



FINDING THE RIGHT BIKE

COMMUTER BIKE

Features: Geared for small distances (5-15 miles), heavy, less efficient, multiple gears, up-right posture

ROAD BIKE

Features: Geared for long distances 50+ miles, thinner wheels with less friction and energy on the road, parallel to the ground, leaned over posture

MOUNTAIN BIKE

Features: Lower pressure and wider tires to dig into gravel and grass, cushier ride, less efficient through lost energy lost in the shock system

FOLDING BIKE

Features: Good for multimodal trips, as it affords the ability for freedom to use a bike

E-BIKE

Features: Motor (up to 20 miles/hour) is available for many different bike types, can help break the barrier of biking up hills and over long distances

CARGO BIKE & TRAILERS

Features: Useful for hauling heavy loads and ability to link with an electric assist

BLUEBIKES

Features: Public share bikes, convenience (alleviates concerns regarding parking, theft, maintenance), step through frame, 43 pounds, adjustable seats, basket, fenders



NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

HELMET: Make sure it fits and covers your brain. Important to note that helmets have a shelf life of ~5-7 years and are designed as a one time use device. Helmets are designed to break into pieces, so if they are at all compromised, replace with a new helmet.

LIGHTS: Lights that are bright, low, and pointed down to have visibility for 500 feet are ideal for riding. Lights that are red should be placed in the back and lights that are white should be placed in the front. Lights that could be use include daylight running lights and usb rechargeable lights. As the best way to stay safe is to be predictable, make sure lights are used to stay visible on the road!

U-LOCK: A steel u-lock is needed to keep your bike safe. Compared to a cable lock, steel u-locks can deter thieves with cold cutters.

HELPFUL EQUIPMENT

REAR RACK: Help carry objects on your ride

BELL: Indicate your direction when sharing roads with others

WATER BOTTLE: Support with hydration and overheating

SIDE MIRROR: Help for quick checks (But don't entirely rely on the side mirror for your vision! Glance back when making a turn)

WHAT TO WEAR

GUIDELINES ON HOW TO DRESS FOR THE RIDE

- Plan for 10 minutes into the ride (anticipate how you will feel a bit into the ride whether you're up the hill, in the sun, or in a rainstorm)
- Ride in work/school clothes or bring clothes with you (rolled up) and change at your destination
- Plan to warm up and cool down in your outfit
- It's easy to overheat, so anticipate starting cool and warm up into the ride

MATERIALS TO WEAR

LAYERS

SYNTHETIC FABRICS: Breathe and wick moisture better (as cotton fabrics tend to stick to sweat)

BRIGHT COLORS: Good for visibility



BASIC BIKE MAINTENANCE

GUIDELINES ON HOW TO KEEP YOUR WHEELS ROLLING

- Inflate tires regularly
- Lube/clean chain often
- Carry tire levers and spare tube to fix a flat
- Get empowered to learn how to fix a dropped chain and fix a flat and learn more with our [ABCs of Bike Maintenance guide](#)

GUIDELINES FOR LOCKING YOUR BIKE

When scouting for a location to lock your bike, look for a designated bike rack. If you have access to a secure indoor bike cage, use that as it's the gold standard. If designated bike parking is unavailable, look for something secure and give it a good shake to make sure it's affixed to the ground. If it's a sign or post, make sure it's not a handicap access point or fire exit. Learn more about locking your bike with our [How to Lock Your Bike guide](#).

PLANNING YOUR BIKE ROUTE

- Start by checking a bike map or Google Maps and find a fun route that feels safe and one you like, not one you think you need to do. Think of riding as an example of how you would map your own route that will change based on weather, traffic, time of day, and season.
- Consider bike infrastructure and its different uses (for example, some designated lanes are shared with trolleys and buses). There may not be bike infrastructure across your entire trip- try to connect dots in your network and find a way to thread through the high comfort areas in the more comfortable way. It's also important to consider that bikes are not required to stay in the bike lane and have full rights to the road.
- As we share a real world on the roads, remember to factor in other groups (for example: tourists) that your route interacts with and the level of awareness they have. As we are in a shared environment, try to have patience and flexibility regardless of the type of road you're on to stay safe.
- Use a variety of maps to think about your own path and play around with it. To explore and identify different types of bike infrastructure throughout the city, check out the City of Boston's [Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress map](#). Sometimes you'll find routes that you might not travel by car or bus- bikes afford you the ability to be creative with your route.



TRAFFIC LAWS AND SAFETY TIPS

TIP #1: RIDE WITH TRAFFIC

As bikes are vehicles and cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as other drivers on public roads. The safest way to ride in the street is to be predictable and obey all traffic laws. Some rules that are relevant to your ride are to go with traffic and avoid riding on sidewalks in business districts. To see the general laws in Massachusetts, check out [MassBike's Laws page](#).

TIP #2: CHOOSE YOUR LINE

When riding, hold your line and try not to swerve. Additionally, keep out of the door zone (which is the far edge of the bike lane next to the door zone). Often times, it could be safer to ride closer to the road than the door zone as drivers will see you, but the person opening their car door will not.

take the lane if you need to, but signal and make sure drivers respect your maneuver

TIP #3: AVOID THE RIGHT HOOK

Be careful when passing stopped cars or when the lane splits. Try not to be in parallel spot next to vehicles- in fact, be directly front or back of a vehicle and maintain distance.

TIP #4: LEFT HOOKS

Most crashes happen at intersections. To make a left turn, try using a left turn bike box (or two stage left) when available where you can keep to the right side of the road throughout your left turn. If an intersection is particularly tricky, dismount and walk as a pedestrian next to your bike.