

Cycling: Dr Greg's top tips



Why cycle?

Cycling is a fun way to get around and a great activity to enjoy in your spare time, as well as very good exercise. As the old saying goes, once you've learned how to ride a bike you never forget – so if you haven't cycled since childhood, don't worry! You'll pick it up again in no time.

There are lots of benefits to cycling, including:

- **It's a low-impact form of exercise, which means it's suitable for most people of any age, even those who are injured or overweight**
- **It helps to burn fat**
- **It strengthens and tones the legs and bottom**
- **It raises your heart rate and improves cardiovascular fitness**
- **It can help you to achieve and maintain a healthy eight.**

Cycling makes you feel good and can give you a buzz, especially if you enjoy riding fast!

Check out Dr Greg Whyte's tips for getting started, and for making the most of cycling if you're already a regular...

Before beginning any exercise programme, it's a good idea to consult your doctor. Always take sensible precautions to avoid injury when exercising and seek medical help if you feel unwell. When cycling, always wear a helmet.



Getting started



Pick the perfect bike Think about what sort of cycling you want to do. Whether you'll be using your bike to travel to work, go mountain-biking or building up to long rides on the roads, there's a type of cycle to suit you. A good shop will be able to offer you advice.

Do some research!



Build up your fitness Your legs might feel tired quite quickly when you first start cycling but don't worry, they'll soon get accustomed to riding. Start off at a comfortable pace and, as your fitness improves, you'll find yourself feeling stronger and more confident. It's best to start with short rides of 20 minutes or less and build up your mileage by around 10 per cent each week.

Try a spinning class! Spinning is a hugely popular type of fitness class. It involves cycling to music and, although it's challenging, it can be great fun. Don't be intimidated if it looks or sounds difficult – classes are structured so that each person taking part can exercise in accordance with their own ability.

↖ Check gym timetable!

Staying motivated

Stick to quiet roads If you're riding on the road, choose quiet locations if possible. This will make your journey more enjoyable, less hectic and safer.

Keep your bike clean Be sure to clean your bicycle regularly. Not only will this mean it looks good, but it will also give you a smoother, more comfortable ride and prolong the life of your bike. Your local cycle shop will be able to show you how to clean and oil your bike. Its brakes, chains and gears should also be serviced at least once a year.

Did you know?

15% of women cycle to work three times a week, while 16% use their bikes once a week to run errands or travel to see friends and family.



Enjoy it There's nothing quite like the experience of peddling along under your own steam! It's one of life's simplest pleasures, so take the time to enjoy cycling – and appreciate how much your fitness is improving each time you go out to ride.