Bike Sharrows — FAQ

Why is the city putting these symbols on this street?
Shared lane markings (also known as sharrows) are used to indicate a shared lane environment for motorists and bicyclists. This is a shared lane, not a bicycle lane.

By law bicyclists and motor vehicle drivers both have a right to use our streets, and both have a responsibility to follow the rules of the road.

How should bicyclists use shared lane markings?
Ride over the shared lane marking in the same direction as other traffic. Use the marking as a guide to stay away from the opening door of parked cars and to be more visible at intersections. If you need to change lanes to make a turn or avoid a hazard, look behind for other vehicles, use hand signals and merge safely.

How should motorists use shared lane markings?
It is okay to drive over shared lane markings but slow down, drive safely, and yield to any bicyclists on the road in front of you. If you need to pass a bicyclist, use caution and give at least three feet. When parked, look for bicyclists before opening the door.

Why sharrows instead of regular bicycle lanes?
We are using sharrows because there is not enough room for bicycle lanes, or traffic volumes and speeds don’t necessitate a separate lane. We typically use sharrows to strengthen connections in the bike network by filling a gap in a continuous bike lane, transitioning cyclists across an intersection, or from bike lanes to a shared lane environment such as a mixing zone - turn lane for cars, and through or turn lane for bikes.

What does this mean for you?

**Bicyclists**
- Ride over shared lane markings which should keep you a minimum of 3 to 4 feet from parked cars—what is often called the dooring zone.
- Ride in the same direction as other traffic; unless indicated otherwise by signs or pavement markings.
- Look, signal and merge before turning.

**Motorists**
- Slow down, drive safely over shared lane marking if bicyclists are not present.
- Always expect bicyclists on the road and give at least three feet if you need to pass.
- Remember that bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motorists.

Where can I get more info about bike sharrows and bike lanes:
Go to [www.ddot.dc.gov/bike](http://www.ddot.dc.gov/bike)