



Bicycling Basics

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1. **Begin well fueled.** You want to avoid running out of energy near the beginning of your ride.
2. **Be self sufficient – carry spares.** Carry a spare tube, a patch kit, a tire iron and a pump for air.
3. **Learn how to do minor field repairs,** especially tire repairs. You can learn this at your local bike shop. The sport wouldn't be where it is without your local bike shop – support your local bike shop!
4. **Stay aware on your bike.** Keep your situational awareness. Biking is fun but it requires more mental concentration than sitting on the couch. It can become frightening and unsafe quickly.
5. **Be courteous. Remember you're not the only one on the road or path.** This is a corollary to No. 4. Be safe, be courteous, be tolerant. Other people may walking or skating. Get out of the path when you stop. Others may not be watching and hit you.
6. **Stay hydrated.** Carry plenty of water. Drink at least one full bottle of water for every hour you ride. Carry energy bars and electrolyte replacements for rides longer than one hour. Eat often – little bits. Your body will require more than liquids for longer rides.
7. **Plan your ride.** Unless you are going to an area that's a no-brainer, carry a map or some other orienting device like a GPS.
8. **Avoid overdoing it.** You're not trying to beat Lance Armstrong. Biking should be fun. Ride within your own abilities and physical limits. Smart people rest – proud people bonk out!
9. **Maintain your bike.** Your local bike shop can help you. Tune your bike at least once a year. If you can't do it yourself, take it to the local bike shop.
10. **Dress appropriately and safely.** Bike gear may look geeky, but it has been refined over the years. Wear a helmet every time you ride your bike and consider wearing gloves. Be prepared – the weather may change. Be visible to others if you're riding on the road. Visit your local bike shop for help with clothing choices.