Secure Your Bike

Bike theft is an unfortunate reality. While bicycle theft is not uncommon, it is preventable. Follow these simple rules to help secure your bike:

1. Register your bike with the National Bike Registry online and with the Hagerstown Police Department. Registration forms are available at police precincts, bike shops, and libraries.
2. Mark your bike with a unique identifier—write your name under the seat, on the tire side of rear, or on paper inside the handlebars.
3. Insure your bike against theft. Bike may be included on a homeowner’s or renter’s insurance policy.
4. Store your bike inside when possible, and never leave your bike unattended—even if it’s “just for a minute.”
5. Park your bike in a well-lighted area where it can be seen from inside buildings.
6. Never leave your bike locked in a public location for an extended period of time, especially overnight.
7. Avoid using the same locking location on a daily basis.
8. Use a bike rack wherever possible—parking bikes together improves security for all.
9. If bike racks are not available, lock your bike to a fixture that is firmly secured to the ground. Avoid locks inside a bus or building.
10. Use a secure lock that is resistant to cutting. Multiple, small locks are generally best. Cables, chains, and pad locks are easily cut with bolt cutters.
11. Do not use a lock longer than necessary as the extra space may be used as leverage by potential thieves.

Follow the 3-POINT LOCKING RULE: lock the:
- 1 Frame
- 2 Front Wheels
- 3 Back Wheel

Helmet & Clothing Safety

BIKE SMART—WEAR A HELMET! In Maryland it’s the law for those under the age of 16. Here are a few tips to help you avoid some common bicycle helmet mistakes:

1. Wear a bright-colored helmet to ensure that drivers and other cyclists can see you.
2. Choose a helmet with a seal of approval from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or Snell Memorial Foundation.
3. Replace your helmet if you hit a hard surface while wearing it—helmets lose their capacity to absorb shock after taking serious hits.
4. Never wear a helmet as protection for other activities since most helmets are made for a specific sport. For example, there are no helmets made for riding skateboards, baseball, and snowmobiling.
5. Teach kids to remove bicycle helmets when playing—especially before climbing on playground equipment or trees. There is a risk of strangulation from the chin strap during these types of activities.
6. Examine your helmet often for signs of damage—such as dents, cracks, or stresses.

For added safety, consider these tips on what to wear when riding your bike:

1. Avoid dark-colored clothing, especially during night time. This is to wear reflector or bright-colored clothing to be more visible on the road.
2. Avoid loose-fitting or flared pants legs—they can get caught up in the chain while riding.
3. Choose shoes that grip the bike’s pedals. Cleats, shoes with heels, or flip-flops can create problems while riding. Never ride barefoot!