

# E-BIKES: RIDING SAFELY

**ALL E-BIKE RIDERS MUST WEAR A HELMET. CHOOSE ONE RATED FOR HIGHER SPEEDS (SUCH AS NTA-8776 CERTIFIED OR MOTORCYCLE-STYLE).**

**LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS MUST BE WORN ON ALL SIDES AT NIGHT OR IN TIMES OF LOW VISIBILITY.**

**ON THE ROADS, E-BIKES ARE SUBJECT TO MOST OF THE SAME RULES AS CARS AND SHOULD BE TREATED AS VEHICLES.**

**FOR TRAIL USE, LAWS VARY BASED ON THE CLASS OF E-BIKE. YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET.**

**YOUNGER KIDS MAY LACK THE SKILLS FOR SAFE RIDING. WHILE NO LAW BANS KIDS FROM CLASS 1 OR 2, PARENTS SHOULD USE CAUTION. E-BIKES ARE HEAVY AND FAST, REQUIRE STRONG COORDINATION, AND TRAFFIC JUDGEMENT.**



# E-BIKES: RIDING SAFELY

## WHAT ARE E-BIKES?

### ALL E-BIKES

The motor must be less than 750 watts. E-bike top speeds are capped at 28 mph, unless the bike has a throttle. In that case, the maximum speed is limited to 20 mph. Once the maximum speed is reached, the motor must shut off. Working pedals are required.

### CLASS 1 E-BIKES

Class 1 e-bikes have a maximum speed of 20 mph. Their motors use pedal assist, meaning the motor stops when the rider stops pedaling. Class 1 e-bikes may be ridden on paths and trails without requiring local permission.

### CLASS 2 E-BIKES

Class 2 e-bikes have a maximum speed of 20 mph and are equipped with a throttle. They may also include pedal assist. When the bike reaches its maximum speed, the motor shuts off. Class 2 e-bikes are allowed on surfaced paths and trails; access to natural surface paths and trails depends on local ordinances.

### CLASS 3 E-BIKES

Class 3 e-bikes have a maximum speed of 28 mph and operate using pedal assist. They must be equipped with a speedometer. Children under 16 are not allowed to ride Class 3 e-bikes, except as passengers (if the bike is designed to carry one). Class 3 e-bikes are not permitted on multi-use trails.

## E-BIKES AND KIDS: WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW

While there's no law in Connecticut that prohibits children from riding Class 1 or Class 2 e-bikes, parents and guardians should think carefully before allowing it.

E-bikes can reach speeds of 20 mph or more, and those with a throttle can operate more like a small motorcycle than a traditional bicycle. These higher speeds, combined with increased power, require quick decision-making, strong coordination, and a good understanding of how to navigate traffic—all of which younger children and early teens may not have yet.

Children are still developing cognitively and physically, and many lack the road experience needed to ride safely. These factors make e-bikes significantly more dangerous for younger riders.

**Bottom line: Just because it's legal doesn't mean it's safe. Make sure your child is truly ready—both physically and mentally—before putting them on an e-bike.**

## WEAR A HELMET

Under Connecticut state law, all e-bike riders are required to wear a helmet. It's important to choose one that is rated for the speeds your e-bike can reach. Look for a helmet designed for higher speeds, such as a motorcycle helmet or one that meets the NTA-8776 certification, which is specifically designed for e-bikes.

## USE LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS TO INCREASE VISIBILITY

This is the same as regular bicycles. Connecticut law requires a white light on the front, red light or red reflector on the back, and reflectors on both sides of the bike.

## KNOW WHERE TO RIDE

Like regular bicycles, e-bikes are considered vehicles under Connecticut state law, so you should ride in the travel lane going in the same direction as traffic. Unless you're turning left, stay as far to the right as is safely possible to allow drivers to pass—provided they maintain at least 3 feet of space between their vehicle and your bike. Follow all traffic lights and signs. Use the appropriate signals to let drivers around you know what you're doing.

## IS THERE ANYWHERE ELSE I CAN RIDE?

Class 1 e-bikes are allowed on trails. Class 2 e-bikes may be ridden on trails only if permitted by local ordinance. Class 3 e-bikes are prohibited on trails. All other regulations are determined on a town-by-town basis. Municipalities also have the authority to regulate whether bicycles and e-bikes can be used on sidewalks through local ordinances. Please check your local laws for more information.



Per Connecticut state law, all e-bike riders are required to wear a helmet. It's important to choose one that is rated for the speed your e-bike can reach. Since e-bikes travel at speeds of 20 mph or higher, you should look for a high-impact helmet, such as a motorcycle helmet or one that meets the NTA-8776 certification, which was specifically designed for e-bikes. Scan this QR code to learn more.

