

Josue Cedeno

Age: 34

Occupation: Business Analyst

Are you a T.A. member? Yes

Where do you commute to/from? Greenpoint, Brooklyn to Tribeca, Manhattan

What is your route? I ride from Greenpoint over the Williamsburg Bridge across Delancey Street down to Broome and over to Greenwich Street.

What kind of bike do you have? Specialized Epic Road Bike

What kinds of gear do you use (not gears on bike, but lights, helmet, rain coat, etc.)? Helmet, riding gloves, reflective vest, front/rear lights, horn, chain lock

How long have you been commuting by bike? One year

Why did you start commuting by bike? Most importantly you always get a seat and for that short period it doesn't feel like you are going to work—you're free! More and more people are choosing to bike to work everyday. Although it is still a bit scary, the freedom and exercise make it all worth while. I would recommend it to anyone who has a bike and is within reasonable distance to their job!

What do you wear when you bike to work? A

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change of wardrobe is a must! I normally bike with shorts, t-shirt and sneakers, as well as my normal bike gear. I bring a bag with a change of clothes for when I get to the office.

Do you ride in all weather?

I normally ride during fair weather. I try to avoid the rain as much as possible.

What kind of response do you get from co-workers? The normal response is "Wow! You bike to work."

What is the best commute you can remember? It's the simple things that make the best commute: beautiful days; all green lights and no [jerks] threatening your life with irresponsible driving.

The beautiful days are common, but unfortunately the last two are rare.

What was your worst experience/commute? I was hit by a car, coming home late one night from visiting some family members. I was riding in the bike lane on Berry in Brooklyn, a few blocks from home and I came to an intersection and noticed that a driver that was just rolling through the stop sign. I tried to swerve to get out of his way but he kept coming and hit me. Even though the street seemed nearly deserted people seemed to rush out from nowhere and surround me right away, asking if I was okay and calling 911. The police came quickly and took a report and EMS stabilized my back and neck and put me in an ambulance. I spent over 4 hours in the hospital being examined. I came away with a broken wrist and my bicycle was totaled but it would have been much worse if I wasn't wearing my helmet.

The next day a lawyer called me out of the blue which I thought was very strange. But it did inspire me to try to find a reputable lawyer to help me. I called Transportation Alternatives for advice on who to talk to and they pointed me to the Cycling Resources section of transalt.org. There were several lawyers listed there and I called all of them. All of them were very professional and offered great advice. One of them, Barton Slavin, gave me a checklist of all of the pieces of information I needed to collect in order to make sure that I could get a fair settlement from the driver that hit me.* I've been following that checklist and though it



is a slow process I feel confident that most of my medical bills and bike repair expenses will be covered by the motorist or his insurance.

The crash has made me into a big advocate for helmets and now when I ride I am much more cautious. I am still trying to readjust to biking on New York City streets.

Advice for new bicycle commuters? Start slow and remember you are not invincible. I've been hit by a car and it hurts like hell! I was lucky to survive and for that reason I strongly recommend that cyclists take every reasonable precaution. By reasonable I mean the basics—wear a helmet! Use your personal judgment to increase your personal safety. Once you're safe you are free to have a great time. Good riding!

Where do you park your bike? At work, we have a designated area for parking our bikes. At home, I leave the bike in the apartment. And when I'm on the go I try to find anything secure enough to hold my bike.

What's your riding style? Normally my style is very casual. However, it really depends on the situation.

What's the most memorable reaction you've gotten on your bike? I'm a big fan of the biker head nod—that look of approval and solidarity between riders. I love it!

*Note: Visit transalt.org/features/checklist.html for post-crash instructions. □