

Basic Commute Gear

- **Fenders** (because you never know when it's going to rain!)
- **Rack, Panniers** and/or **Basket**
- **Lights** (if you have to work late or want to stay downtown for happy hour)



Ideal bikes for commuting

Just about any bike in good condition will be suitable for bicycle commuting, depending on your personal needs. You may want to use the one you have until you decide if you're going to be bike commuting a lot. But the right bike can make your commute a lot more comfortable.

- **Mountain Bikes** have fatter tires and endure rough streets, but they are heavier and don't make for the fastest commute.

- **Road Bikes** are the fastest but the dropped handlebars may be uncomfortable for novices, and high-pressure tires are unsuitable for some city streets or greenways



- **Hybrids** are similar to mountain bikes but have tires and gears suited for city streets.

- **Cruiser or City Bikes** are often simple, one-speed bikes that work great for short trips. There are multi-speed cruisers available so you can deal with our region's topography!



- **Commuter Bikes** are getting popular. Some of them come already equipped with everything you need, including lights, fenders, chain guards and even internal gears so you have less maintenance.

BICYCLES AND TRANSIT

All KAT buses have bike racks on the front. Each rack holds two bicycles. It's easy to load your bike:

Signal to the driver that you are about to load your bike on the rack.



Grab the bar on the front of the bike rack and pull down to unfold.



Lift the bike onto the rack, fitting the tires where indicated with marks for front wheels. Use the inside slot (closest to the bus) first.



Pull the support arm out and up over the front tire to secure the bike. Use your bike lock to secure the bike to the rack.



This information is brought to you by the Knoxville Regional Bicycle Program, which strives to integrate bicycling into the transportation system. The program works with citizens and governments within Knox, Blount, Anderson, Roane, Sevier and Loudon counties to implement the *2009 Regional Bicycle Plan*. The program is housed within the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and staffed by a Bicycle Coordinator. In addition to managing the Bicycle Program, the coordinator assists the Bicycle Advisory Committee, oversees the *Bicycle Plan* implementation, and reviews road plans to ensure compliance with the accommodation policy.

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ROUTE



If you don't know what route to take, check out the *Knoxville-Knox County* or *Blount County Bicycle Map* and see what options are available. Look for roads with wide shoulders, wide curb lanes or bike lanes so there is enough room for cars and bicycles to share the road easily. Roads with center turn lanes can also help motorists get around you.

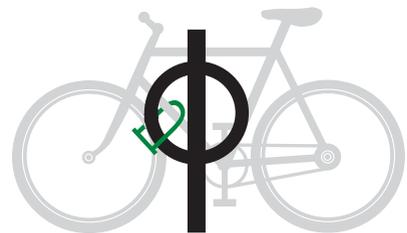
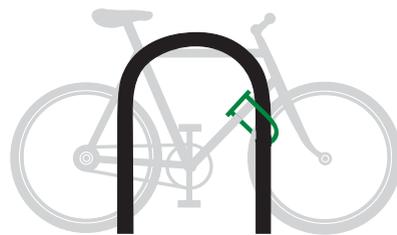
If you want help finding the best route between home and work or any other destination, contact the Bicycle Program.

PARKING

If your business doesn't have a bicycle rack, there are a few options. Talk to your employer about finding a convenient indoor storage spot (could be under some stairs or in your office). You can also tell them about the Bicycle Parking Grant Program. For more information, contact the Knoxville Regional Bicycle Program.

LOCKING

Put your lock through your frame and the front wheel, at a minimum. Options for locking the frame and both wheels are: removing the front wheel so it can be locked with the rest of the bike, or using two locks. You may also wish to lock up (or take with you) any easily removable components like your wheels and seat.



HAULING STUFF



You can carry a lot on a bike if you are properly equipped.

Basic backpack is very convenient for small loads but doesn't hold a lot and can make for a hot and awkward ride.

Messenger bag has a single strap that rests on your opposite shoulder; also does not hold a lot.

Rack for the rear of your bike is extremely useful. You'll need one to be able to use panniers, buckets, etc.



Panniers are bags that attach to a rear bike rack. They are made of durable, often waterproof, material, and you can pack a lot in them. Some are even removable and can transform into messenger or shopping bags.

Baskets and buckets are a less expensive option for carrying more weight. Baskets can attach to the front or rear of your bike. Some are collapsible and others are easily removable to go in the store with you.

Trailers attach to the rear of your bike and are the best for carrying large loads, be it children, pets, groceries or whatever else you can think of. (Check the classifieds or craigslist for used ones.)



CARRYING KIDS

There are seats that can be mounted on a bike to allow you to carry a child. The child is secured into the seat by safety straps. Keep in mind that because of its height, this type of carrier alters your center of gravity while riding and increases the risk of losing balance.

Bike trailers are a great way to carry kids along with other stuff you might need (groceries, picnic lunch, toys, etc).

Bike tag-alongs or trailabikes are designed for older children, and allow the child to pedal along with you. Remember that the law requires anyone under 16 to wear a bike helmet.

Note: For any device used to carry children, check manufacturer's specifications for how to safely use the product, as well as any age and/or weight limitations.

COMMUTING BY BICYCLE

Thinking of combining your work commute into a workout? Here are the basics to get you on the road.

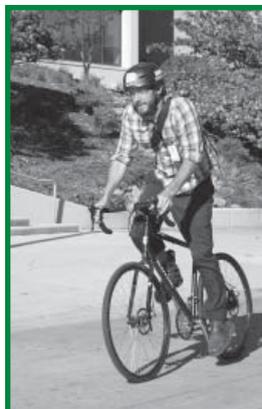
How far and how long?

Base your decision on how far to bike on your experience, confidence and abilities.

Distance. Typically, 3 to 5 miles is an ideal distance for bicycle commuting. Some seasoned riders go much farther.

Time. Riding 10 mph won't break a major sweat (except in summer), and you can cover 3 miles in less than 20 minutes. You might be able to average 12 to 15 mph, and if conditions (and your fitness!) are right, average speeds over 15 mph are possible.

Because of traffic and parking in urban areas, bicycling generally takes the same time, or less, than driving for trips of 3 to 5 miles. But even if your commute is longer, 30 extra minutes of sleep won't be as invigorating as an early morning ride. You'll arrive at work alert and ready to go! Plus, you'll save the time you usually spend at the gym (and the trip to and from).



What should I wear for my commute?

The important thing is to dress comfortably. For short commutes, regular clothing is adequate – just be sure to use a leg strap to keep pants legs from getting caught in the chain, or get a bike with a chain guard.

- **For longer trips**, many prefer to wear bike shorts and jerseys. Experiment with what works for you and invest in quality pieces over time.
- **For rainy days**, water-resistant and waterproof clothing specific to cycling is available. A good rain jacket with a longer flap in the back is an example. You can also buy rain pants, waterproof gloves, helmet covers and shoe covers. Another simpler option is a rain cape, which is open on the bottom to allow air flow, so you don't get overheated. (Fenders are a must!)
- **In winter**, layering and having wind-proof gloves is usually adequate. If you are warm when you start off in the morning, you'll be too hot on your commute.
- The most important part of your bicycling attire is a **properly fit helmet**. Helmets can prevent head injuries, so wear one every time you ride.
- **Gloves** can make your riding more comfortable and protect your hands.

You can start as a fair weather bike commuter. If you only ride when the forecast is good, you'll still make a significant difference. The more you bike, the more you'll look forward to that part of your day and you may find yourself wanting to bike every day. With the right clothing and gear, biking in the rain and the cold is not as bad as you think.

Cleaning up

Whether you need a shower once you arrive at work depends on many factors. You may be able to use a washcloth or baby wipes for a quick clean-up. If you must have a shower and your workplace doesn't have one, see if there is a health club nearby.

TIP: The downtown YWCA has very reasonable membership rates so you could join just for the shower privileges!

What about work clothes?

Some bike commuters simply ride in their work clothes, depending on the season and length of ride. Others ride in casual or bike clothes and change at the office. You can carry your work clothes with you, or drive one day a week with the clothes for the rest of the week.