

Bike Safety

By Karen Zhang

Karen in America

在美国，使用自行车作为日常交通工具的人并不多，这主要是受到道路交通及安全状况的影响。Karen本期将给大家讲讲美国的自行车安全问题。



I haven't done much biking in America because I realize most roads are not biker-friendly. If you are a biker, you must pay extra attention to the traffic in America. According to *The Economist*, a prestigious ^[享有声望的] English news weekly magazine, dying while cycling is three to five times more likely in America than in Denmark, Germany or the Netherlands.

No kidding. Although roads in America are wider and have better signs than in China, bike lanes ^[车道] are lacking, especially in big cities. Sometimes, bikers have to ride on the shoulders and obey the same traffic lights as automobiles. I notice Americans often wear helmets ^[头盔] and glaring ^[明显的] windbreakers ^[风衣] when cycling on the road. Some bikers even install rear-view mirrors on their bikes. These measures all help to enhance biker's safety.

However, riding bikes in America can be as difficult as in China because of the heavy traffic. In cities, if cars are parked by the

roadside, bikers have to take risks and ride in the car lanes. Generally speaking, it's too easy for American drivers to speed. In Virginia, for instance, the speed limit for city traffic is between 30 and 50 miles per hour. But cars usually run higher than the limits. According to Britain's Department of Transport, at 40mph, the chance of death in a collision ^[碰撞] is 85%. No wonder bikers in America have to look for routes with calmer traffic, such as through the park or on the back roads.

If you are a biker or you want to cycle in America, Portland ^[美国城市波特兰], Oregon is considered the most biker-friendly city in the country. The city has taken European-style steps to make streets safer for cycling, such as special traffic lights for bikers and concrete buffers ^[减震器] to protect bike lanes. That's why nearly 6% of commuters ^[使用公共交通工具上下班者] bike to work in Portland, the highest proportion in America. Anyway, watch out and have a safe ride! 🚲