

Safety Check



From the Safety Chick

Drat!
A Flat!

Riding alone or with a group. Neighborhood side street, main thoroughfare or country road. One thing continues to baffle me. Where does all the broken glass come from? Near busy intersections, the accident prone areas - that is where I expect to see it. There are intersections in my neighborhood that I ride 2-3 blocks out of the way just because of the debris and broken glass that are always present. It isn't just there -- it seems to be everywhere. Brown, green or clear on a sunny day it sparkles, you get a little warning. Some days you are in it before you realize it is there. The wider the shoulder or bike lane, the amount of glass seems to increase.

Glass cannot always be avoided. Sometimes you see it and want to swing around it but traffic does not allow you to do so. You may be riding in a group and not have enough room to safely maneuver. Perhaps you didn't see it. So, what to do. If you ride through a large area of glass, you may want to stop, PULL OFF THE ROAD and inspect your tires. Or, you choose to move on, see if you are lucky or unlucky that day.

Not so lucky, you get a flat. You have a couple of options. Get out your cell phone and call for help. You never know, maybe someone will be willing to drive 25 miles to pick you and your bike up and 25 miles back home. Then take your bike to your local bike shop and have them fix it for you. You can call a cab, the cab company will be happy to pick you up, they will even send a van at your request. Or you can fix the flat. Of course, to fix the flat it helps to have the tools and the know-how. If you are really lucky, you will be riding with someone that is an expert flat fixer and will kindly help you. (You know who your kindly tire fixers are.)

So if it is you that will be fixing the flat -- get a clue before you get stuck by the side of the road.

Move off the road.

Have the tools -- new tube, patch kit, tire irons, pump.

Have the know-how -- listed below are a few websites that have detailed instruction on how to fix a flat. I love the Jim Langley sites, he has a video of how to remove and replace the tire.

You might even consider trying it at home before you get stuck alone on the side of the road.

<http://www.bicyclinglife.com/HowTo/FixAFlat.htm>

<http://bicycleuniverse.info/eqp/fixflat.html>

<http://www.jimlangley.net/wrench/flattiretwo.htm>

<http://www.jimlangley.net/wrench/flattire.html>

Tailwinds