

TV Vignette

Bicycle Safety – Animation

Scenario: Just outside their home in post housing, a Soldier takes his small child (boy or girl is irrelevant, but I will say for now it's a boy named Bobby) to show him his first bicycle and teach him to ride. Bobby is very excited and decides to immediately name the bike Max. On hearing his name, Max wakes up (a headlight mounted in the center of the handle bars shows eyes and mouth) and becomes alive. Max turns his headlight around to watch and listen as Dad instructs.

As Dad begins to show Bobby about riding by letting him sit on Max and hold the handle bars, Max interrupts with corrections. [Animation from here on should show Bobby acting out what Max is telling him. Perhaps a cute puppy could be following him around and maybe point at some things Max is telling him about.]

“Wait a minute. Always wear a helmet when you ride,” says Max, “and bright colored clothes.”

Bobby looks at Dad, then says to Max, “What else do I need, Max?”

“If you ride at night you need to turn on my headlight and have a light or reflector on my rear fender or behind the seat. There should also be reflectors in the wheel spokes. Plus you should also wear a reflective vest of some kind large enough to be seen at a distance.”

Bobby asks why he needs these things, and Max replies, “It's so car and truck drivers can see you better and avoid hitting you.”

“Dad,” says Bobby, “are you going to let me ride at night?”

“Well, not right away, but you'll probably need to ride at night sometime. Max is right, Bobby, you will need that stuff, not only to be safe but to help you mom and I to feel better about letting you ride your bike.”

“What else do I need to know, Daddy?”

“Son, you always need obey the traffic laws, too.”

Bobby looks puzzled. “Traffic laws? I thought those were for cars.”

“No,” Max says. “They're for bicycles, too. Ride with the same direction as car traffic, stop for stop signs and red lights, and always let someone on foot have the right of way, and for pete's sake, Bobby, don't ride me like I'm some kind of racing car. There's a time and place for that, and it's certainly not on your neighborhood streets. ”

“Wow,” says Bobby, “That's a lot to remember. Is there anything else?”

“One more thing,” says Max. “You need to take care of me.”

Dad says, “We call that PMCS in the Army, buddy. Drivers always take care of their vehicles before they go drive them.”

“That’s right,” says Max. “Make sure my handle bars are tight, too (he wiggles them like arms. Puppy jumps back and drops his front down and puts his wagging tail high as if to play), and that my seat is adjusted to the right height for you, and tight so it doesn’t slip,...:”

Bobby asks what the right height is. Max responds, “Adjust them so that when the pedal is all the way down, your leg is still slightly bent when you’re sitting on my seat.”

“Okay, Max. That’s an awful lot I need to remember. How much more is there?”

“You’ll be fine, Bobby. Just check my tires and wheels, before you ride me. Make sure the tread is good and there’s no cord showing, and check the spokes to make sure they’re all tight. Then check my chain to make sure it’s in the right place and it’s not too loose. Maybe you could put a few drops of oil on it from time to time, too.”

Puppy jumps around and yips.

Bobby looks at Dad for confirmation of everything Max has said, and Dad smiles and nods his head. “Yep, it’s all good,” as he reaches into a box and hands Bobby a new bicycle helmet.

Bobby is excited, “Wow! Awesome, Daddy!” Spot fades as Bobby puts on the helmet.

Final message on screen:

“Ride safe, Ride responsibly.

From your Fort Knox Safety office.”