

Be E-Bike Safe

Bikes and e-bikes are a fun, convenient way to get around. However, e-bikes' higher speeds and greater weight can make them more dangerous compared to regular bikes.

In Marin County, three of every four bike crashes involving school-aged children that require paramedic assistance are e-bike related. **Parents, make sure your children follow these guidelines to stay safe while riding e-bikes.**



Wear a Helmet and Wear it Properly

You're more likely to have a crash resulting in a brain injury when you ride a faster e-bike compared to a regular bike. Additionally, helmets are required by law for cyclists under the age of 18. **Make sure your helmet fits and that it's properly adjusted and attached before you ride.** Helmets designed for increased speeds are ideal.



Practice Passenger Safety

E-bikes are heavier and harder to control with or without a passenger. **Carrying a passenger is legal only if your e-bike has a seat for another person; regardless, the extra weight can make it difficult to maneuver, slow down, and stop.** Passengers must also wear a helmet if they are under 18.



Be Responsible, Predictable, and Visible

E-bike crashes are more likely to lead to severe injury and hospitalization compared to crashes involving regular bikes.

Be responsible: follow laws and stop at stop signs.

Be predictable: ride in the same direction as traffic.

Be visible: wear bright clothing and use lights.



Slow Your Speed

The higher the speed, the higher the risk of severe injury. **At 20 MPH, it could take you almost four school bus lengths to fully stop to avoid an obstacle.** Take your time when riding and do not alter your e-bike's speed to go above the class limit.

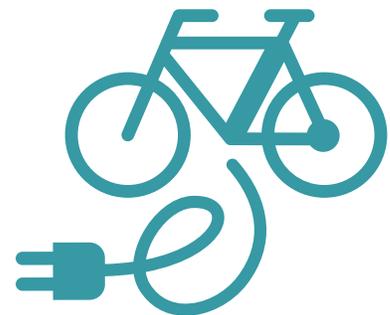
Buying an E-bike for Your Child? **What to Know**

E-bikes have a lot of benefits: they make it easy to get around, can give your child more independence, and can have a positive impact on the environment. **Before you buy your child an e-bike, though, first consider if they have the size, skill, and maturity to ride one.** E-bikes are faster, heavier, and harder to maneuver than regular bikes, and with increased speed comes increased risk of severe injury. Here are some considerations before you buy an e-bike for your child.

Types of E-Bikes

E-bikes come in three different classes. Depending on your child's age and ability, certain e-bikes may be illegal or ill-suited. When in doubt, opt for pedal assist so that physical activity is included in your child's experience.

	Minimum Age	Throttle	Bikeway Access
CLASS 1 20 MPH	All ages	No	Class 1–3 E-Bikes: Legal on any paved surface or trail on which a regular bike is allowed unless otherwise signed
CLASS 2 20 MPH	All ages – not recommended for children younger than 16	Yes	
CLASS 3 28 MPH	16	No	



OUT OF CLASS

- If an e-bike doesn't meet the above specifications, it is not legal on public roads.
- A throttle device modified to increase speed beyond 20 MPH is considered an out of class vehicle.
- If it has an electric motor that can exceed 750 watts, it is no longer classified as an e-bike.

Buying Considerations

- In California, all e-bikes must be sold with a label specifying the bike's wattage and type. **If it doesn't have a label, it isn't legal!**
- Follow the manufacturer's age recommendation; many do not recommend Class 2 for children under 16 years of age.
- Purchase e-bikes at local bike shops so they're guaranteed to be assembled properly and can be taken back for regular maintenance.
- E-bike brakes wear out faster than regular bike brakes, so they should be checked and maintained regularly.



Don't Fall for Popular E-bike Myths

~~Class 1 e-bikes can't go long distances or up hills~~

Class 1 e-bikes have more than enough battery power for local trips, and they make climbing Marin's hills a breeze.

~~Class 2 e-bikes can't go over 20 MPH~~

Class 2 e-bikes can be easily modified to exceed 20 MPH. This is dangerous for your child and makes the bike illegal to use on public roads if its label is not changed.

Benefits & Risks of E-Bikes

E-bikes are great mobility options, and they encourage independence and greener modes of transportation. However, they come with risks. **Remember, as a parent you are legally, financially, and morally responsible for the actions of your children.** Here are some things you should know to empower your child to make safe, healthy decisions.

- Helmets are required for all Class 1 and Class 2 riders under the age of 18, and all Class 3 riders must wear helmets. E-bike specific helmets are recommended to provide the most protection at higher speeds.
- Higher speeds lead to more severe injuries from crashes. Children should ride their e-bikes at appropriate speeds for their surroundings and never alter their e-bike's speed to go above the class limit.
- A passenger is only legally allowed if the e-bike has an additional seat. Passengers make e-bikes more difficult to slow, stop, and handle, and can cause distractions. Children are discouraged from riding e-bikes with a passenger and should never ride with more than one. Passengers must also wear helmets if they are under 18 years old.

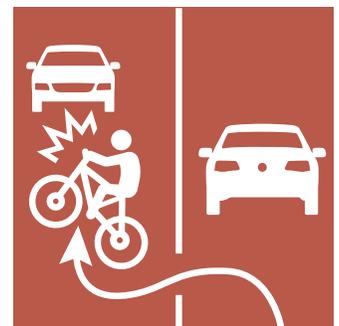


Is Your Child Ready for an E-Bike?

E-bikes are heavier and faster than regular bikes; they are harder to maneuver and take longer to stop. E-bike riders (and all cyclists) must follow the same rules as vehicles when riding on the road.

Your child should be experienced with safe bike riding. This includes:

- Riding safely with vehicles in the flow of traffic and at intersections
- Riding outside the door zone of parked vehicles; using hand signals for turns
- Safely avoiding obstacles on the road
- Giving pedestrians the right of way



If your child doesn't have the skill or experience to safely ride a regular bike, they shouldn't ride an e-bike.