

# 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.**



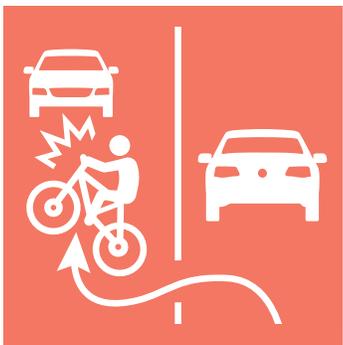
## Wear a Helmet and Wear it Properly

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.

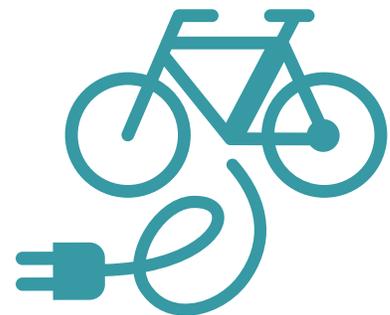
# Buying an E-bike for Your Child? **What to Know**

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
<b>CLASS 1</b> <b>20 MPH</b>	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
<b>CLASS 2</b> <b>20 MPH</b>	All ages – not recommended for children younger than 16	Yes	
<b>CLASS 3</b> <b>28 MPH</b>	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.



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## 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.

~~All Class II e-bikes are legal for children to use~~

Some e-bikes sold as Class II – such as Super 73 – can be shifted to speeds greater than 20 MPH using motor power alone.

These are considered motorized vehicles and must be operated by someone with a driver's license.

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## 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.



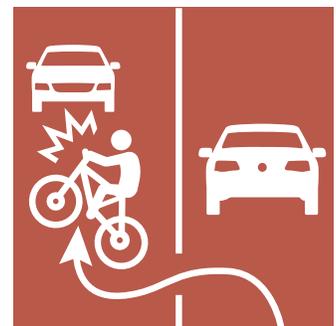
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## Is Your Child Ready for an E-Bike?

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.**