



Tips for beginner cyclists

There is a common misconception that if a child hasn't learnt to ride before they have outgrown kids bikes with training wheels, they've 'missed the boat'. This doesn't have to be the case! Here are some tips to get them pedalling! Remember to keep it fun and use games to practice.

-  Practise in a traffic-free area - find a place that is large, flat, smooth and grassy or paved.
-  Properly inflate the tyres, it will help avoid punctures and make a smoother ride. Look for the recommended pressure printed on the tyre sidewalls.
-  Remove pedals using a pedal wrench and lower the seat until the rider can put both feet on the ground when standing over the frame.
-  Emphasise balance first and pedalling later.
-  Check hands are placed on the grips of the handlebars.
-  Remain stationary - practise balancing on the bike.
 - Lift one foot off the ground
 - Shift weight onto other foot
 - Repeat on the other side, rocking left to right
 - Try lifting both feet at the same time
-  Start moving, try scooting off one foot at a time so they can get the feel of balancing.
-  Once adept at scooting, challenge them to push forward off the ground using both feet, pick up both feet and coast. Practice looking ahead.
-  Once they have mastered the ability to scoot and coast the bike move on to turning and steering. Start with big, easy, looping turns.
-  Once the rider masters coasting, turning and looking ahead while riding, it's time to put the pedals back on the bike. For now, keep the seat in its lowered position so the rider can put both feet on the ground to stop.
-  Practise moving from a stopped positioned using the power pedal. The "power pedal" position allows the rider to have the most powerful first pedal stroke, resulting in a smoother and faster start
 - Identify dominant foot (same side as the hand you write with)
 - Align pedal of dominant foot with bike frame down tube
 - Place dominant foot on the pedal
 - Transfer weight and drive the pedal down
-  Steady the rider as he or she moves forward by placing a hand on a shoulder or the bike saddle - but let them learn how to balance and feel comfortable on the bike without assistance.
-  As they get the hang of pedalling a bike, they can start practicing turns. Encourage them to do large circles and figure 8's.
-  Practise gently pressing on the coaster brake until they can use it without wobbling very much.
-  Once they can ride easily, get on your bike and have them follow you.