

### 360 Degree Pedal Lights

Most of us have both a blinky light on the back of our bike and a navigation light on the front to warn vehicles approaching from behind or in front that we are present. Yet there is evidence that most cycling accidents happen at, or near, a road junction where riders need to be seen from the side.

For an added degree of safety, Pedalite's 360 Degree Pedals have three directional LEDs (white forward, amber to the side, and red to the rear) shining from their sides and basic amber reflectors on the front and back to achieve 360° of visibility.

The winning feature of these pedals is their ability to generate and store energy to power the LEDs via the rotation of the pedal spindle. This means no batteries. It takes about 10 minutes of steady pedaling to build up the stored power, but the lights are active the moment you begin pedaling. While this stored energy is not limitless, it does provide 3-5 minutes of operating power when at a standstill. You don't need to remember to turn them on or off.

By daylight, the lights are obviously less noticeable, but still pop a little in the shade or cloud cover. They are more powerful at night when the lights are bouncing off the pavement and catching your eye with a flashing pattern. Because the Pedalite pedals are, by nature, mounted low on the bike, they are not meant as a stand-alone lighting system. However, it's nice to know if the batteries of your other light fail mid-ride, you're not left completely in the dark.

When these pedals first arrived at the office, some of my colleagues—dedicated commuters—scoffed at their weight, and the issue can't be ignored. They are a little heavy at 525g. If you are looking for fleetness or racing at night, this might not be your pedal. But for the average rider looking for a little extra safety, this is a very effective answer. I did not feel the extra weight would prevent me from leaving these pedals on my bike year-round.

There is a distinct top and bottom to the pedal. The bottom, with its rounded section to house the generator, is smooth, though not slippery. It

was a bit odd to have to flip the pedals over, but not a big deal. The top has a set of pins that increase grip which is a nice touch. You can also purchase compatible toe clips specially designed for the pedals—standard toe clips will not work.

Pedalite 360 Degree Visibility Pedal Lights are made from a NASA-developed, DuPont polymer and the polycarbonate lens is the same spec as bulletproof body armor. The LED bulbs are not replaceable, but their life is claimed to be over 100,000 hours. Good to go with a one-year warranty.

### Anklelite

Lightweight (97g) and weather-proof, this solar-powered safety light can be strapped onto your upper arm or ankle with a hook-and-loop closure. The straps also have reflective strips. A simple switch flips between constant light and a flicker pattern. Most of the surface area of this light is taken up by the solar panel. The small, yellowish lights emit a good four hours plus of light in both modes. It's not going to light up the night, it's more like the nice pleasant glow of a kids' night light. Like the Pedalite, the Anklelite is aimed at cars approaching from the side rather than the front and back.

This light does need a little bit of time to charge up—about 30 minutes of sunlight or artificial light will do the trick. At one point my Anklelite ended up stored in a dark basement for some time in the “on” mode, and when I pulled it out again, I found it would not hold a charge. According to the folks at Pedalite, when the charge is completely depleted like this, it will require a solid soaking (9-10 hours) in direct sunlight to charge it back up again. This did the trick for me. Even windows have filters and those energy saver bulbs aren't strong enough to completely top the charge off. They further recommend monthly maintenance by setting the Anklelite out in the natural sun a full day, especially during the winter months. Additionally, one should fully charge up before initial use and top off between rides. The little red indicator light will let you know when it's charged.

I like the idea of the Anklelite's solar panel and the pedals' generator to store energy and save on batteries. As both lights are just a little too weak to stand on their own, they are best paired with your existing light system.

[www.pedalite.com](http://www.pedalite.com)



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