



Photo Source: Aaron Doucett

GEAR UP YOUR BIKE!

Consider swapping your year-round bike for a winter specific bike or modifying your bike for winter weather with the following:

- Fatter tires with good grips, which will be less efficient but also provide better traction and control for roads that are glossed with ice, slush, or salt.
- Slightly lower tire pressure: 10-15 psi counts lower than the max—to handle any bumps (like salt!) in the road.
- Fenders to prevent splash back when riding in the rain and slush.
- Lights with bright LED bulbs: 3 white bulbs in the front and 3 red bulbs in the back.
- Pedals that are in a wider platform style to fit your winter boots.
- Single speed or fixed derailleur gears with a low-gearing ratio to limit speed and slow the bike quickly.
- Seats that are 1-inch lower to allow for your foot to get on the ground and maintain control.

MAINTAIN YOUR BIKE!

- Have a routine tune up before the winter season begins to address the basics: tightening cables and bolts, fixing any loose or broken spokes, checking and replacing brakes, etc.
- Get into a habit of wiping your bike down after enduring wet conditions, inflating your tires regularly, lubing and cleaning your chain often and checking your tires for debris.
- Take 30 minutes to de-grease, scrub, and re-grease your chain every week in the wet season.
- **TIP #1:** For lube, do not use WD-40 on your bike, as it's a solvent, not a lubricant. Consider using Boeshield T-9 or Phil Wood Waterproof Grease instead.
- **TIP #2:** Looking to bike without the hassle of maintenance? Check out BlueBikes- it has fatter tires, full fenders, integrated lights, and you don't need to maintain it yourself! Just be aware that some street stations may go away in the winter due to snow clearance.



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PREPARE YOURSELF!

- Before a ride, check the weather and when the sun sets
- Layer your clothes to avoid overheating:
 - Layer 1:** For your base layer, consider moisture wicking and breathable fabrics such as synthetic fabrics or merino wool for your thermal underwear and socks.
 - Layer 2:** For 1 of 2 of your middle layers, consider wearing insulating turtlenecks, fleece sweaters, and pants.
 - Layer 3:** For 2 of 2 of your middle layers, consider a thick wool or fleece sweater, padded ski pants, wool socks, and a scarf.
 - Layer 4:** For your outer layer, consider a waterproof and windproof winter jacket, gloves or mittens that maintain your control to break, shift, and signal (ex: lobster mittens).
- *Make sure your outermost layer is visible, bright, and reflective.
- Consider wearing sun goggles to shield you from sun rays reflected from the snow.
- For headgear, make sure your winter hat doesn't block you from correctly wearing your helmet. As a reminder, our helmet should cover your forehead!
- **TIP:** Consider tucking your work clothes into your outermost layers or changing into them at work- make sure to pack an extra pair of socks!

TRY MULTI-MODAL COMMUTING!

- You can combine your bike ride with other modes of transportation!
- If you're thinking of taking a bus, most MBTA buses have bike racks, with exceptions to buses that travel in tunnels (ex: Silver Line) and wire buses (ex: buses that run in Harvard Square).
 - If you're thinking of taking a train, MBTA trains allow bikes to be taken, with limitations to underground trains during weekday rush hours (7-10AM and 4-7PM) and exceptions to the Green Line and Mattapan Trolley.
 - *Unfortunately, bikes are not allowed on platforms in the Park Street, Downtown Crossing, and Government Center stations.
 - If you're thinking of taking a commuter rail, MBTA Commuter Rail lines allow bikes to be taken. For weekdays, check for the bike symbols on timetables.
 - If you're thinking of taking a ferry, the ferry allows bikes on all times and days.
 - **TIP:** Folding bikes have no restrictions when they're folded when you board!



WINTER CYCLING TIPS

Photo Source: Aaron Doucett

PRECAUTIONS DURING YOUR RIDE!

- Be visible, predictable, and overcommunicate with signals. (Account for poor visibility from your neighborhoods on the road, especially when it rains or snows!)
- Be slow and extra cautious around slippery metal grates near train tracks and construction sites.
- Before turning, brake and prepare your center of gravity.
- Hold your handlebars straight and steady.

LOCKING YOUR BIKE!

- When you can, try bringing in your bike.
- If you're choosing to park outside, find a spot that is:
 - Covered from snow
 - Not blocking sidewalks or exits
 - Away from the street (where they clear the sidewalk) to avoid the risk of being plowed in
- **TIP:** Put a plastic bag over your seat to prevent frosting your seat!