



CYCLEWISE

**A GUIDE TO THE BENEFITS
OF TRAVEL BY BIKE**



CYCLING...

**ALTHOUGH MOST PEOPLE
THINK OF CYCLING AS A
LEISURE ACTIVITY, IT IS
ALSO A SUSTAINABLE
MEANS OF TRANSPORT
THAT HAS MANY BENEFITS
FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THE
COMMUNITY.**

You can build cycling into your daily routine by cycling to work, to school, to local shops, to local sporting facilities, to the train station or bus stop, or for fun. Cycling as part of a regular journey is a great way to take more exercise every day and improve your health.

This booklet gives you information and tips on how to make cycling part of your daily routine and enjoy the benefits of travel by bike.

We hope you find it useful.

The Healthy Habits Team

A large number of bicycles are parked in rows on a grassy field. The bicycles are of various colors, including purple, red, blue, and black. The text "CYCLING..." is overlaid in the center of the image.

CYCLING...

...THE BENEFITS

ENJOYING REAL BENEFITS IS AS SIMPLE AS CYCLING THE SHORT DISTANCE TO THE POST OFFICE INSTEAD OF TAKING THE CAR. JUST 30 MINUTES OF MODERATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY EACH DAY HELPS YOU FEEL BETTER, LOOK BETTER AND LIVE LONGER!

Replacing short car trips with cycling also helps to support your community by purchasing goods and services locally.

Cycling makes you look better!

- Cycling can help you manage or lose weight and stay in shape. A brisk 25 minute cycle burns around 100 calories. You can burn the same amount of calories by cycling at a slower pace for a slightly longer period.
- Low impact exercise such as cycling can help improve muscle strength, flexibility and endurance.

Cycling makes you feel better!

- Starting the day with some light physical exercise can help you be more awake and alert, helping concentration and memory.
- Every time you exercise you boost your immune system, helping you fight off illness. It can also reduce stress levels, increase energy levels and improve sleep patterns.
- Regular exercise can improve psychological well-being and help combat depression.

Cycling helps you live longer!

- Regular exercise can help reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer, obesity, strokes, respiratory disease and diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure) and osteoporosis.
- People who do regular exercise can enjoy the well being of people 10 years younger.

Cycling can save you money!

- Cycling is one of the least expensive ways to travel and shorter journeys provide a great opportunity to exercise instead of driving, which is good for your health, the environment and your bank balance!



CYCLING...

...
ON A BIKE YOU
CAN TRAVEL
3 TIMES FASTER
THAN YOU CAN
WALK
...

...GET PEDALLING

DEPENDING ON YOUR SPEED YOU CAN BURN BETWEEN 375-600 CALORIES PER HOUR. ANY OLD BIKE WILL DO TO GET STARTED. DUST THE COBWEBS OFF THE OLD ONE THAT IS IN THE SHED AND MAKE SURE IT'S SAFE TO USE, OR YOU COULD BORROW ONE FROM A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND.

Bikes come in all shapes and sizes and after using a bike a few times you'll have a better idea of what kind of cycling you enjoy and what kind of bike you want to cycle.

How far should I travel?

Don't push yourself too hard the first time if you haven't cycled in a while. Half an hour's cycling is a reasonable aim and you can build up to longer cycles if that's what you like to be doing. Remember to enjoy yourself; cycling should be fun, not a hassle!

Where can I go?

Try and avoid cycling on roads with heavy traffic unless they offer the most convenient route to where you want to go and your comfortable cycling them. Cycle paths, canals, parks and green spaces are likely to be the most pleasant relaxing route.

What should I take?

Remember to take a cycle helmet if you wear one, a waterproof jacket in case it rains and some sunscreen if the weather is good. You may also want to take plenty of drinking water and a map if you're unfamiliar with the local area.



CYCLING...

...
**BICYCLES WORK
BETTER AND LAST
LONGER WHEN
PROPERLY
MAINTAINED**
...

...SAFETY CHECK

BEFORE YOU (OR YOUR CHILD) GET ON A BIKE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO CHECK THAT IT IS ROAD WORTHY. A SAFETY CHECK SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE YOU USE A BIKE FOR THE FIRST TIME, OR IF IT HASN'T BEEN RIDDEN FOR A WHILE. YOU SHOULD AIM TO DO THIS MONTHLY IF THE BIKE IS USED REGULARLY.

Before you ride you need to check:

BRAKES

Check that the:

- Brake blocks are not worn.
- Brake blocks contact the centre of the rim when the brake lever is pulled.
- Brake cables are not starting to fray.
- Levers and the brake assembly have no loose nuts or bolts.

Brakes stop the wheel rotating but will not stop the bike if the tyres are poor and the wheel skids too easily. So you need to check that the tyres:

- Have sufficient tread.
- Are inflated correctly. With the force of your thumb you should just be able to make a dent in the tyre. (Bikes with narrow-tyres need higher pressure and wider tyres generally need less). The recommended pressure for tyres is often indicated on their side wall. You can check this with a tyre pressure gauge.

...
OVER 33% OF
KIDS WOULD
LIKE TO CYCLE TO
SCHOOL BUT ONLY
2% DO
...

CYCLING...



LIGHTS & VISIBILITY

If you're going to be cycling in the evening or at night, lights are essential.

- Lights and reflectors allow you to be seen at night or when it's getting dark.
- The Highway Code states that at night you must have white front and red rear lights lit and your bike must also be fitted with a red rear reflector and amber pedal reflectors.
- Before setting off make sure that your head and tail-light work and are sufficiently bright and that your lights and all reflectors are clean.

A bell is also an essential item to ensure you can be noticed and comes fitted as standard to all newer bikes.

STEERING

For safe steering the handlebars should control the direction of the front wheel without being too tight or too loose. Check:

- There is no rocking between the bike frame and the handlebars and wheel assembly: when you lift the bike by the handlebars the frame should lift at the same time.
- The wheel doesn't move left and right independently of the handlebars.
- The steering isn't too tight (the handlebars take an effort to turn) or too loose (the handlebars feel unstable).

STABILITY

Vibration can cause the nuts or bolts on a bicycle to become loose. The bike won't fall apart if the nuts and bolts remain tight.

- Check for sufficient tightness of each, and remember that some of the bolts need an Allen key.
- Perform a drop test: lift the bike a short way (5cm) off the ground and allow it to drop landing lightly on its tyres. Check any rattle you hear when the bike drops.

A photograph of a busy road intersection. A traffic light on a tall pole shows a red light. A queue of cars is stopped at the intersection. In the foreground, a yellow bollard with a blue circular arrow sign pointing left stands on a small island. A white bus is visible in the background on the left. The sky is overcast.

CYCLING...

...
CYCLISTS CAN
EASILY AVERAGE
10 MILES AN HOUR,
EVEN WHEN THE
STREETS ARE
CONGESTED
...

...TO WORK

IT IS WORTH PLANNING YOUR ROUTE CAREFULLY. BIKE LANES, BIKE PATHS AND RELATIVELY QUIET STREETS ALONG THE ROUTE WILL MAKE YOUR RIDE SAFER AND MORE PLEASANT. SOMETIMES A ROAD PARALLEL TO A MAJOR ROAD PROVIDES LOWER TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND BETTER CYCLING. THE HEALTHY HABITS TEAM CAN HELP YOU PLAN YOUR JOURNEY AND PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON LOCAL ON AND OFF-ROAD ROUTES.

On busy roads where traffic is often congested, travelling by bike can often be significantly faster than travel by car.

It is a good idea to do a test cycle of your route before you start commuting by bike to get an idea of how long it takes. It is also a good idea to leave a little bit earlier the first few times you cycle until you get used to your route and to allow for traffic and unforeseen events.

Some people commute for part of their journey to work by bike and the rest by public transport or car. This allows them to incorporate exercise into a journey that might otherwise be too long to conveniently cycle. It may be possible to gradually increase the portion of the journey cycled as fitness and confidence increases.

A middle-aged man with white hair, wearing a dark green jacket over a white shirt and black trousers, is standing next to a silver bicycle. He is holding the handlebars with both hands, and a white plastic bag is hanging from the right handlebar. A black messenger bag is slung over his shoulder. He is standing on a paved path next to a black metal fence. In the background, there are green trees and a grassy area. The word "CYCLING..." is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image, with three small white circles following the word.

CYCLING...

LOOK GOOD FOR WORK

In most cases it is best to change at work rather than cycling in your work clothes.

You can keep your clothes tidy by:

- Rolling rather than folding clothes and shaking them out when you arrive.
- Taking tomorrow's clothes today and leaving them on a hanger overnight.

KEEPING YOURSELF FRESH

If you have a reasonably relaxed commute you won't necessarily need to freshen up when you get to work. However it is probably a good idea to shower at your destination if your cycle to work makes you break a sweat.

Lots of work places have showers and it is worth checking with your employer to see if there is one available. Even if there's not, you may be able to arrange to use a shower at another business within a shared building or at a local gym.

CYCLE PARKING

It is important to find somewhere to safely park your bike. Your work place may have dedicated indoor or outdoor cycle parking or there may be somewhere secure you can store your bike. Ask your employer, security staff or other cyclists.

Whatever you do, don't simply leave your bike somewhere without checking it's okay and make sure you lock your bike to the stand provided if it's in a public place.

CARRYING STUFF

Just because you're cycling doesn't mean you can't carry anything. Most bikes are designed to take bicycle racks and panniers (saddlebags made for bicycles) to carry additional weight safely and keep the bike stable and a standard backpack is fine for lighter loads.



CYCLING...



...TO THE SHOPS

Cycling is the ideal alternative to driving to your local shop.

- You don't need to find a car parking space.
- You save money on fuel and running costs.
- You can exercise as part of a shopping trip.
- It is easy to stop and talk with friends and neighbours.
- You will support local businesses.

You may think you can't do a proper shop without you car but:

- Many shops do home deliveries so you can buy a big order and arrange to have it delivered to your home.
- You can also buy less and shop more often. This is a great way to make sure you always have the freshest foods and it gives you the opportunity to get some exercise rather than being stuck in a car.

...
**NEARLY 75%
OF JOURNEYS
WE MAKE ARE
UNDER 5 MILES**
...

**CYCLING FOR 16
MINUTES USES AS
MUCH ENERGY AS:**

SWIMMING BREAST STROKE

FOR 10 MINUTES,

PLAYING FOOTBALL

FOR 12 MINUTES,

DOING AEROBICS

FOR 16 MINUTES,

WEIGHT TRAINING

FOR 17 MINUTES,

WALKING

FOR 20 MINUTES...

SO GET CYCLING!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON HOW
TO GET CYCLING, OR DETAILS OF CYCLE
ROUTES IN YOUR AREA, YOU CAN GET IN
TOUCH WITH THE HEALTHY HABITS TEAM
OR VISIT US AT THE HEALTHY HABITS SHOP:

55 COWGATE, KIRKINTILLOCH, G66 1HW



CALL US 0141 777 3020

EMAIL HEALTHYHABITS@EASTDUNBARTON.GOV.UK

VISIT WWW.EASTDUNBARTON.GOV.UK/HEALTHYHABITS

SOME WEBSITES OF INTEREST

National cycle network:

www.sustrans.org.uk

Cycle maps within your area:

www.cyclecityguides.co.uk

All aspects of cycling within Scotland:

www.cyclingscotland.org

The Highway Code: Rules for Cyclists:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Highwaycode/DG_069837

If you do not have internet access at home, pop into your local library and they will be able to show you how to use the internet access.



Visit us at the Heathy Habits Shop: 55 Cowgate, Kirkintilloch, G66 1HW
call us 0141 777 3020 email healthyhabits@eastdunbarton.gov.uk
visit www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/healthyhabits