

Top tips for CYCLING TO WORK

CAMCYCLE

cambridge cycling campaign

1) Choose a cycle that works for you and your journey

Road bikes can be good for a longer commute, while an upright bike works well for a short or medium journey. A cargo bike can be used to combine the school run with a cycle to work and an e-bike is ideal for some help up hills or over a long distance.

2) Save money with a cycle-to-work scheme

Investigate whether your workplace offers cycle purchases via the government-backed cycle-to-work scheme. This allows you to buy a cycle tax-free and can save you a lot of money. Some workplaces also offer membership schemes which allow you to rent rather than buy a cycle.

3) Add the right accessories

You are legally required to have a rear red light and white front light, plus red rear reflector and amber pedal reflectors. A good strong lock is essential to keep your bike safe. Mudguards and puncture-resistant tyres are a practical investment and you may wish to carry a puncture repair kit.

4) Wear clothes that keep you comfortable

Try to dress in layers because you often warm up while cycling. Don't forget a waterproof coat (and possibly trousers) in case of rain, and avoid anything that might get caught in the chain. You may choose to cycle in sports or cycle kit and change once at work. This is a great option if you have a long commute or to avoid your work clothes getting dirty.

5) Select a way to carry your baggage

There are lots of options and your choice may depend on the length of your journey and the type of cycle you ride. Rucksacks are safe and convenient but may become heavy or make you sweat. Panniers offer a functional alternative and mean that the weight is carried by your bike. If you choose a basket, a cover will protect the contents from the rain and stop things falling out. Saddlebags and handlebar bags may work for those travelling light.

6) Test your route

Your route may vary depending on the time of day and year so try some test rides to help you become confident with the route and journey time. If you take the train, make sure you know the rules on types of cycle carried at peak and off-peak times. Alternatively, you could consider the bike-train-bike system, where you keep a bike at one or both ends of your train journey.

7) Build your confidence

Cycling in a busy city can be intimidating so find someone at work who already cycles and ask their advice. You could even go for a test ride together. Also consider getting cycle training to boost your knowledge and confidence cycling on the road.

8) Maintain your cycle

For smooth, enjoyable rides, it's important to keep your bike in good working order. Check your brakes are working and your tyres are pumped up. You should get your bike serviced at least once per year.

9) Join or start a Bicycle User Group (BUG)

A BUG represents those who cycle to work and communicates cycling issues to relevant stakeholders in the organisation. Employers should provide staff with secure, covered cycle parking and should also be encouraged to offer showers, a place to change, somewhere to store damp cycle kit and a pump for inflating tyres. A BUG can also be used to organise workplace cycle events like a cycle to work day with breakfast and bike buddying for newbies.

10) Spread the word!

If you're enjoying cycling to work, share your experiences with others to encourage them to try it too. Talk to people in your workplace - find out the issues with their current commute and explore ways cycling could help solve these problems. Listen carefully to their concerns and don't dismiss any fears they might have. Perhaps offer to cycle their route to work with them on a day off and help them build confidence to ride it more regularly.



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