For more info,
scan here.

Check the Environment

TRAFFIC CHECK: Do they consistently follow road rules and watch for cars?

ROUTE CHECK: Have you planned a route with low traffic or bike lanes? Can your child follow the route without getting lost?

POLICY CHECK: Is your child old enough to ride in your community (some have age restrictions by class of e-bike)? Does your community have laws restricting e-bikes on sidewalks, bike paths, or roads?

Check Your Household

RULES CHECK: Have you set clear family rules before the first ride?

CHARGING CHECK: Does your child know where they can safely charge their e-bike battery? Not in their room, not charging overnight.

INSURANCE CHECK: Will you be covered if your child is in a crash? Many homeowners policies require a special e-bike policy to cover injury to others and property damage.

Family e-Bike Agreement

We agree that riding an e-bike is a privilege that comes with added responsibility. E-bikes are faster, heavier, and more difficult to ride than regular bikes. They are dangerous to others who cannot hear you as you approach or who may have mobility issues that prevent them from moving out of your way quickly. Pets on leashes may get frightened and even pull away from their owners and get in your path. We agree to the rules below to help keep everyone safer.

Rider Agreement

I, _____, will:

1. Ride my e-bike carefully and cautiously and be courteous to other people walking, biking, driving, or sharing space with me at all times.
2. Wear my helmet every ride.
3. Ride only the e-bike my parent/caregiver approves for me.
4. Follow signs, rules, and family agreements about where I can ride my e-bike and ride only in places my parent/caregiver and I have agreed on.
5. Not alter the max speed of the e-bike.
6. Obey traffic rules, traffic lights, stop signs, other street signs, and road markings.
7. Watch carefully for cars, driveways, and people walking or biking nearby.
8. Ride without distractions by keeping my phone and headphones away and staying focused on the road.
9. Stay within the speed limit and ride at a safe speed for the place I am riding, even if the e-bike can go faster.
10. Not carry passengers if my bike is not designed for it.
11. Charge the battery safely and use only the correct charger in an agreed upon location: _____.
12. Tell my parent/caregiver right away if the e-bike is damaged, not working correctly, or if I crash or almost crash.
13. Use good judgment and not take risks to impress friends or keep up with others.
14. Take care of the e-bike and lock it when I leave it.
15. Complete my family responsibilities listed here: _____.

Parent/Caregiver Agreement

I, _____, agree that I/we will:

1. Choose an e-bike that fits my child's age, size, skill, and maturity.
2. Make sure my child has a properly fitting, speed-rated helmet, rated for e-bike use.
3. Make sure my child can ride a conventional (foot-powered) bike safely and understands the rules of the road before considering an e-bike.
4. Teach and practice the basics with my child before independent riding, including starting, stopping, turning, braking, and scanning for traffic.
5. Set clear rules for where, when, and with whom my child may ride.
6. Talk with my child about safe speed, distractions, passengers, and peer pressure.
7. Review local e-bike laws and trail or road rules with my child.
8. Periodically check that the e-bike is in safe working condition and that charging is done safely.
9. Keep communication open so my child feels comfortable telling me about mistakes, close calls, or safety concerns.

Signatures

By signing below, we agree to follow this plan and talk openly about safety.

Rider Signature

Date

Parent/Caregiver Signature

Date

If I, _____, break this agreement, I will lose the privilege of riding my e-bike for _____ weeks
and _____ (any other penalties).