

How can behaviour change theory help more people to walk and cycle?

RoSPA's guide on How to stay safe while walking and cycling at night

February 2023

Walking and cycling at night can be dangerous because it is more difficult to see your surroundings and other road users in low light conditions, increasing the risk of collisions and injuries.

For pedestrians, the risks at night may include:

- tripping over uneven surfaces,
- being hit by a vehicle
- becoming the target of crime.

For cyclists, the risks include:

- Colliding with other road users.
- Hitting obstacles in the road.
- Losing control of the bike.

Ways to reduce these risks, when walking or cycling at night, include wearing reflective clothing, using cycling lights, and staying alert to your surroundings. It is also essential to follow the rules of the road and to be aware of any potential hazards.

When walking at night:

1. **Stay alert:** Stay aware of your surroundings and avoid being distracted by your phone or other devices.
2. **Walk facing oncoming traffic:** This will allow you to see any approaching vehicles and give you more time to react.
3. **Wear bright or reflective clothing:** This will make it easier for drivers to see you and help you stay visible in low-light conditions.
4. **Stay on the pavement:** If no pavement is available, walk as close to the side of the road as possible, facing oncoming traffic.
5. **Plan your route:** Try to plan your route and let someone know your destination and expected arrival time.
6. **Avoid wearing headphones:** Wearing headphones can make it harder for you to hear what's happening around you.

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When cycling at night:

- 1. Make sure your bike is equipped with lights:** By law, your bike must have a white light at the front and a red light at the back when cycling at night. Make sure these lights are working and are bright enough to be seen from a distance.
- 2. Wear reflective clothing:** Wearing reflective clothing or attaching reflective strips to your bike will make you more visible to other road users in low-light conditions.
- 3. Use hand signals:** Use hand signals to let other road users know when you are turning or changing lanes.
- 4. Stay visible:** Stay in well-lit areas and avoid cycling on the inside lane of a road if possible.
- 5. Keep an eye out for pedestrians:** Be particularly careful when cycling through pedestrian areas, as pedestrians may need to pay attention to traffic.
- 6. Watch out for potholes:** Potholes can be difficult to see at night, so be extra vigilant and try to avoid them if possible.
- 7. Plan your route:** Plan your route and avoid cycling through areas that are poorly lit or known to be dangerous.
- 8. Keep your bike in good working order:** Make sure your bike is in good working order, with properly inflated tyres and functioning brakes.
- 9. Follow the rules of the road:** Follow all traffic laws and regulations, including stopping at traffic lights and stop signs.
- 10. Don't cycle when tired:** You should never be in control of a vehicle, including bikes, when you are tired. Your attention on the road will not be as strong or effective as when you are alert.