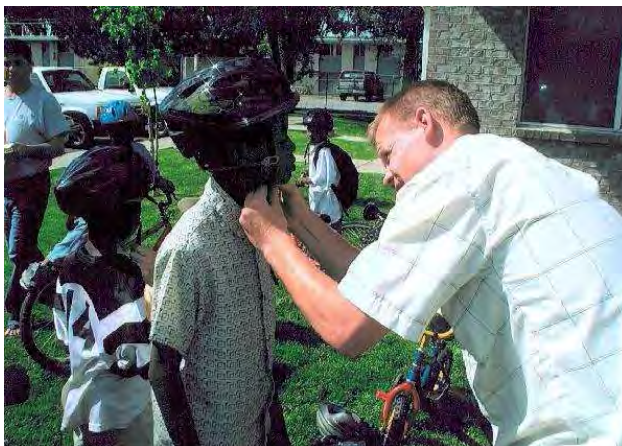


Bicycle Rodeo Skills Packet

Learn to ride a bicycle safely and confidently in any situation!



Inside you will find 14 different bicycle safety skills stations that can be used for a bicycle rodeo course.

For more information on conducting a bicycle rodeo or to reserve the bicycle rodeo trailer contact Keri Gibson at the Utah Highway Safety Office at (801) 243-7571.

Introduction - Learning Bicycling Skills

A bicycle rodeo is more than just an obstacle course. A bicycle rodeo should be used to teach bicyclists the real world skills they will need to ride a bicycle safely.

Whether riding on the sidewalk, the street or on a path.

As with learning any new skill, the skills that are taught in a bicycle rodeo course are not mastered just simply by going through a skills station one time, they take practice.

Bicycle safety skills should be properly demonstrated and discussed as to why they are important. Once the participants understand why a bicycle safety skill is important and how to properly perform the skill, they should be allowed to practice the skill before being tested on the skill.

Some may think that teaching bicycling skills is not necessary since as kids they never had any formal bicycle training. Today however, roadways are a lot more crowded. There are increasingly more motor vehicles on the road than in years past that can make roadways very intimidating to bicyclists. It is important that bicyclists learn how to safely "drive" a bicycle. A bicycle is more than just a toy, it is a vehicle and can be safely ridden on the road, but the rules of the road must be followed and safety skills learned.

A bicycle is fun. It is a great form of exercise, recreation and transportation regardless of one's age. Get on a bike and see just how much fun you have and freedom you feel. But be safe, because nothing ruins a good ride faster than a bad crash.

Bike Inspection and ABC Quick Check

The intent here is not to renovate the participants' bicycle, but to check the bicycle for basic fit and condition.

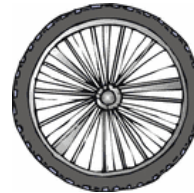


Basic Sizing – the rider should be able to stand flat-footed while straddling the top tube of the bike. There should be at least one inch of clearance from the top of the inseam of the rider and the top tube of the bike. Many people have the misconception that the rider must be able to touch the ground with both feet while seated on the bikes' saddle. This is not so, however from the seated position, the rider's feet should adequately reach both pedals, even when one pedal is at the lowest point, and the other is at the highest point.

ABC – Quick Check

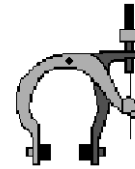
A - is for Air

- Make sure tire is properly inflated
- Check tire sidewall and tread for cracks



B - is for Brakes

- Check pads for wear, replace if there is less than ¼ inch of pad left
- Make sure pads don't rub on the tire or into spokes
- Pull the brake lever, there should be at least 1 inch between the handlebar and the brake lever when fully applied



C - is for Cranks, Chain and Cassette (gears)

- Make sure cranks are tight
- Check the chain for wear (12 links should measure no more than 12 1/8 inches)
- Check your gears for broken teeth
- Make sure your chain is lubricated



Quick - is for Quick Release

- Make sure that wheels are tight and secure in the bicycle frame
- Make sure Quick Release Levers are closed (or wheel bolts are tight)



Check - is for Check it Over

- Before beginning your ride, take the bike for a quick little spin to make sure it is working properly



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Fitting A Bicycle Helmet

5 Easy Steps

Step 1 - Select the right sized helmet.
Make sure the helmet fits snug when is placed on the head.

Step 2 - Positioning the helmet.
The helmet should sit level on the head and cover most of the forehead - one or two finger-widths above the eyebrow.



Step 3 - Positioning the side straps.
Adjust the slider on both straps to form a “V” shape just under the ear lobe.



Step 4 - Positioning the chin strap.
Buckle the chin strap. Tighten it until it is snug, so that no more than one or two fingers fit under the strap. Make sure it is centered under the chin.



Step 5 - Final Positioning.
Rock the helmet back and forth with it buckled on the head. The helmet should not move forward, backward or from side to side. With an open mouth (as if yawning), the helmet should fall down on the head.

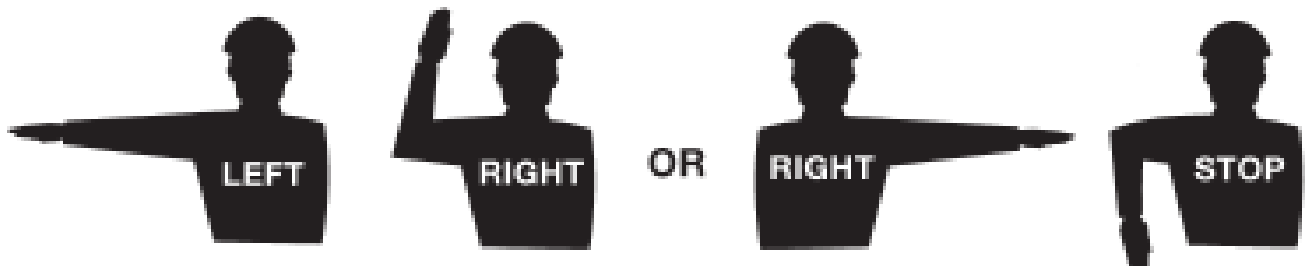


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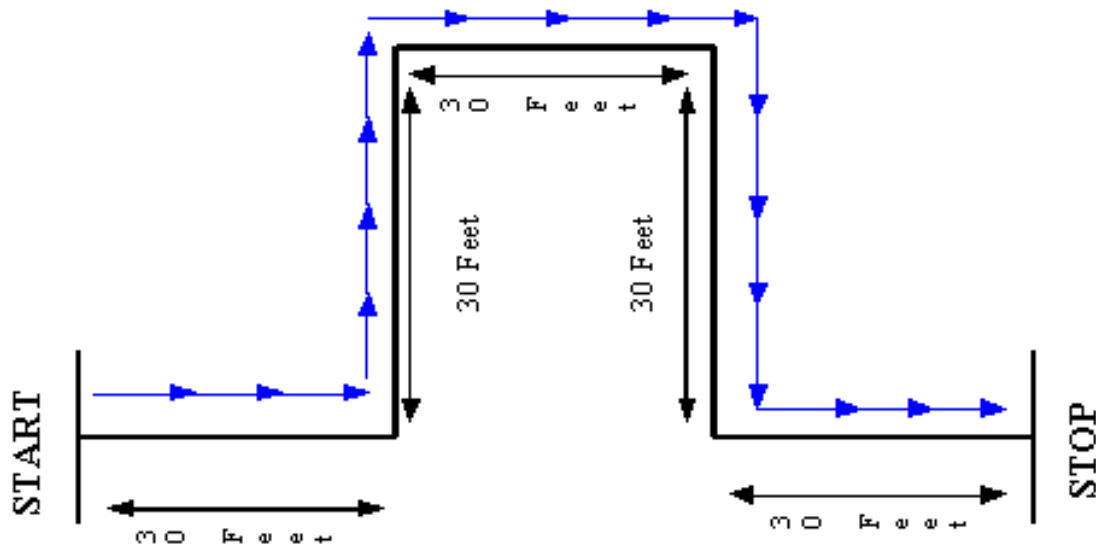
Hand Signals

Unlike a motor vehicle, a bicycle does not come with turn signals or brake lights. However, it is still important for the bicyclist to tell other road users what he/she intends to do. A bicyclist uses hand signals to communicate to others on the road what he/she is about to do.

There are hand signals for turning left, right, and slowing down. Below are the hand signals for each.



It is important to practice using the hand signals in an area such as a parking lot so that you can learn to keep control of your bicycle while doing them. If you do not feel comfortable using hand signals when riding on the street with traffic, or you may lose control of your bicycle trying to do a hand signal, then do not use them until you have practiced the skill and are able to do it without losing control of your bicycle. It is more important for you to be safe.



The bicyclist rides around the above course, giving the proper hand signals at each turn and at the final stop. The skill is done properly when the bicyclist is able to negotiate each turn giving the proper hand signal and without excess wobbling.

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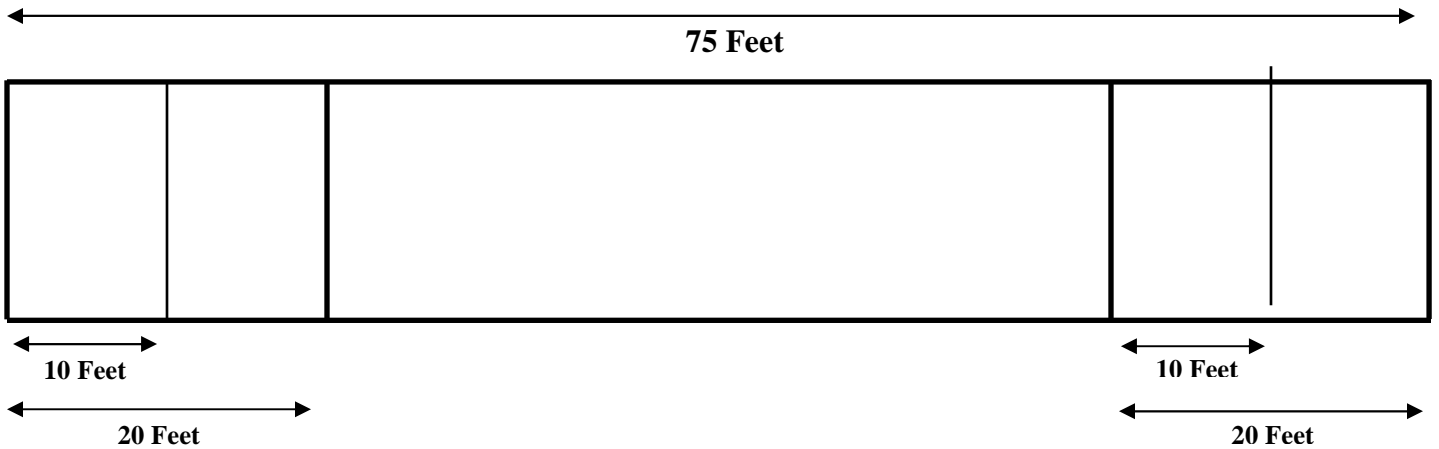
STOPPING/BRAKING

One of the most common errors when coming to a stop for bicyclists occurs when riders do not stop the bike before putting their foot or feet on the ground and end up “running” with the bike between their legs. Discourage this, because while they are doing this, the bicycle is controlling them and increasing their risks for a collision.

Have each rider start pedaling down the lane and proceed to the first line stop line (10 ft line), where the rider should apply the brakes for a normal stop. The rider should complete the stop by the end line. Once the rider has mastered this skill, have him/her ride down the lane at a faster speed and apply the brakes at the second stop line (20 ft line). The rider should complete the stop by the end line once again. Practice skill going one direction, then turn around and repeat skill in the opposite direction.

A. Procedure for stopping and dismounting the bicycle (should be done in one motion):

- Slow the speed of the bicycle by applying the brakes
- As the bike nears a stop, slide off the seat and take your right foot off the pedal
- Lower the right foot toward the ground as the bike continues to slow
- At the moment the bicycle stops, the right foot contacts the ground



Emergency Stopping (for more skilled riders)

If the need arises to stop quickly the emergency/quick stop maneuver is a very valuable skill to learn. It takes practice to master, but when done correctly is very effective.

When braking hard, it is a natural instinct to pull on both brakes as hard as possible. This will cause the rider to lose control of his/her bike. With the wheels locked up by the brakes, the rear wheel will skid and front wheel will lock up, pitching the rider forward and over the handlebars.

To do the quick stop (or emergency stop), while braking hard, slide your body back on the seat as far as possible. This transfers your center of gravity over the rear wheel and keeps the rear tire from skidding.

Practice this by riding fast and at a predetermined spot pull on the brakes while sliding back as far as possible on the seat. (See diagram below)



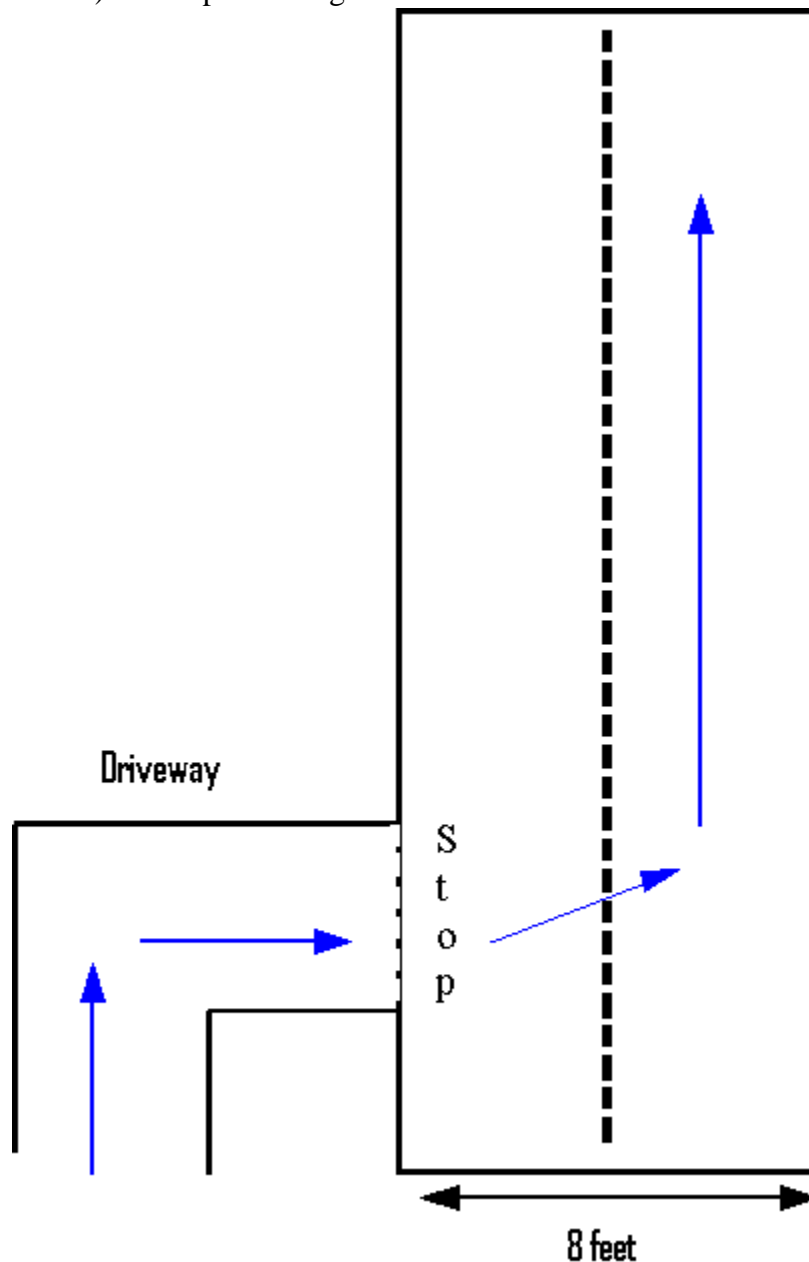
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Exiting a Driveway or Parking Lot

Teach the steps for entering the roadway. One of the biggest causes of children being hit by motor vehicles while riding bikes is due to children not stopping and looking for traffic before entering the roadway from the sidewalk, a driveway or a parking lot.

Usually this type of bicycle-motor vehicle crash happens in quiet residential neighborhoods. In many cases there maybe some sort of sight obstruction (fence, wall, tree, bushes, parked vehicle, etc.) that blocks the bicyclists' view of the motorist or the motorists' view of bicyclist.

The rider will ride along the "driveway" toward the roadway and STOP before entering the road. The rider should then look left, right, and left again and make sure it is clear to go (no vehicles coming from either direction) before proceeding.



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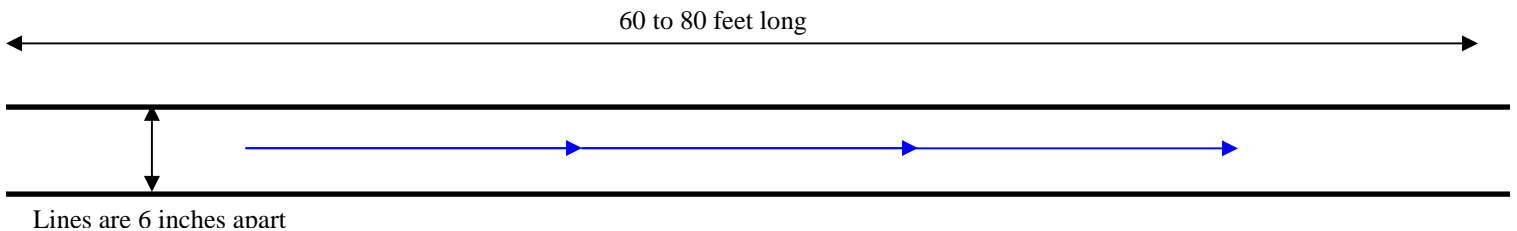
Riding a Straight Line – Where to Ride on the Road



Bicycle riders should ride on the right side of the road in the same direction as motor vehicle traffic. Ride far enough away from the curb and parked vehicles to avoid roadside debris and opening car doors. But also ride far enough to the right that motor vehicles can safely pass you on the left.

Have the riders ride down between the two lines to teach the skill of riding in a straight line. Tell the bicyclists to ride along keeping their tires between the two lines. Also, tell them not to put their feet down. Have the riders practice until they can do it without stopping, without putting their feet down and without going outside the lines.

Explain that as a bicyclist, you need to ride in a straight line and in a predictable manner so that motorists will know where you are going and what expect form you.



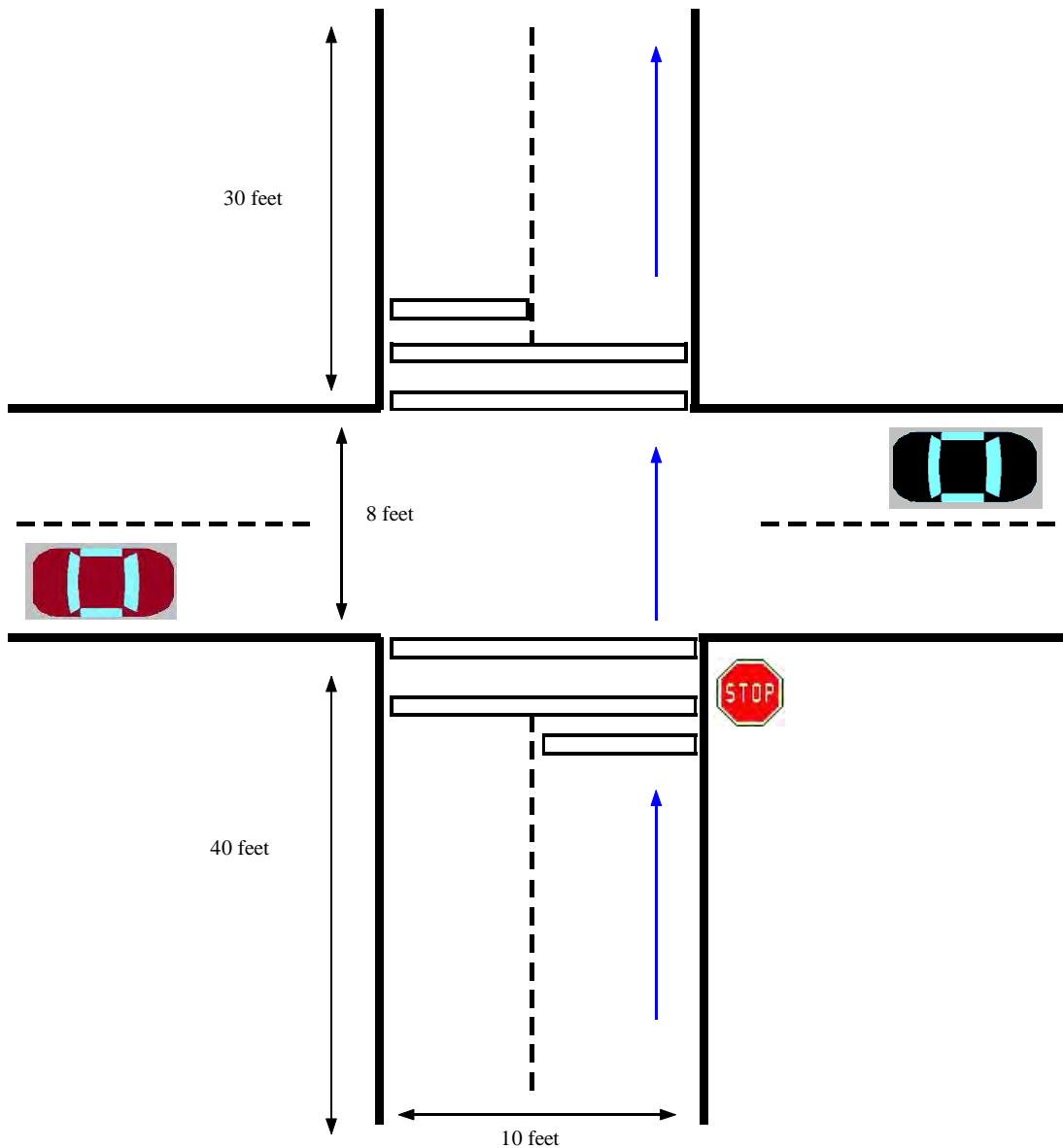
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Intersection – Crossroads

Running a stop sign is a big risk. It is one of the most common causes of injury producing bicycle-motor vehicle crashes.

Bicycles, like any other motor vehicle should come to a stop at a stop sign, look for cross traffic (including pedestrians in the crosswalk) and make sure it is clear before going.

To do this, as the bicycle rider approaches the stop sign, he/she should scan the nearby sidewalks & crosswalks for pedestrians. The rider should stop behind the “stop line” which is the white line before the crosswalk. After doing this the bicycle rider should slowly pull forward to get a good view of the crossing traffic. Wait until it is clear to cross.



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Looking Back and Scanning

Many unskilled bicyclists are scared of looking back for motor vehicle traffic because they cannot do it without swerving. This skill will teach the rider to look back while continuing in a straight line.

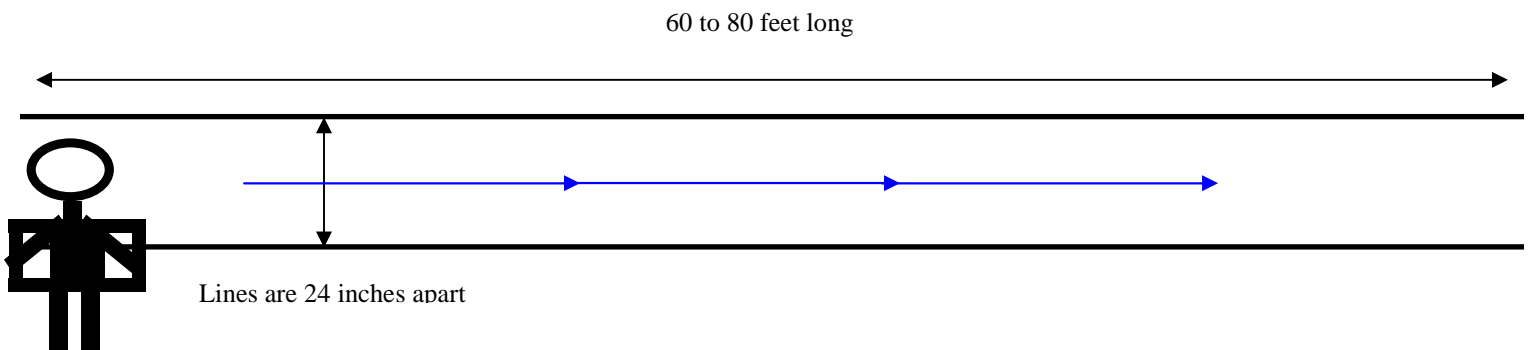
There are a couple of different ways to look back: over the shoulders or under the arms. As the riders arrive to this station explain the following situation to them:

“You are riding down the street and decide to turn left at the next corner. What’s the most important thing to do before making that left turn?”

A likely answer might be, “give hand signals.” Tell them signaling is important but there is something much more important. Look behind you!” Then ask, “Why is that important?”

Then explain to the riders how they are to do this skill station.

Have the riders ride down between the two marked lines. When the rider is part way along the instructor will yell to them to look back. The instructor will have several different colored pieces of paper. The rider should identify the color the instructor is holding up, after the rider has looked back. The rider should be able to do this without swerving outside the marked lines, without putting his/her feet on the ground and without stopping.



Tips for doing it successfully:

- An easy way to look back is to drop your left hand to your thigh and coast; then look back over the left shoulder
- Tell the rider to ease up their grip on the handlebar and hold their shoulders steady when looking backwards
- Tell them to practice this skill in an empty parking lot not on the road

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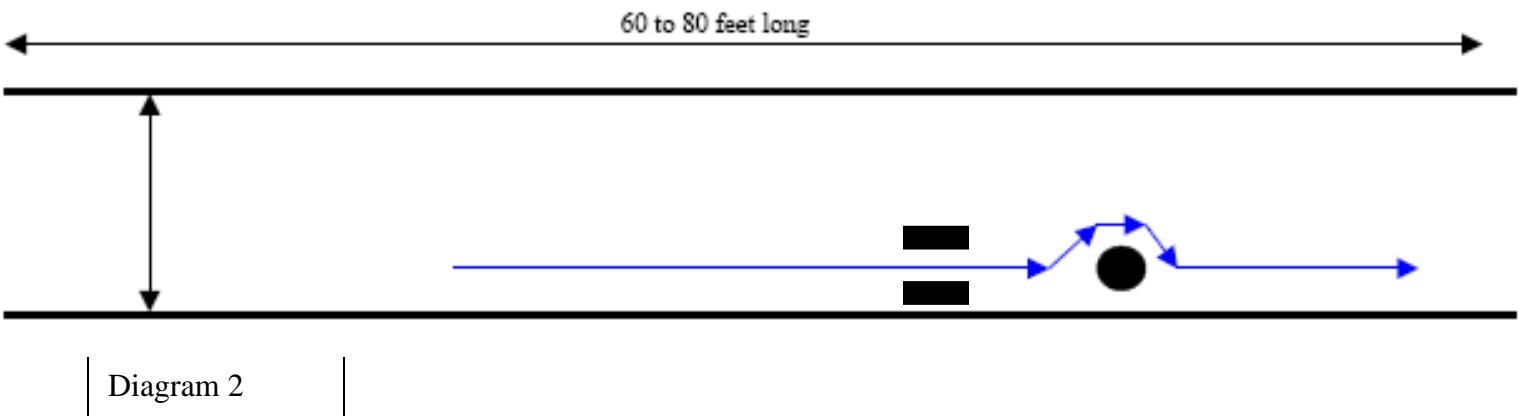
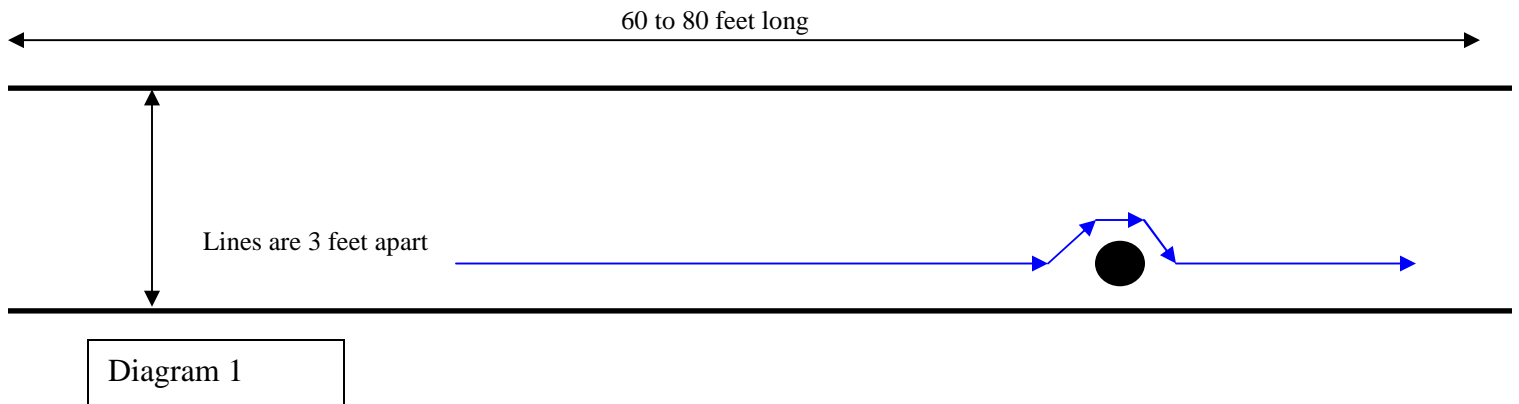
Rock Dodge

When riding on the roadway, bicycles should ride to the right. However, debris often collects on the right part of the roadway, especially on the shoulder. Because of this it is necessary to look ahead for debris, rocks or any other object that may be a hazard and could cause a bicyclist to fall.

To move around such objects, the bicycle rider may not be able to move to the left very far because of motor vehicles traveling at greater speeds are passing on the left. In this type of situation there is an emergency maneuver that can be done that will allow the front tire of the bike to dodge around the obstacle, and yet still allow the bicyclist to maintain a fairly straight line, so he/she won't move left in front of passing motor vehicles. This maneuver is called the "Rock Dodge".

To practice the Rock Dodge, the rider will ride in a straight line until just before the "rock" (or object). At that point the rider should turn the handlebar suddenly without leaning the bike, so the front wheel goes around the rock, then quickly turn the handlebar back the other way. It really doesn't matter if the rear wheel runs over the rock, the important part is to get the front wheel around the rock, without swerving too far left.

When practicing this maneuver, many bicyclist will do a time consuming weave. That is not the idea. So if the riders are having trouble waiting until the last moment to dodge around the "rock". Set the skill station up so they have to "thread the needle" just before reaching the "rock" (see diagram 2 below).



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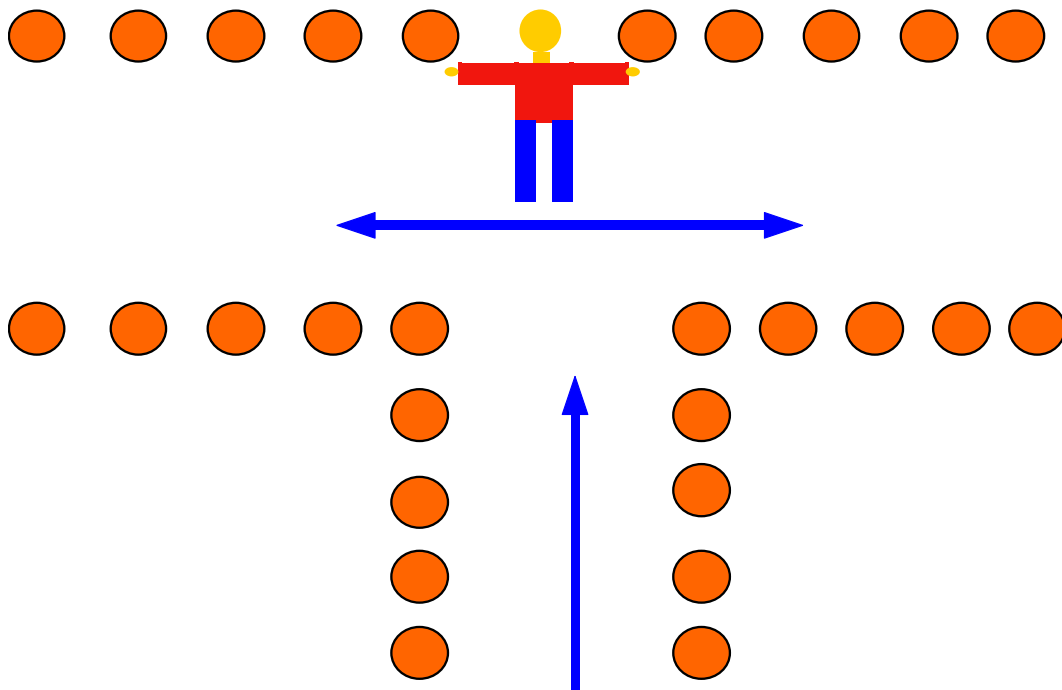
Quick Turn

There are many reasons why a bicyclist may have to make a quick turn. A quick turn is an emergency maneuver that allows the bicyclist to make a sharp turn while still moving at speed. This maneuver should be practiced in a controlled environment before doing it on the roadway where motor vehicle traffic is present.

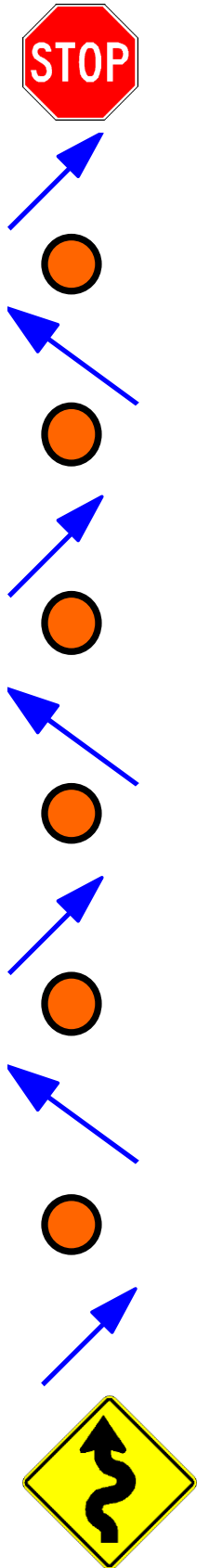
The “quick turn” is quite different from a planned or intended turn. For a planned turn, the rider does much of the turning by leaning the bike in the direction of the turn. The bike then steers around the turn, while the rider adjusts the handlebar to keep the bike directly under the rider. However, in a quick turn there is no time to turn by leaning. To do the quick turn, the rider does a quick flick of the handlebars in the opposite direction he/she will turn. This will cause the bike to lean in the direction of the turn. So if the rider flicks the handlebar to the left, the bike will lean to the right (the direction he/she wants to make the quick turn). Right when the bike begins to lean right, the rider quickly turns front wheel to the right (if making a quick turn to the left, the bike will lean to the left, and the rider will turn the front wheel to the left). This motion should align the bike into a natural leaned turn. It is very important for the rider to keep his/her inside foot at the top of the pedal stroke to avoid hitting the foot and the pedal on the ground as the bike leans.

The maneuver sounds more complicated than it is, and should be done quickly in one smooth motion.

The participants will ride down the between the row of cones toward the course instructor. Just as the rider reaches the “T”, the instructor will point to the left or the right. The rider is to do the quick turn in the direction the instructor points.



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Slalom – Zig Zag

A very basic bike control exercise is the ability to weave between traffic cones without hitting the cones.

Place the cones in a line (use as many cones as you would like). Place the cones 6-8 feet apart depending on the age of the participants (closer together for older, more skilled bicyclists and farther apart for younger less experience bicyclists). Have the participants ride around the cones, first to the left then to the right.

Each participant should be able to complete the course without hitting any cones and without putting a foot down.

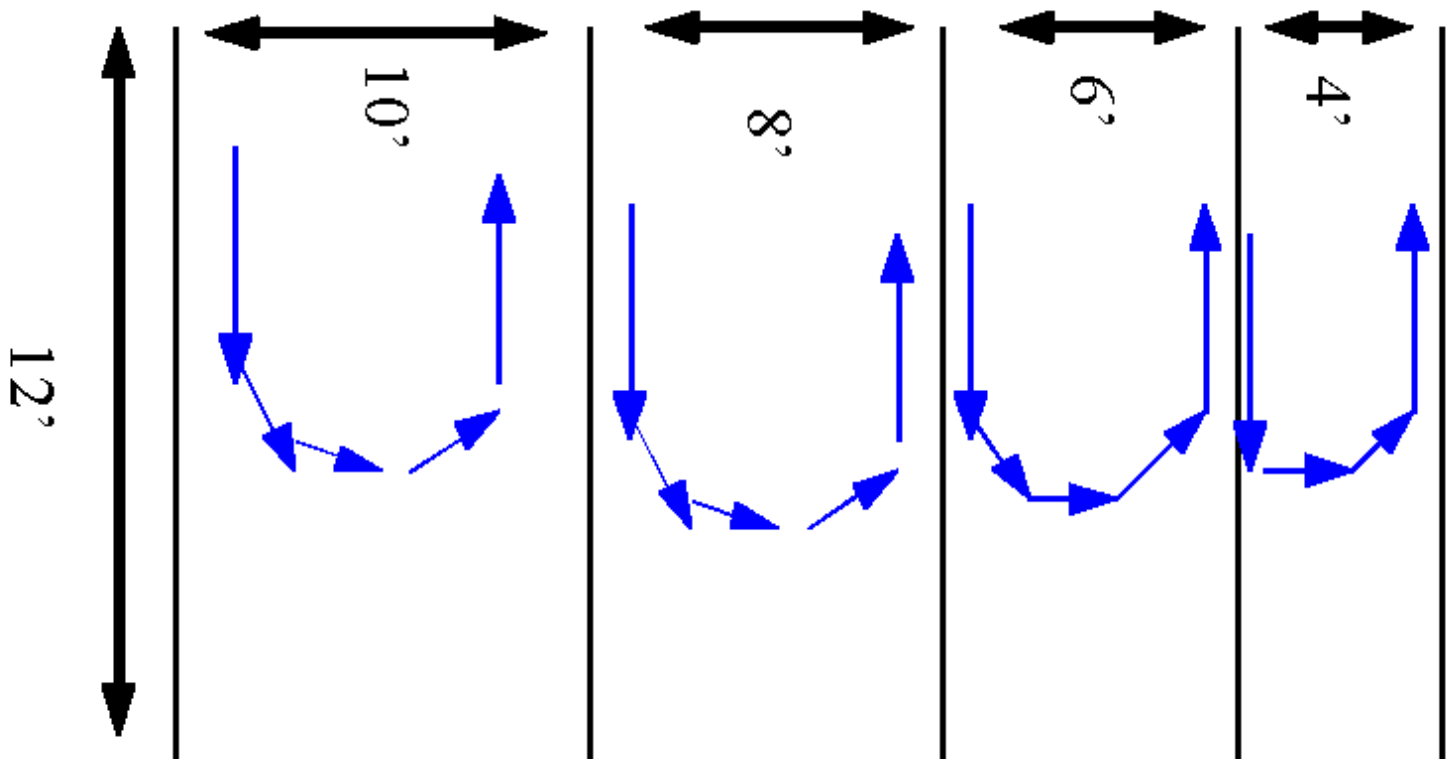
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Tight Turn Bay

With this skills test, the bicycle rider will ride into successively smaller boxes painted on the pavement. The bicyclist will try to turn around (do a U-Turn) within the box without putting a foot down or without going over any of the lines.

Only one rider should be in a single bay at a time. Start at the widest bay and if successfully completed move on to the next smallest bay.

This skill teaches the bicyclist bike control and balance. It can be fun and is very challenging.



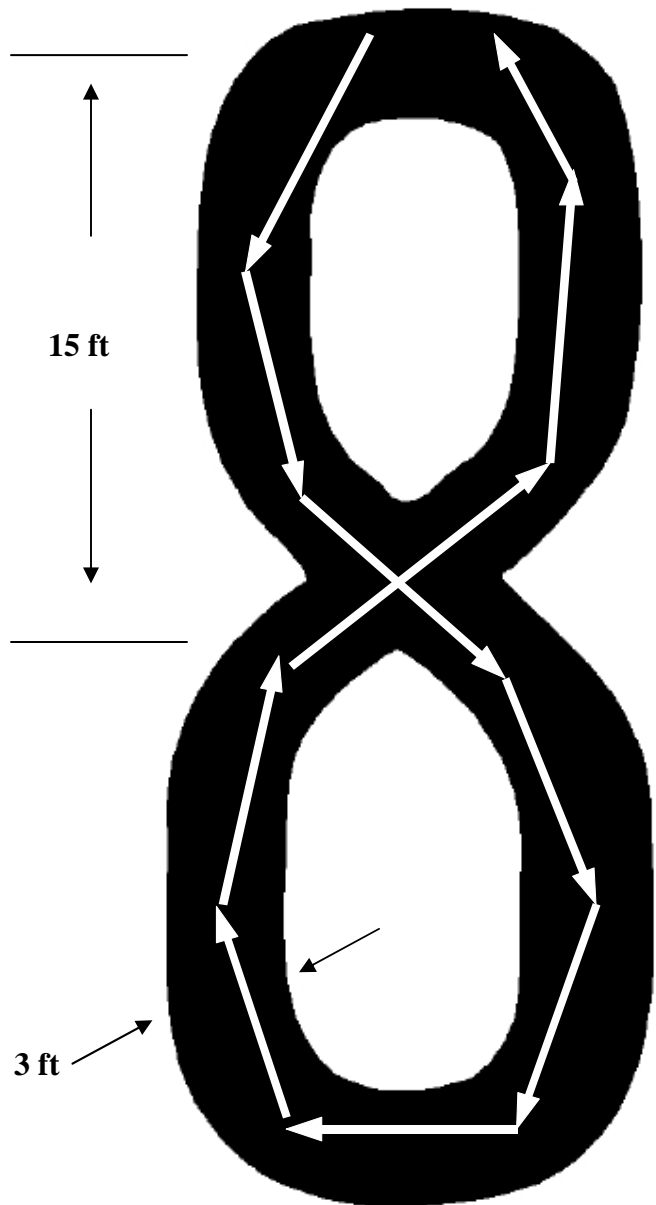
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Figure 8

Have the participants enter the figure 8 one-at-a-time. Allow two to three riders in the figure 8 together. The idea is for them to ride around several times without going outside the lines and without putting a foot down. Riders will enter and exit the figure 8 at the same spot.

With several bicyclists in the figure 8 at one time they will have to learn to yield to one another where the two circles intersect. Use this to teach about right-of-way at uncontrolled intersections and Four-Way Stop intersections.

- The bicyclist that arrives first goes through first
- When two bicyclists arrive at the same time, the one to the right goes through first



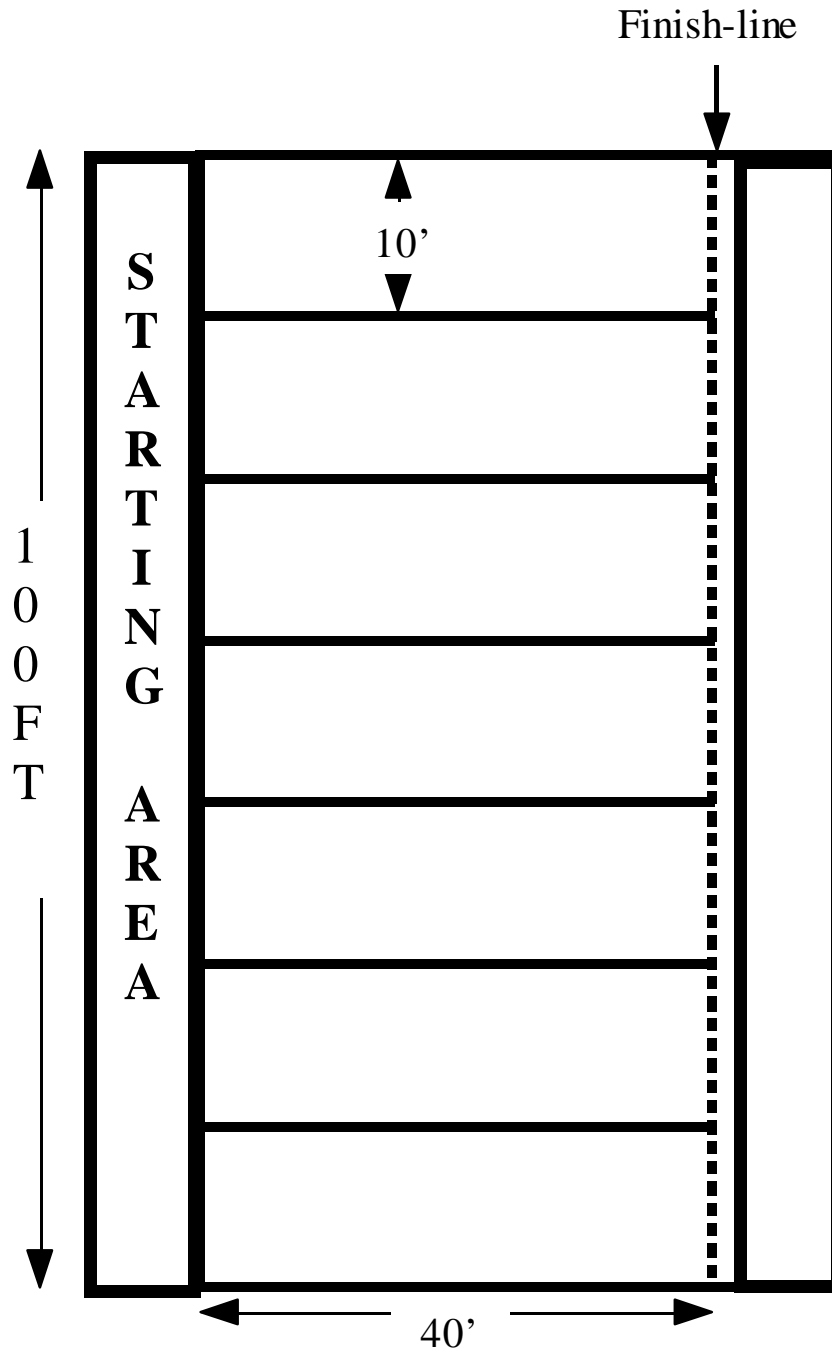
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Slow Race – Balancing at Slow Speed

In a slow race the last bicyclist across the line wins. But the trick is to do it as slow as possible without the rider taking his/her feet off the pedals.

The slow race helps bicyclists hone their low speed balance skills, which will contribute to their overall control at slow or fast speeds.

To run the slow race, line the contestants at the start line and, when everyone is ready, yell “GO!” Any racer that weaves outside his/her lane or puts a foot down is disqualified.



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