

# Glendale Sharrows: FAQ

**Q. I've seen new pavement markings on streets in Glendale. The marking is a bicycle with two arrows above it. What does it mean?**

A. These are new Shared Lane Markings also known as “sharrows.” They suggest where cyclists should ride to avoid being hit by car doors being opened by motorists. Although it is the motorists’ responsibility to check for cyclists before opening doors, riding too close to parked cars (in the “door zone”) can lead to injury. This type of collision is common and many inexperienced cyclists ride too close to parked cars.



**Q. But on some streets, bicyclists riding over the sharrows will take the entire lane. Aren't they supposed to move to the right?**

A. Not always. According to the California Vehicle Code (CVC-21202), bicyclists operating on a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic shall ride as close as safely practicable to the right curb or edge of roadway. Exceptions to this are when bicyclists are overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction, preparing for a left turn, avoiding unsafe conditions such as parked cars, or when the lane width is too narrow to share with a motor vehicle.

**Q. Can't bicyclists just look into parked cars as they ride and see if someone is about to open the door?**

A. Checking every parked car for a driver can be very difficult. Also, it is often impossible to see drivers when large parked vehicles block the view or vehicles have tinted windows.

**Q. If I see sharrows in a lane, is the lane only for bicycles?**

A. No. Sharrows are used in lanes shared by bicyclists and motorists when there is not sufficient width or a need for a bicycle lane. In contrast, bicycle lanes set aside a pavement area just for bicyclists and are marked by a solid white line and a different symbol.

**Q. So, if I don't see sharrows, then it's not a shared lane and bicyclists aren't supposed to be there?**

A. No. Bicyclists can ride on any street in California except for Interstates and other controlled access highways with signs specifically prohibiting bicyclists. Just as every street in Glendale has a 25 mph speed limit unless stated otherwise, bicyclists are allowed on every street with or without sharrows, bike lanes or bike route signs.

**Q. Are sharrows going to be on every street that does not have a bicycle lane?**

A. No. These markings will be used primarily on streets designated as part of the Glendale bicycle network, particularly on streets that do not have sufficient street width to allow for bicycle lanes and have a safe speed limit.

## Additional information about sharrows

Sharrows primary goal is to guide cyclists to ride outside the “door zone”, but they also discourage wrong-way riding which is illegal as well as dangerous.

Sharrows provide a visual cue for cyclists about where they should ride for safety and a visual cue for motorists about where to expect cyclists to be in the roadway.

Sharrows are fairly new to southern California, but are already in use in many northern California cities as well as cities across the United States.

Southern CA cities with sharrows include Long Beach, Pasadena, and Hermosa Beach. Northern CA cities using sharrows include San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland, and Palo Alto.

Cities outside California using sharrows include Denver, Portland, New York, Pittsburgh, and Seattle.

Sharrows don't require the removal of vehicle lanes or parking for motorists.

Sharrows don't require a change in motorist or bicyclist behavior in terms of the existing California vehicle code. They reinforce and help to better articulate proper and safe bicycling behavior as set by the vehicle code.

**Important/relevant California vehicle code (CVC) sections:**

CVC 21200 - Every person riding a bicycle upon a street or highway has all the rights and is subject to all the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle, including the provisions of law dealing with driving under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs, except those provisions which by their very nature can have no application.

CVC 21202 - a) Any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at such time shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway except under any of the following situations:

1. When overtaking and passing another bicycle or motor vehicle proceeding in the same direction.
2. When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway.
3. When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions (including, but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes) that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge. For purposes of this section, 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.

CVC 21202 - b) Any person operating a bicycle on a one-way street or highway with two or more marked traffic lanes, may ride as near the left-hand curb or edge of such roadway as practicable.

**For more information about Sharrows in Glendale, contact Colin Bogart at [colin@la-bike.org](mailto:colin@la-bike.org) (818) 334-9731.**

