

LEARNING TO RIDE A BIKE

This video from Cyclists' Union Fietsersbond shows you how to learn to ride a bicycle: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sclznc0KzqM

Preparations

- It is easiest to use a folding bike (because it is easy to adjust) with hand brakes, without gears and wheels of at least 20 inches.
- Find a safe, quiet place to practise (for example an empty parking lot).
- Wear comfortable shoes and no loose clothing (dress, wide trouser legs, scarf).

Brakes

- The rear brake is usually on the right side of your handlebars and the front brake on the left: check which brake is on which side on your bike.
- Use the rear brake to brake.
- Use both brakes if you have to stop suddenly.
- Never brake with the front brake alone: this will only lock the front wheel and cause the rear of your bike to rise and you may fall.
- Always keep both brakes pressed when getting on and off the bike, so you are in control of your bike.
- Do not use your feet to brake. This won't slow you down enough, especially when you are going fast.

Walking on your bike

- Adjust your saddle to the right height: sit on the saddle, put your feet flat on the ground on both sides of the bike and make sure your knees are slightly bent.
- Take on a relaxed posture, relaxed hands, thumbs around the handles.
- Sit on the saddle and move the bike by walking. Walk as you would normally do: left-right-left-right.
- Look at a point in the distance, don't look at your bicycle.
- While walking, make turns to the left and to the right, do a figure eight or slalom. This way, you will get used to the movements of the bike.
- The next step is walking while sitting on your bike, but with both legs at the same time. Move both feet forward, push off and let the bike roll out with your feet off the ground.

Cycling

- Sit on the saddle, put the right pedal at three-quarters height, put your right foot on the pedal, push the pedal down with your foot and push off with your other leg. Brake with the rear brake until you come to a stop again. Practise this several times.
- Sit on the saddle, put the right pedal at three-quarters height, put your right foot on the pedal, push the pedal down with your foot and push off with your other leg. Once you have speed, put your left foot on the pedal. You are cycling! Immediately press your rear brake, stop and put your feet back on the ground. Practise this a number of times: cycling, braking, stopping. Don't go too fast. It is important to maintain control of your bike. If you immediately go very fast, it can be difficult to brake and stop.
- Practise making turns, putting out your hand and looking back while riding your bicycle.
- Raise your saddle in small steps.

On the road

- Always pay attention to the traffic around you!
- Make sure you are clearly visible and always put your front and rear lights on in the dark.
- Always cycle on the right-hand side of the road.
- Is there a bicycle path or a bicycle lane? Then that is where you should cycle.
- Cycling on the sidewalk is not allowed.
- Cycling on the motorway is not allowed.
- Cycling on the highway is not allowed.
- Are you turning left or right? Look behind and beside you to see if you can make a safe turn and extend your arm in the direction you want to turn. Point to the right with your right arm if you want to turn right and point to the left with your left arm if you want to turn left. This will tell other traffic users where you are going.