

Cyclists

ROAD SAFETY FACTSHEETS / ALL ROAD USERS

Who is a cyclist?

A cyclist is anyone riding a pedal-powered bicycle on a public road, shared path, or cycling infrastructure. This includes recreational riders, commuters, and children cycling to school. Cyclists are among the most vulnerable road users, with no structural protection in the event of a crash.

Who is most at risk?



Older adults (60+)

Cyclist fatalities among those aged 60+ have increased by 3.3% annually. Older riders are more physically vulnerable and are increasingly involved in single-vehicle crashes.



Children (0–16)

Children have the highest population-standardised rate of cycling hospitalisations. Limited road awareness and unpredictable behaviour increase risk near traffic.

Cyclist safety tips

- Always wear a fitted, approved helmet.** This is the law in Australia. A helmet significantly reduces the risk of serious head injury in any crash.
- Obey all traffic signals and road rules.** Cyclists have the same obligations as other road users at intersections and traffic lights.
- Use hand signals** to indicate turns and stops, giving drivers advance notice of your intentions.
- Use dedicated bike lanes** wherever available. When riding on the road, ride as far left as is safe and predictable.
- Be seen.** Wear bright or high-visibility clothing. Use a front white light and rear red light, required by law after dark and recommended at all times.
- Stay alert at intersections,** which are the most common locations for cyclist-vehicle collisions. Make eye contact with drivers before proceeding.
- Children should be supervised near traffic** and taught safe road behaviour early, including looking both ways and using pedestrian crossings.

Why cyclist safety matters



Cyclists account for 17% of all road hospitalisations in Australia, far greater than their share of road deaths. Without the protection of a vehicle, even low-speed crashes can result in serious injury.

More than one in three cyclist fatalities involves older adults aged 60+, a proportion that has grown significantly over the past decade.

Risk factors for cyclist crashes



Vehicle speed



Poor visibility



Intersections



Driver behaviour



Road surface



No helmet worn

Cyclist safety statistics

- In 2024, there were 38 cyclist fatalities in Australia, an 11.8% rise from 2023
- Cyclists account for 17% of all road hospitalisations and 3% of road deaths
- More than 1 in 3 cyclist fatalities involve adults aged 60 and over
- The majority of multi-vehicle cyclist crashes occur at or near intersections
- Over 8,163 cyclists were hospitalised in 2021, the most recent year for which data is available