

Let's Go for a Bike Ride...

April 2007

The Right Bike For You

Used with permission from www.bikesrnottoys.com/

Now that you have decided to buy a bike, which type should you pick?



Trail bikes or light-duty mountain bikes

Similar looks and features as mountain bikes, but usually not as light, rugged, nor expensive as real mountain bikes. This bike is fine for trail and road use but won't take the abuse mountain bikes can. Ideal for commuters, family and recreational riding.

Comfort bikes

Similar to light mountain/trail bikes, but with less distance between seats and handlebars, a higher front end for more upright seating. Usually have shock-absorbing seat posts for seat comfort, some have flexible, shock absorbing handlebar stems or telescoping, shock absorbing front forks, wider, softer saddles, and wide pedals. Ideal for comfortable recreation, trail, commuter users. Very popular with adults wanting more comfort and more upright seating.

Mountain bikes

Have rugged stronger components and frames, intended for rougher, off-road riding in rugged terrain, over rocks and logs, but are often used on-road. Have fat knobby tires for more traction and cushion, flatter-profile handlebars for a more leaned-over seating position, very low gears for easier hill climbing. Some have suspension systems for greater shock absorption. This bike is for riders wanting the off-road experience on a bike.

Road, touring, and comfort bikes

Built for pavement riding, increased aerodynamics, and speed. Have smoother, narrow tires, turned-down handlebars, and often skinny saddles. For riders wanting more speed, to ride longer distances, or a more aerobically intense workout. Road models are usually lighter with a slightly shorter wheelbase length for more nimble, quick response. Touring models have a longer wheelbase, increased road-shock absorbency, and various threaded eyelets for attaching carrying racks and bags.

Hybrid or cross bikes

Combines mountain-bike seating and handlebar position with wider tires on road-bike diameter wheels. Excellent for use on both pavement and dirt trails, but not intended to be a great road bike or mountain bike. Some have shock seat posts and handlebar stems and either straight-across handlebars (causing riders to lean slightly forward), or cruiser bars curving back towards the rider (who sits more upright). More expensive models have front telescoping shock absorber forks. This bike is enjoyed by serious and recreation riders riding more on pavement who want more nimbleness and speed.

Cruisers

Fat tire bikes. Usually heavier bikes with one speed and coaster brakes, or multi-speed with hand brakes, wide tires, upright handlebars and seating position. For road, boardwalks and riders who want a bike "like I had as a kid!"

Bike Buying Tips

1. What kind of bike riding will you be doing?
2. Decide how much you want to spend.
3. Shop around before you buy.
4. Ask for a test ride.
5. Bargain. Ask for accessories to be thrown in.
6. Make sure you get one free tune up.
7. Select the size frame best suited for you.

Straddle the bike. You should have one to two inches of clearance between the top bar of the bike and your crotch, three to four inches if you are going to be riding on off-road terrain.

8. Be sure you can comfortably reach the handlebars.
9. Buy a lock to prevent theft.
10. Buy a helmet for safety.



How to Not Get Hit by Cars

From www.bicyclesafe.com

Excerpts from article by Michael Bluejay,
used with permission.

The Right Cross

This is one of the most common types of collision or potential collisions. A car is pulling out of a side street, parking lot, or driveway on the right. Either you're in front of the car and the car hits you, or the car pulls out in front of you and you slam into it. How to avoid this collision: Get a headlight. Lights make you more visible, even in daylight. Honk. Get a bell or a horn and use it. Slow down so much that you're able to completely stop if you have to. Move left. The farther left you are, the more likely the driver will see you. Also, you have more room to maneuver by moving even farther left or by speeding up and getting out of the way.

The Door Prize

A driver opens his door right in front of you. You run right into it if you can't stop in time. To avoid this collision, ride to the left far enough that you won't run into any door that opens unexpectedly.

Red Light of Death

You stop to the right of a car that's already waiting at a red light or stop sign. They can't see you. When the light turns green, you move forward, and then they turn right, right into you. To avoid this collision, don't stop in the blind spot. Simply stop behind a car, instead of to the right of it. This makes you very visible to traffic on all sides.

The Right Hook

A car passes you and then tries to make a right turn directly in front of you, or right into you. They think you're not going very fast just because you're on a bicycle, so it never



occurs to them that they can't pass you in time. To avoid this collision, don't ride on the sidewalk, ride to the left, and glance in your mirror before approaching an intersection.

The Right Hook Part Two

You're passing a slow-moving car on the right when it unexpectedly makes a right turn right into you, trying to get a parking lot, driveway or side street. To avoid this collision, don't pass on the right. If a car ahead of you is going only 10 mph, then you slow down too, behind it. Look behind you before turning right.

The Left Cross

A car coming towards you makes a left turn right in front of you or right into you. To avoid this collision, don't ride on the side walk, get a headlight and wear bright colored clothing. Slow down.

The Rear End

A car runs into you from behind. To avoid this accident, ride on very wide roads or in bike lanes or on roads where the traffic moves slowly; also, get a rear light and a mirror.

The Crosswalk Slam

You're riding on the sidewalk and cross the street at a crosswalk and a car makes a right turn right into you. To avoid this collision, slow down, get a headlight and don't ride on the sidewalk in the first place.

Wrong Way Wallop

You're riding the wrong way. A car makes a right turn from a side street, driveway, or parking lot right into you. They didn't see you because they were looking for traffic only on their left, not on their right. Don't ride against traffic. Ride with traffic, in the same direction.

Avoid Busy Streets

One of the biggest mistakes that people make when they start biking is to take the exact same routes they used when they were driving. It's usually better to take the streets with fewer and slower cars.

Ride As If You Were Invisible

Assume that motorists don't know you're there and ride in such a way that they won't hit you even if they don't see you.

Selected Books About Bicycling in MARINet Libraries

- 629.227 Ballantine [Richard's 21st-century bicycle book](#) by Richard Ballantine (2001)
- 629.227 Sidwells [Complete bike book](#) by Chris Sidwells (2005)
- 629.2272 Dodge [The bicycle](#) by Pryor Dodge (1996)
- 629.28 Downs [The bicycling guide to complete bicycle maintenance & repair : for road & mountain bikes](#) by Todd Downs (2005)
- 629.2877 Zinn [Zinn & the art of road bike maintenance](#) by Lennard Zinn (2005)
- 796.6 Barry [Fitness cycling](#) by Dede Demet Barry (2006)



-
- 796.6 Bicycling [Bicycling magazine's mountain biking skills: skills and techniques to master any terrain](#) edited by Ben Hewitt (2005)
- 796.6 Bicycling [Bicycling magazine's training techniques for cyclists: greater power, faster speed, longer endurance, better skills](#) edited by Ben Hewitt (2005)
- 796.6 Burke [The complete book of long-distance cycling: build the strength, skills, and confidence to ride as far as you want](#) by Edmund R. Burke and Ed Pavelka (2000)
- 796.6 Harr [Ride fast: get up to speed on your bike in 10 weeks or less](#) by Eric Harr (2006)
- 796.6 Taylor [Major Taylor: the extraordinary career of a champion bicycle racer](#) by Andrew Ritchie (1988)
- 796.62 Armstrong, L [Lance Armstrong's war: one man's battle against fate, fame, love, death, scandal, and a few other rivals on the road to the Tour de France](#) by Daniel Coyle (2005)
- 917.94 Story [Bicycling America's national parks. California : the best road and trail rides from Joshua Tree Redwoods National Park](#) by David Story (2000)
- 917.946 Rusmore [The Bay Area Ridge Trail: ridgetop adventures above San Francisco Bay](#) by Jean Rusmore (2002)
- 917.9462 Martin [Mountain biking Marin: 40 great rides in Marin County](#) by Theresa Martin and Brian Simon (1998)

Magazine Articles on Bicycling: InfoTrac OneFile

- Begin at the Marin County Free Library: www.marinlibrary.org.
- Click on Databases & eBooks.
- Click on Magazines and Newspapers.
- Click on InfoTrac Magazines.
- Try different keyword searches. A keyword may be very general such as *cycling*, or more specific, such as *bicycle commuting*. Feel free to ask a librarian for assistance to get the articles you want.
- This database is also accessible from home with your MARINet library card.



Bicycling Resources in and around Marin County

- **511 - Your Bay Area Travel Guide:** <http://www.511.org/>
Click on Bicycling.
- **Bike Stores in Marin County:**
<http://www.marintrails.com/biking/links/bikestores.html>



- **Marin County Bicycle Coalition:** <http://www.marinbike.org/>
- **Marin Trails Mountain Biking Page:** <http://www.marintrails.com/biking/>
- **Safe Routes to Schools - Marin:** <http://www.tam.ca.gov/view.php?id=34>
- **San Francisco Bicycle Coalition:** <http://www.sfbike.org/>
- **Trips for Kids - Marin:** <http://www.tripsforkids.org/abouttfk.htm>
- **Women's Mountain Bike & Tea Society (WOMBATS):** <http://www.wombats.org/>

Other Websites to Visit

- **Bicycle Tour.com:** <http://www.bicycletour.com/>
Lists profit and nonprofit bicycling tours and events.
- **California Association of Bicycling Organizations:**
<http://www.cabobike.org/>
“...fosters and promotes a favorable climate for bicycling in California...”
- **California Bicycle Coalition:** <http://www.calbike.org/>
Lobbies for better cycling conditions in California.
- **International Mountain Bicycling Association:** <http://www.imba.com/>
Advocates trail access and responsible mountain biking.
- **League of American Bicyclists:** <http://www.bikeleague.org/>
Provides news and advocacy for a “bicycle-friendly” America.
- **Mountain Bike Hall of Fame:** <http://www.mtnbikehalloffame.com/home.cfm>
Documents “the individuals and events which have significantly contributed to mountain biking history.”
- **National Bicycle Tour Directors Association:** <http://www.nbtda.com/>
Lists bike tours by region, date, and cost.
- **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy:** <http://www.railstrails.org/>
Works with communities to transform unused rail corridors into public-use pathways and trails.
- **USA Cycling:** <http://www.usacycling.org/>
Identifies, trains, and selects cyclists to represent the United States in international competitions.



[Marin County Free Library/Civic Center Branch](#)

Mon, Wed, Fri: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Tue, Thu: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.

Sat: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Closed Sundays

A Branch of
Marin County
Free Library

Marin County Civic Center • 3501 Civic Center Drive, #427
San Rafael, CA 94905 • 415.499.6057 • <http://co.marin.ca.us/library>

Created by Elmer Jan for the Marin County Free Library/Civic Center Branch on 25 April 2006, revised 17 April 2007.
Modified and adapted from works by the Hibbing Public Library. This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike Licensed. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/1.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 559 North Abbott Way Stanford California 94305, USA.