

SHARROWS?

What:

A “Sharrow”, or Shared Roadway Bicycle Marking, is intended to show both bicyclists and motorists the minimum distance cyclists should ride from on-street parked cars to prevent “dooring”.

Why:

“Dooring” occurs when a motorist opens their car door as a bicyclist rides by within the “door zone” (the distance an open car door protrudes from the car). This is a common collision pattern on streets that have on-street parking, no bike lane, and are regularly used by bicyclists.

Where:

Sharrows are used on streets with on-street parking, that are too narrow to include a bike lane.

How:

The markings are a reminder to both motorists and bicyclists that this is a shared lane. Therefore, both will be driving over the symbols. (See tips at right.)



Sharing the Road

Tips for Motorists:

- Leave at least three feet of passing space between the right side of your vehicle and bicyclists. When a road is too narrow for cars and bikes to travel safely side by side, it is safest for bicyclists to “take” the travel lane.
- Reduce your speed when passing a cyclist, especially if the roadway is narrow.
- After passing a cyclist on your right, check over your shoulder to make sure you have allowed adequate distance before merging back over.
- Look for bicyclists before opening your car door on the traffic side.
- Be aware of your blind spots. Always double check before turning or changing lanes. On streets with low speeds or downward slopes, bicyclists may travel as fast as cars.

Tips for Bicyclists:

- Don’t change lanes, or lane position, without checking to insure that it is safe to do so. After yielding to other’s right-of-way, change lanes.
- Don’t weave in and out of parked cars. This makes it hard for motorists to see you. Ride in a predictable manner, outside of the car door zone.
- Don’t hug the curb. Hugging the curb can make you invisible to other traffic, and therefore increases your crash risk when motorists are turning. Ride at least three feet from the edge of the road, further depending on conditions.
- Make yourself conspicuous with your clothing, especially at night. Wear bright, light colored clothing, and use proper lights and reflectors.
- Obey all traffic laws. Stop for stop signs, red lights, when exiting driveways, and yield to other’s right-of-way. Ride in the direction of traffic flow, never against it.

More Sharrow FAQs

Q: Bicyclists riding over these markings take up the lane, aren't they supposed to ride to the right?

A: The California Vehicle Code allows bicyclists to move from the right to avoid conditions that make it unsafe, and in "substandard width lanes". A substandard width lane is "a lane that is too narrow for a bicycle and a vehicle to travel safely side by side within the lane".

Q: Why can't cyclists just look inside the parked cars and move out when they see somebody in a car?

A: It is often impossible to see people sitting in parked cars. Although it is the auto driver's responsibility to open the door only when safe, it is the bicyclist who ultimately pays the price.

Q: So if I don't see these markings, then it's not a shared lane and bikes can't be there?

A: No, bicyclists are allowed on all roadways within the City limits (with the exception Hwy. 101).

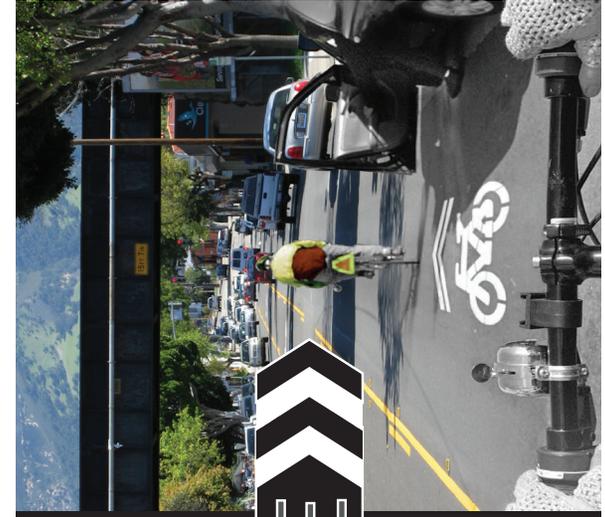
Q: Is the City going to start putting these on all streets that don't have a bike lane?

A: No. Streets selected for installation must meet a number of criteria. The lanes must be too narrow for motorists and cyclists to safely travel side by side within the lane, on-street parking is allowed, and the route is regularly used by bicyclists.

Q: I've never seen these markings before, why are they being used now and does anybody else use them?

A: These markings were approved for use in California in 2006. They are being installed as a mechanism to reduce collision patterns. Some of the other communities in California that have installed sharrows include: San Francisco, Berkeley, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

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In Shared Lanes...

CYCLISTS RIDE HERE



Go to
www.slocity.org
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