

DRIVE YOUR BIKE

Getting Started Using Your Bicycle As Basic Transportation



Additional Resources

- www.mvrpc.org
- www.mvrpc.org/bikeportal
- www.mvrpc.org/tr/bikePed.php
- www.miamivalleyrideshare.org
- www.greaterdaytonrta.org
- www.co.greene.oh.us/greenecats
- www.bhsi.org
- www.dot.state.oh.us
- www.bikeleague.org/programs/education



One Dayton Centre
One South Main Street, Suite 260
Dayton, Ohio 45402

(937) 223-6323
www.mvrpc.org/recTrails

GETTING STARTED

Getting Around By Bike

Bikes are great vehicles for basic transportation. Inexpensive, Fun, Healthy, Non-Polluting and Practical, riding your bike can be a great way to get to work, or run some errands. Did you know that 40% of all trips are less than two miles, and 82% of short trips are taken in a car?

Have you thought about biking to work? What routes you could take? What gear you might need? How much great exercise you'll get?

Maybe you live too far from work, but you probably live within two miles of a lot of places you go. Look on a map. How far is it to the pharmacy? The grocery? The library? The school? The bank? Could some of these trips be made on a bike?

Next time the weather is right and you have some time, leave the car keys at home.

Why not drive your bike?



Bicycling: A real means of transportation in the Miami Valley

Multiuse Trails

The Miami Valley has over 225 miles of multiuse paths along rivers and abandoned railroad beds. Trail maps are available from www.MVRPC.org.

Great Streets and Roads

With the exception of interstate highways, bikes are legal vehicles on all roads in Ohio. You may find a comfortable ride on the Miami Valley's great network of neighborhood streets and back roads.

Bike on Bus Programs

The Greater Dayton RTA has bike racks on all their buses. Racks hold two bikes each and are no extra cost to use with normal bus fare. For details call the GDRTA Rideline at (937) 226-1144.

Greene CATS has similar bike racks on their flex service buses. Contact Greene CATS at (937) 562-6523 for complete information.

Pedal Pals

This free service matches bicycle commuters who live and work in the same areas. The program also matches novice cyclists with experienced cyclists who can assist them with their commutes. Pedal Pals is sponsored by RIDESHARE. Call the RIDESHARE hotline at (937) 223-SAVE or 1-800-743-SAVE to register. You can also register online at www.miamivalleyrideshare.org

Want More Info?

Visit www.mvrpc.org/bikeportal

Answers to Your Bike Transportation Questions

Adapted from the League of American Bicyclists

How can I drive my bike if ...

... I'm out of shape? Choose an easy pace, and you'll find cycling no more strenuous than walking. Do a trial ride. Ease your way into better shape and maintain it once you've become a regular bicycle commuter.

... my bike is a clunker? If the bike is mechanically sound and fits correctly, you have a suitable bike. If you can't maintain it yourself, take it to a reliable bike shop. Remember that good maintenance is important when you rely on your bike to get you there on time.

... there's no place to park? Existing bike parking may be available in nearby buildings or garages. Stash your bike at work in a covered, secure place like a closet or storage room. If your employer doesn't provide parking, make a formal request with other employees. If you park outside, use a good U-lock.

... traffic's just not safe? If you obey traffic laws and ride visibly and predictably you are at no greater risk than driving a car. One basic rule: wear a bicycle helmet every time you ride.

... it rains? It's easiest to start as a fair-weather bike commuter. Later, you might want to experiment with different types of rain gear.

... it's too far? If you live too far from work for a practical bicycle commute, consider driving part way and cycling the rest or take advantage of the bike racks on buses. Also, look for short-distance errands you can run from home.

... it takes too long? The average bike commuter travels 10 mph in traffic. In urban areas, cycling generally takes less time than driving for trips of three miles or less. Or compare it to the time you spend exercising and commuting. Remember also that Greater Dayton RTA and Greene CATS buses are equipped with bike racks. If you're pressed for time or if you would like to commute by bike one-way, use the bus bike racks for the other portion of your trip.



... there's no place to shower? Most bike commuters don't shower at work. Commuting is different than fitness cycling and generally is not a sweaty undertaking. If you like to ride hard and get a good workout but can't find a shower where you work, try a nearby health club.

... my job requires professional attire? Some bike commuters ride in their business attire and still look good when they get to work. Most simply ride in casual or cycling clothes and change when they arrive. You can prevent wrinkles by rolling (instead of folding) clothes in a backpack or pannier (bike bag that mounts on a rear rack). Some commuters keep several outfits at work, rotating outfits on days they don't ride or they take their clothes to a dry cleaner near work.



Biking Benefits!

To You:

- **Improve your health and fitness!** Some benefits of an active lifestyle include avoidance of chronic diseases, better family life, elevation of mood, extension of lifespan and enhancement of personal appearance and self-image.
- **Save money!** Each time you switch from car to bike you'll save on gas. All those short trips really add up. If you scatter just 20 bike commutes over a year, that's like parking your car for a month!
- **Save time!** No need to drive to the gym – active transportation can be your fitness routine.

To Your Community:

- **Improved health.** When you ride your bike, you are not only improving your health, you are also improving the health of others by improving local air quality.
- **Improved air quality.** According to the Regional Air Pollution Control Agency (RAPCA), vehicle emissions in the Miami Valley contribute about 45% of ground-level ozone, more commonly known as smog. Short car trips - those that are most bikeable - are up to three times more polluting per mile than long trips. An average four-mile round-trip bike commute prevents nearly 15 pounds of air pollution.
- **Improved quality of life.** Local economies are diversified and rejuvenated by cycling business and tourism. Quality of life improvements attract employees, new residents and employers to the community. A study of home sales in Indianapolis found that homes along greenways sold for as much as 10% more and are easier to sell.

To Your Employer:

- **Employees work more efficiently.** Studies have shown that fitness programs help develop more alert workers who miss fewer days because of sickness and have fewer job-related injuries.
- **Parking costs are reduced.** The cost of providing a car parking space is approximately 10 times that of a secure bicycle locker. Bicycle racks require less space and less money and can help alleviate time lost finding a parking space.
- **Bicycle parking is attractive to customers.** More and more people are discovering the ease of shopping by bike. Thus, by providing secure bicycle parking, employers do a service both for employees and customers.

Tips for Your Employer

Two of the most important steps employers can take to support/encourage bicycle commuting are to offer:

1. Bike Parking:

- Make provisions in a closet or storage room.
- Fence off and cover a section of the parking lot and allow only commuting cyclists access.
- Allow cyclists to bring their bikes into the office.
- Provide bicycle lockers.
- If racks are provided, they should be racks that allow both bicycle wheels and the frame to be secured to it (with a lock the cyclist provides).

2. Flexible Work Hours:

- Flexible work hours or permission for bicycle commuters to leave work ten minutes early to miss heavy commuter traffic can provide a welcome margin of safety and comfort for cyclists.



Other Employer Suggestions:

- Include bike maps, bike parking information and cycling tips brochures in new employee orientation packets.
- Get a Bicycle Users Group (BUG) started. Have monthly brown bag lunches with bike-related speakers and discussions.
- Pay 50% of the cost of a first year's basic membership in a local bike club.

Starting in 2009, employers may offer pre-tax bicycle commuting benefits to their employees. These benefits are structured in the same manner as parking and transit benefits under the US Tax Code. Employers should consult their tax advisor for more details about utilizing this benefit.