

Heart-to-Heart



Update on Safety Bills in Colorado Legislature

Molly McKinley, BC's Grassroots Advocacy Manager testifies in legislature.
Credit: @meganhottman

The first bill we're supporting at the legislature this year was heard on Monday by the Senate Judiciary Committee. [SB20-061](#), also known as the **bike lane bill**, defines bike lanes in the law and adds protections for bicyclists riding in them by establishing that bicyclists have the right of way in the bike lane. **It passed the Judiciary Committee by a vote of 3-2, and now heads to the Senate Floor.** We'll be working every step of the way to make sure the bill becomes law, but your legislators need to hear from you that you want to see it passed! Send your Senators a note now by clicking [here](#).

[Senate Bill 20-065](#), the **handsfree bill** that Bicycle Colorado has been working on for the past four years is also making its way through the Senate. It will be heard by the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee this coming Tuesday, February 11, and if you are represented by a Senator on the committee, you'll be getting an email from us asking you to reach out! Make sure you are signed up for our Action Alerts by clicking [here](#). The bill will discourage distracted driving throughout Colorado by limiting usage of electronic devices behind the wheel, and is an important step in the right direction for roadway safety.

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HeartCycle has four great tours with space open for you: Durango Weekend, Glacier & Waterton National Parks, Black Hills of SD and Ohio Appalachian Country. Check out the updated list at bottom of this newsletter. We would love to see you on our club tours this year. Each tour rider will receive a hat and sun sleeves this year. The board members have tried on the sun sleeves and found them to be similar to the unisex jersey sizing. So if you normally wear a small jersey - the small sun sleeves should be your size.

Judy Siel Co-Tour Director

BUYING GUIDE FOR BEST BIKE LIGHTS

By Best Reviews

Along with a properly fitted helmet and a good understanding of the rules of the road, bicycle lights are a crucial element for safe cycling. You need to see and be seen to avoid accidents, and your bike's lights play a major role in your ability to do so.

On today's market, there are lots of different bike lights to choose from. How do you decide which lights are critical and which are optional?

If you're ready to light up and get riding, check out our five recommendations. If you'd like to learn more about bicycle lights in general, including how to choose them and ride safely, read on.

TYPES OF BICYCLE LIGHTS

Bike lights fall into two general categories: lights that help you see and lights that help others see you. Below, we examine the different types of lights a bike rider can use to protect himself, from headlights to helmet lights.

Headlights

A front light, or headlight, is your bike's equivalent of car headlights. Bike headlights help you see what's up ahead and to your sides when you're biking in dim or dark conditions. Of course, your headlight also helps make you more visible to others – particularly motorists who are driving in the opposite direction.

Bike headlights are much more intense than bike taillights and have a somewhat narrower beam. They also require a higher level of battery power. Most bike headlights mount to the handlebars.

A good bike headlight has multiple settings, so you can tailor the light to your surroundings and the level of light you're in. At a minimum, your light should have the following settings.

- A low or regular intensity setting
- A high beam for riding in especially dark areas
- A flash or pulse setting (so you're more visible during the day)

General safety lights

Bike safety lights help other people – particular motorists – see you in dim or dark conditions. But many studies suggest that it's best to use your safety lights even when riding during the day if you're in a high-traffic area.

Safety lights are mounted on the back of the bike, usually directly below the seat or on the back of the bike rack. Some riders also attach safety lights to the bike frame or spokes.

Taillights

Your taillight is your most important bike safety light. In fact, many states require bicyclists to use them. Most are red and have two settings: a steady beam and a flashing pattern, the latter of which is the best choice when riding at night. Your taillight should be visible to motorists both behind you and to your side.

Frame lights

While not absolutely necessary, it's a good idea to have supplemental safety lights if you typically ride on busy roads or in low-light conditions. Bicycle frame lights come in a variety of colors, so you can add a dash of quirky style along with safety to your bike. Frame lights usually attach to the bike frame between the wheels.

Spoke lights

Spoke lights are lots of fun, especially for kids. These small-but-intense lights may come in packages that fasten all the way around the bike wheels or as just one or two lights that clip to a couple of spokes. Either way, as the wheels turn, the lights blur into what appears to be a steady stream of light. Some spoke lights can even be programmed to create intricate patterns as the wheels spin, greatly increasing not only your safety, but also your style factor.

Helmet lights

Bike helmet lights are another optional type of safety light that we highly recommend. These lights clip to, clamp on, or slip over your helmet. Many have a white light on the front and a red light on the back so you get a bit of extra illumination on the road, along with increased visibility to motorists. Most helmet safety lights can be set on a steady or flashing pattern.

LUMENS AND BEAM PATTERNS

It's hard to discuss bike lights without defining lumens and beam patterns, as these two concepts are very important when choosing the best bike light for your needs.

Lumens

A *lumen* is basically a unit of measurement for the amount of light that strikes the object you want illuminated. While it's a bit more complicated than this, it's easiest and most familiar to think of lumens as the intensity or brightness of your bike lights. The higher the number of lumens, the brighter the light. This is especially important when choosing a bike headlight – or if you often travel off-road paths. You can use the following statements about lumens as a general guideline.

- Safety lights are typically in the 25- to 100-lumen range. That's just enough to make your bike visible to motorists, but it's not enough to light your way, so only consider a light in this range if it's going on your bike's rear, frame, or spokes for safety purposes.
- If you typically ride on well-lit paths or roads and just need a little extra light, you'll probably find a headlight in the 100- to 300-lumen range to be sufficient. Going much beyond that while riding in mixed traffic could blind oncoming motorists, greatly increasing your chance of an accident.

- Mountain bikers, off-road enthusiasts, and those who ride at night or on poorly lit roads needs much more intense headlights. Generally, you'll want at least 400 lumens, although many headlights specifically marketed for mountain bikers are much brighter than that. (Some go well beyond 1,000 lumens.) For the sake of comparison, consider that the typical car headlights emit roughly 700 lumens on low beam and 1,200 lumens on high.

Beam pattern

Beam pattern refers to how widely a bulb casts its light. A spotlight, for example, focuses in a narrow but long beam pattern, while a flood light spreads illumination over a wider, yet shorter, path. Your best choice of beam pattern depends, to a great extent, on where and how you ride. For some cyclists, owning two light sets with different beam patterns can be beneficial.

The average commuter cyclist who rides on surface streets or fairly smooth paths does best with a headlight that has a fairly tight beam pattern. This means there is less peripheral illumination, but the light shines further ahead. Mountain bikers and others who ride in rugged conditions fare better with a light that has a wider beam pattern, making it easier to spot potholes and other trail hazards.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Mounting system

How will you mount your new bike light to your bicycle? Most bike lights fasten with a screw or clamp to the handlebars, seat back, frame, or spokes. Many small safety lights fasten with Velcro. Some high-output headlight systems have clips that make it easy to remove the light when leaving your bike. This deters theft.

- While bike light mounting clamps are normally adjustable, and thus fit the majority of bike frames, it's always best to confirm that any light kit you're considering fits your specific bike model.

Batteries

Bike lights all run on batteries, but which kind of batteries will you need? Small safety lights for the spokes, frame, and back of the seat typically run on regular disposable or rechargeable batteries.

However, headlights often include a USB cord so you can recharge the batteries over and over again from your **computer** or other USB-ported device. This applies to high-output headlights in particular.

- Bike lights generally hold a charge for a long time, but if you ride extensively at night, look for a light with an extra-long run time. Keep in mind, too, that high-output lights tend to take several hours to recharge.

Bike light prices

How much do bike lights cost? Most casual bicyclists purchase their bike lights as a headlight/taillight set. These sets range in price from less than \$15 to over \$50.

- For the average commuter cyclist, spending around \$25 will get you bright, dependable lights with plenty of battery life and solid clamps.
- If you are a mountain biker and need high-output lights for night riding or trail use, expect to spend \$40 or more for higher-lumen lights.
- Spoke lights generally cost less than \$15.
- You can find good helmet lights for less than \$20.

Colorado HeartCycle 2020 Tours

Las Vegas & Death Valley Spring Training

Las Vegas, Nevada

March 11 - 20 Status: Open
 9 days, Advanced \$1,750.00
 Jimmy Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
 Richard Williamson, richard6a@gmail.com

Paso Robles Wine Country

Paso Robles, California

April 18 - 25 Status: Full
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$1,390.00
 Becky Bottino, bbottino@gmail.com
 Ken Condray, condray3@gmail.com

Shenandoah Valley

Staunton, VA

April 25 - May 2 Status: Wait List
 7 days, Advanced \$1,650.00
 Kurt Arehart, klarehart@gmail.com
 Jim Bethell, bethell.jim@verizon.net

Relaxed in Provence

Avignon, France

May 14 - 23 Status: Closed
 9 days, Intermediate \$2,675.00
 Polly Page, mspollypage@gmail.com
 Rich Crocker, richcrocker@hotmail.com

Durango Weekend

Durango, Colorado

May 16 - 19 Status: Open
 3 days, Int./Adv. \$670.00
 Denise Weaver, dweaver1200@hotmail.com
 Rob Weaver, Robert_r_weaver_iii@hotmail.com

Bruges-Paris, Bike and Barge

Bruges, Belgium

May 16 - 29 Status: Closed
 14 days, Easy/Int. \$3200.00
 Joanne Speirs, jcspeirs1@gmail.com

Traverse Bay

Traverse City, Michigan

May 30 - June 7 Status: Full
 8 days, Int./Adv. \$1,570.00
 Lynn Driver ldriver@med.umich.edu
 Bob Rowe browe49@comcast.net

Beyond Dordogne

Bordeaux, France

June 19 - 28 Status: Wait List
 9 days, Advanced \$2,750.00
 Fred Yu, frederickyu@comcast.net
 Graham Hollis, gramhollis@icloud.com

Roaring Fork Road & Groad Weekend

Basalt, Colorado

July 15 - 19 Status: Wait List
 4 days, Int./Adv. \$760.00
 Ron Finch, blouie-rfinch@comcast.net
 Robin Heil, rjsheil@bresnan.net

Oregon Wine & Surf Loop

Eugene, Oregon

July 25 - August 2 Status: Full
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$1,680.00
 Cindy Alvarez, sindelou@cox.net
 Bob McIntyre, dcx12@aol.com

