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INTELLIGENCE & INVESTIGATION

Don't Get...

# Too Close For Comfort

A Guide For Drivers



[cyclinguk.org/TooCloseForComfort](https://cyclinguk.org/TooCloseForComfort)





## Give at least 1.5m when overtaking cyclists, more when travelling over 30mph or in poor weather conditions

- The Highway Code requires that drivers “give cyclists at least as much room as you would a car when overtaking” (Rule 163). Most police forces interpret to mean at least 1.5m (the width of a car) at speeds of up to 30mph.
- Cyclists may have to move out to avoid potholes or debris on the road – passing closer than 1.5m puts lives at risk and you risk being charged with careless driving. You could lose your licence and receive a fine of up to £5,000.
- Never overtake just before you turn left.
- Watch Cycling UK’s ‘changing perspectives’ virtual reality film demonstrating the difference between a dangerous and safe overtake [cyclinguk.org/TooCloseForComfort](https://cyclinguk.org/TooCloseForComfort)
- You should also give space to oncoming cyclists – give priority to a cyclist who has already entered a pinch point (e.g. where parked cars are blocking one lane) just as you would another car.



*“Remember – even the smallest lapse in concentration could mean you fail to see a cyclist, with tragic consequences.”*

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## Should cyclists always use the bike lane?

While cycle paths and lanes can be useful, they are not always safe, suitable or well-maintained, so cyclists may choose to ride in the road instead.

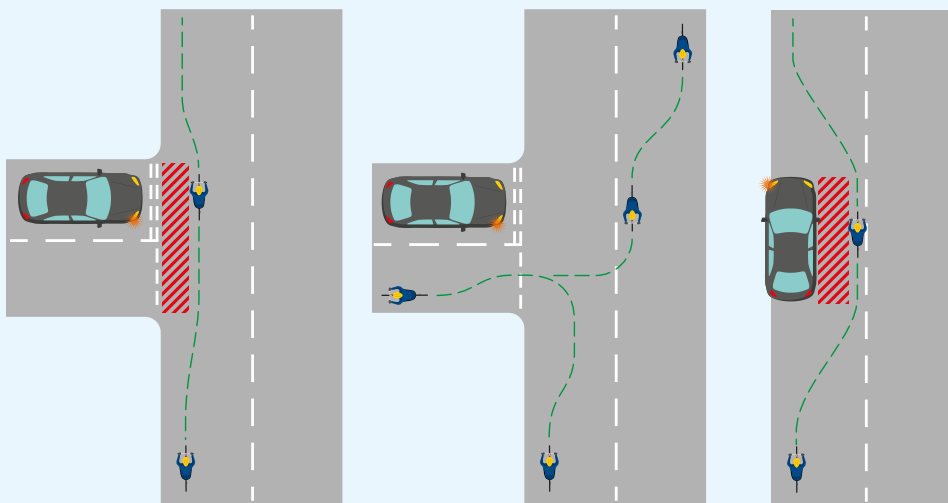
- Some cycle lanes are too narrow or place cyclists in a vulnerable position, so it may be safer for a cyclist to ride outside of the lane.
- Drivers still need to give cyclists the minimum 1.5m passing distance, even if they are in a cycle lane.
- It is unlawful to drive or park in cycle lanes marked by a solid white line during their hours of operation, just like bus lanes, and you could face a fine.



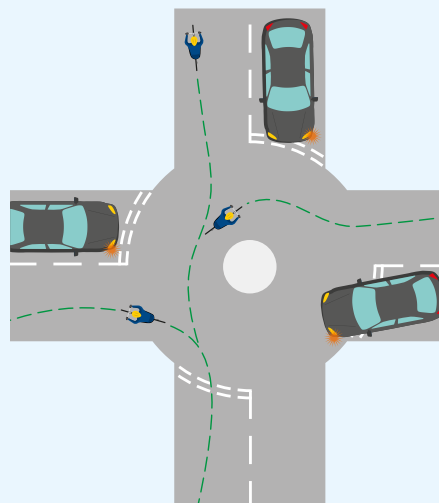
## Why do cyclists sometimes ride in the middle of the road?

The National Standard for Cycle Training teaches cyclists to ride in the centre of the lane in certain situations – this is called the ‘primary position’. This helps cyclists see and be seen, avoid potholes and debris, and deters drivers from overtaking when it is not safe to do so.

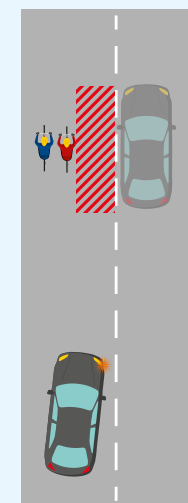
*Cyclists may have to move out to avoid potholes or debris on the road – passing closer than 1.5m puts lives at risk and you risk being charged with careless driving.*



*It's safer for cyclists to 'take the lane' on approach to side roads, at pinch points such as traffic islands, when passing parked cars and through all junctions. Never overtake cyclists at these locations.*



*Roundabouts are particularly dangerous for cyclists, and they may follow the outside of the roundabout, even if turning right. Give cyclists plenty of space and time.*



*Cyclists can legally ride two-abreast, which can be safer than single file (Highway Code Rule 66). Be patient: only overtake when you can give at least 1.5m.*

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## Be aware of others when opening car doors

- It is a criminal offence to open, or cause or permit to be opened, a car door so as to injure or endanger anyone. Opening a car door into a cyclist's path can be fatal.
- Using the hand furthest from the door to open it (i.e. your left hand if you are in the driver's seat) will force you to turn your body and help you spot cyclists.



## General tips

- Be patient around cyclists and pedestrians, give them plenty of space and time, and use eye contact to indicate that you have seen them. Use your indicators when performing any manoeuvre or changing lanes.
- Remember – even the smallest lapse in concentration could mean you fail to see a cyclist, with tragic consequences. Be particularly careful around junctions, where 75% of collisions occur.

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