

## Learning to ride

### Balancing:

Here are 3 different ways to help a child to balance:

#### 🚲 Training wheels ("stabilisers")

When children are used to pedalling, steering and braking, raise the training wheels slightly, a bit at a time. Balance comes with practice!

🚲 **The undersized bike** Lower the saddle so they have both feet flat on the ground and the knees slightly bent. Practise balance by coasting along (children can put their feet down to stop a fall), then try pedalling. Gradually adjust the saddle to the correct position. Scooters (and bikes with pedals removed) can also help your child to balance.

🚲 **Running** Choose a wide safe flat space. Hold your child by the shoulders and run along behind. Don't hold the handlebars, or saddle and don't steer.

### Mastering riding

After balancing, the next step is to practise:

🚲 pedalling

🚲 riding in a straight line

🚲 starting (looking over the shoulder to check for traffic)

🚲 slowing down, stopping, and emergency stop

🚲 signalling, turning left and right at junctions



### Riding on the road:

- **Know your Highway Code and start by cycling on roads with light traffic.**

Watch out for turning vehicles (particularly near driveways and side roads), parked

cars (give them a wide berth and watch out for doors opening) and pedestrians.

Try to cycle approximately one metre away from the kerb. When riding with children and only one adult, it's best if the child leads and the adult cycles a bike length or half a bike length behind. In larger groups, try to keep close together, ideally with an adult in front and at the back of the group.

To learn about the skills needed for cycling on the road, it's best to sign up for a 'Bikeability' cycle training course.

Contact Shropshire County Council's Road Safety Team for more details on 01743 253260.



For more information on buying a bike or information on cycling visit:

[www.shropshire.gov.uk/cycling.nsf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/cycling.nsf)

[www.shropshirecycling.co.uk](http://www.shropshirecycling.co.uk)

Tel: 01743 253008

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# FAMILY FRIENDLY RIDES Getting started

Cycle rides are great fun for all the family, especially the kids. Whether you're cycling for fun or to get to school, cycling helps children become healthier, happier, more confident and independent. This guide gives you all the information you need to start cycling with your family.

### See inside for tips on...

- 🚲 Choosing a bike
- 🚲 Getting kitted out
- 🚲 Getting ready to ride
- 🚲 Learning to ride



## Choosing a bike

**Bikes for grown ups...** There are so many bikes to choose from. Apart from making sure it's the right size for you, it's down to what you like and where you plan to ride. For trips about town, choose a bike with mudguards and a luggage rack.



**Road bike**  
for road riding



**Mountain bike**  
for off road riding on rough ground



**Hybrid**  
for riding on roads and tracks



**Folding bike**  
for combining cycling trips with rail, bus and car travel

## Bikes for carrying little ones...

- 🚲 **Baby seats** (6 months to 5 years approx, 1 passenger)
- 🚲 **Trailers** (Birth to 5 years approx, 1 or 2 passengers)
- 🚲 **"Tag-slong"** or "trailer bikes" (4 to 9 years approx, 1 or 2 passengers)
- 🚲 **Towbars** (4 to 8 years approx, 1 passenger)



## Bikes for independent kids...



- 🚲 **Tricycles** (ages 1 to 3)
  - 🚲 **Scoot-along bikes** (ages 2-5)
  - 🚲 **Two-wheeled bikes** (age 3 upwards)
- Bikes should be marked British Standard BS6102/1.



**Choosing the right size...** Don't be tempted to buy a bike to 'grow into'. The frame has to fit from the word go. As a rough guide:

Suggested age range	Wheel size
3 to 6	12" (31 cm)
4 to 8	16" (41 cm)
7 to 12	20" (51 cm)
10+	24"/26" (61-66 cm)

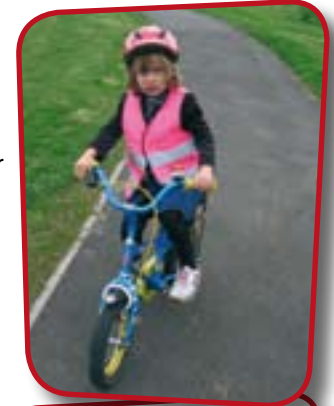


## Getting kitted out



🚲 **Helmet** - make sure that you can see and hear properly. The helmet should fit snugly and not slide around on your head. It should meet safety standard BS EN 1078 or Snell B95

🚲 **Clothes** - wear light or bright colours if possible. At night, add reflective materials to your clothes.



🚲 **Lights** - you must use lights and reflectors by law at night; use a white light at the front and red light at the rear, steady or flashing.

🚲 **Lock** - choose a lock that matches the quality of your bike and the security of your parking site. Make sure you lock your bike at all times.



## Getting ready to ride

It's important that your bike is in tip top condition so...

- 1 Test each brake by squeezing them and pushing the bike forward.
- 2 Pump up your tyres frequently.
- 3 Give your wheels a spin. They should spin freely and not rub on the brake blocks.
- 4 Check that both your saddle and handlebars are straight and tightly fixed.
- 5 Check that your front and rear lights work and are clean.
- 6 Oil your chain if your bike squeaks.

You don't need to be a car mechanic to drive your car; neither do you need to be a bike mechanic to ride a bike! Bike shops are happy to help you maintain your bike from a yearly service to mending a puncture.

## CYCLING CODE cycle with care!

- ◆ Always follow the Highway Code
- ◆ Be considerate to other users, and give way to pedestrians and horse riders
- ◆ Take particular care at junctions, when cycling downhill and on loose surfaces
- ◆ Ride in single file on narrow or busy roads
- ◆ Wear a helmet and high visibility clothing