



Thinking about riding to work, but not sure where to start?

# Try this **5** Step Prep

### Step 1 Gear up

Dig your bike out of the shed and dust it down. If you haven't ridden for a while, chances are the chain could do with some oil and the tyres will need some air. If you're not sure where to start, ask your local bike shop for advice.

### Step 2 Go for a cruise

Go for a ride with the kids or invite some friends to ride with you. Check out your bike set-up and make sure you're comfortable.

### Step 3 Get the low down

Talk to regular riders at work. Ask their advice on how to get to work, where to park your bike, where to shower (if you think you'll need to) and where to leave clothes.

### Step 4 Ease into it

Before riding to work, consider going for a trial run on the weekend. Remember to time your ride – most people are pleasantly surprised to discover how time-efficient cycling to work can be.

### Step 5 Ride to work

Enjoy your ride and celebrate when you arrive. You've achieved something you've dreamed of – fitting more exercise into your day, saving money and helping to save the planet!

Go on, give it a go –  
you won't look back

The Bicycle Network would like to thank the following program partners for their support:



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Everything you wanted to know about riding to work...but were afraid to ask!



The **10** most frequently asked questions about riding to work

[www.ridetowork.com.au](http://www.ridetowork.com.au)

# The 10 most frequently asked questions about riding to work



## 1 Will I feel good?

- Long-term health benefits include increased strength, improved muscle tone, decreased body fat and reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers.
- Cycling gets the endorphins flowing and is a great stress release.
- Remember, bike riding should not feel more strenuous than walking unless you want it to. Don't push yourself too hard at first.



## 2 Will it take too long?

- For city trips of less than 15km in peak hour, it's generally quicker to cycle than to drive or use public transport.
- You've also done your exercise for the day so you don't need to find time to go to the gym.

## 3 Do I need any special equipment?

- You need a bike, a helmet (it's illegal to ride without one) and a good lock.
- If you're planning to ride in the dark you'll also need front and rear lights.
- Make sure your brakes, tyres and chain are in good condition.
- Is your bike set-up ideal for your body size? Are you over-extending your upper body? Is your seat at the right height? Is your helmet fitted correctly?
- Ask your local bike shop for advice and possibly a bike service.

## 4 What should I wear?

- Clothes that are unrestrictive, light, warm and dry quickly are ideal. They should be bright for maximum visibility.
- You can ride in work clothes, or change at work. It depends on how far and fast you're riding and what type of clothes you wear at work.
- You can carry a fresh change of clothes with you or bring them in once a week by public transport or car.
- Ask other riders in your workplace about facilities for changing, showering and storing clothes.

## 5 How do I carry my stuff?

- If you're travelling light, try a backpack, courier-style bag or bike basket (pictured).
- Panniers (bags that can be fastened to a rack) are great for larger loads.
- Bike trailers are an option for large or heavy work materials.



## 6 How do I plan my trip?

- Start by speaking to regular cyclists and checking out maps available from your state/territory cycling organisation. Aim for a route that avoids fast traffic and narrow roads. You might be able to utilise off-road bike paths and on-road lanes.
- If you know someone who cycles in from your direction, ask if they'd like to ride with you. Most regular riders love to share tips and help others get started.
- Consider doing a trial ride on a weekend.

## 7 What if I live a long way from work?

- Consider jumping on the train with your bike in the morning and getting off at a reasonable distance from work.
- Have you thought of driving part of the way and riding from there, or cycling to the train station?
- Some people reduce the distance per day by riding only one way each day.



## 8 What if it rains?

- Wear a rain jacket, preferably with underarm vents and reflective or bright panels.
- Take a change of clothes for your legs or wear waterproof overpants.
- Exercise extra caution, just like when you drive a car in the wet. Avoid metal surfaces such as tram tracks and drains.
- If it rains at the end of the day and you'd rather not ride, leave your bike at work and ride home the next night or take your bike home by train.

## 9 What about riding in traffic?

- Always keep in mind the 'three Cs' when cycling in traffic:
- **Common sense:** Bicycles are recognised as vehicles and must follow the rules of the road. Riding on the left, obeying traffic signals and using hand signals before turning right are all essential for safe riding. Check with your state/territory cycling organisation for special road rules that apply to cyclists.
  - **Courtesy:** Be assertive but considerate by knowing the road rules and acting on them. If you make eye contact with motorists you can be more confident that they've seen you.
  - **Caution:** Find the safest riding route – try quieter streets or off-road bike paths. Ride predictably and leave yourself room to manoeuvre. Try to be aware of what's happening around you and look ahead, too. Avoid narrow spaces where you have little room for error. Watch for opening car doors. If possible, ride out from the door zone – a car door is about 1.5m wide. If you can't do this, then slow down to a speed where you can stop in time.

## 10 What if I get a puncture?

- Firstly, minimise the chances of this by making sure your tyres are in good condition and are inflated to the recommended pressure (the PSI marked on your tyres). Ask your local bike shop about tyres and tyre linings that offer extra protection against punctures.
- If you do get a puncture and you're carrying a basic repair kit, you can replace the tube or repair the old one quite quickly on the spot.
- If you haven't learned how to repair or replace a tube, devise an action plan. This might involve carrying a mobile phone or knowing where the nearest train line is.