

Lock

This can be a cable lock, a chain with padlock or ideally a rigid metal D-lock. More information on different types of locks is given in the *Cycling: security matters* leaflet in this series.

Lights

A white light on the front of the bike and a red light on the rear are required by law when cycling in the dark. Most lights are designed to be quick release so always remove them when leaving your bike. See also the *Cycling: in different conditions* leaflet in this series.



Check list

- ✓ Essential items: lights, a pump, gloves for winter cycling, puncture repair kit, lock.
- ✓ Longer-distance cycling: padded shorts or underpants, layers of clothing, water bottle, snacks, maps.
- ✓ All-weather cycling: waterproof jacket and trousers, reflective clothing.



photo: Julia Bayne/Sustrans

Water bottle

When cycling long distances, or in warm weather, it is possible to become dehydrated so don't forget to take plenty of liquid. Bottle carriers that fit to the bike frame are available cheaply from bike shops together with bottles, but can usually take one litre plastic squash bottles.

Snacks for long journeys

You'll burn up plenty of energy on a long cycle trip, so remember to carry some spare fuel.

Maps/guidebooks

There is a wide range of these, covering all parts of the country. See also *Cycling: finding your way* leaflet in this series or visit www.sustrans.org.uk for a range of maps and guides to buy on-line.

Spare clothes

On day trips, pack an extra layer as your body temperature may drop when you stop for a break.

Further information

Other leaflets in this series:

- Cycling: the right bike for you
- Cycling: basic bike maintenance
- Cycling: in different conditions
- Cycling: security matters
- Cycling: sharing your route
- Cycling: with children
- Cycling: finding your way

For more copies of this leaflet or others in the series, or for advice on where to cycle, including maps and guides, contact Sustrans on 0117 929 0888 or visit www.sustrans.org.uk

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Cycling
clothes and accessories





Cycling clothes

For the majority of short local cycling trips, there is generally no need to wear special clothing, any more than you would for a walk to the shops. In fact most of the time it's possible to cycle in smart clothes, provided they allow you the right movement. However, once you realise how easy and enjoyable cycling can be you may start making longer journeys and cycling on a regular basis in varied weather conditions.

Gaining confidence on a bike is generally a lot easier than learning to drive a car. And once you're in the saddle, it's often quicker and easier to get around by bike. This leaflet is one of a series giving tips to help you get going - and enjoy the freedom and convenience of cycling.

Cycling Clothes

On top

On longer journeys, several layers will allow you to adjust to different temperatures. T-shirts, thermal vests and jackets should be long enough to cover your back. A fleece is ideal for keeping warm on chilly days and a shower/waterproof top with zips (to help adjust to temperature changes) can be packed in your bag just in case. Breathable waterproof clothes tend to be expensive, but are a good investment for regular cyclists offering maximum protection while allowing sweat to escape.

Shorts & trousers

Padded cycling shorts or underpants, whether loose or lycra, can guard against discomfort on long journeys and are available in male and female versions. Leggings or tracksuit trousers can go over these in the cold weather and a pair of waterproof trousers is essential if you intend to cycle in all conditions.

Gloves

Your extremities are much more susceptible to cold on a bike than when you are out walking so a pair of gloves is a must in winter.

Shoes

Trainers or everyday shoes are fine for most journeys, although specialised shoes which clip into the pedals are available for the really dedicated.

Helmets

A helmet can provide vital protection if you fall off your bike, so they are a particularly recommended for young children learning to cycle. You should only buy a helmet if it carries a CE mark and one of the normal safety standards e.g. BS683:1989, A.S.2063, ANSI., IZ. 90.4 SNELL, B90 or B95. It is essential that it is comfortable and fitted correctly – a badly fitted helmet can be a liability not a protection. A good cycle shop can help you choose the right size. If a helmet has been involved in a serious accident or fall then replace it. If fitting a helmet on a child, take great care not to pinch the skin under the chin, as this is a sure way of putting them off wearing it.

Cycling Accessories

Carrying loads

For small loads, a bumbag will suffice and small rucksacks are fine for carrying light loads but can make you hot. For heavier loads it's advisable to invest in some panniers. These are specially adapted bags that fit onto a cycle rack usually fitted over the rear wheel. Front racks and panniers are available and are useful if you have a child seat on the back of your bike or when combined with rear panniers for cycle touring. Barbags that fit onto the handlebars or pouches mounted underneath the saddle are useful for maps, money and tools – but remember to remove these from your bike when locking up.

Pumps

You will usually have to buy this essential tool separately. There are two basic types of tyre valve: the traditional Presta valve and the wider Schraeder valve (like that on a car tyre). Make sure you get a pump that fits the right type of valve – or choose one that fits both types. Inflate your tyres to the recommended pressure specified on them (eg 60psi). Correctly inflated tyres make cycling a lot easier, improve handling and reduce the risk of punctures.

Puncture repair kit

Available from any bike shop, this will contain rubber patches, glue, marker crayon and abrasive paper. For advice on mending punctures, see *Cycling: basic bike maintenance* leaflet in this series.

Reflective clothing

Wearing a reflective vest or jacket will make you substantially more visible to other road users and is highly recommended if you are going to do much cycling at night or in heavy traffic. High visibility clothing is available from workwear shops as well as cycle retailers.



Panniers make it easier to carry a load

