

BICYCLING SAFETY

Choose the right bicycle for you. You don't have to be a competitive racer to appreciate the joys of cycling. You can improve your performance and your enjoyment by making sure that your bicycle is adjusted properly.

The right size bicycle is the difference between successful cycling and potential muscle strain or injury.

* **Frame Size: --**
Bicycles come in sizes from about 19" to 27" for adults. Frame size reflects the length of the tube that supports the seat ("seat tube"). Men's bikes—the kind with a horizontal tube from the seat to the handlebar stem—are sturdier than a women's bike. Many cyclists of both sexes prefer the "men's" variety. To determine the correct frame size, straddle the horizontal bar. There should be about 1" between the bar and your crotch.

Seats: -- Bicycle seats come in many styles. Try a few to find the one that's most comfortable. To check seat height, sit on the bike and pedal until one pedal is at its lowest point. If the height is correct the knee of the extended leg will be slightly bent. Keep seat angle as close to horizontal as possible since too much tilt can cause muscle strain and back problems.

* **Gears: --** Bikes with 15-18 speeds are the best choice. For touring a 10-speed is adequate. If limited to short distances on level terrain a 3-speed (or 1-speed) may be all that is ever needed.



Handlebars: --
Handlebars should be level with your seat and shoulder-distance apart. To check for

proper adjustment, sit on the front tip of the seat and holding the forearm parallel to the horizontal bar, try to grasp the handlebar stem. For proper fit, the fingers should just touch the stem. Improve your performance and enjoyment by making sure that the bicycle is built for you. Handlebars come in different styles so choose one that is comfortable and that allows switching hand positions. (Padded handlebars absorb excess shock.)

* **Toe Clips: --** Toe clips prevent the foot from slipping off the pedal and can be an important safety accessory for serious cyclists. To check for proper fit be sure that the ball of the foot rests on the center of the pedal and toes are comfortably enclosed by the clips themselves.

* **Helmets:** -- A bicycle helmet is a critical and required piece of safety equipment. Always wear a helmet when cycling. Helmets with stiff liners (as opposed to foam liners) offer better protection and come in a variety of sizes styles and colors. Helmets are required when riding on military installations. Helmets must meet the American National Standards Institute, Snell Memorial Foundation Standards, or the Economic Commission of Europe (EU only) for Bicycle helmets.

* **Cycle Away:** -- If the bicycle fits ride it! Enjoy the freedom of motion that comes with riding a well-fitted bike.

Make sure your bike is as ready for the adventure as you are. Check the following items and make sure they are in working order:

* **Chain** -- Clean, adjusted, and lubricated

* **Wheels** -- Clean, lubricated, and check those spokes

* **Tires** -- Good tread, properly inflated, no cuts

* **Cables** -- Clean, lubricated, and adjusted

* **Seat and Handlebar** -- adjusted to your height

* **Brakes** -- Properly adjusted and in working condition

Owners' manual – Use the owner's manual to check these and other items of equipment on your bike.

Dress properly for your protection. Wear brightly colored outer garments or a reflective vest. Bicyclists are hard to see in traffic. Head protection is a smart and required thing to use. Tie down loose pant legs, or you may take an extra trip over the handlebars.

Watch out for the other guy. Most drivers who hit bicycles say they never saw them, until it was too late. Avoid riding your bike in traffic and use bike paths whenever possible. Watch out for pedestrians and use your bell as needed to warn pedestrians before overtaking them on walkways.



DON'T TAKE
UNNECESSARY CHANCES!
FOLLOW SAFETY AND
COMMON SENSE RULES!