

THINKING ABOUT CYCLING?

How to get from A to B and take the eco-friendly road to better health





Riding a bike is a great way to be fit and healthy, and a fun activity to do with a group, or with friends and family. If you use a bike to get around you're also helping to slow down the climate change process.

All you need to get started is a bike with a bell and a helmet. A bottle of water is a good idea too. Then off you go!

I KNOW RIDING A BIKE IS GOOD FOR ME BUT...

You probably know that riding a bike is good for both you and the environment, but you still have some concerns which is why you're not riding. That's okay. Here are some common **CONCERNS** and some good **SOLUTIONS**:

I'm scared of traffic and road conditions



- Use bike paths and quieter streets
- Ride with a group or with others
- Write to your local council with ideas you have for new bike paths

I'm not very fit

- Take your time and start slowly. You'll soon build up your fitness

I'm worried about getting injured



- Wear a helmet, ride carefully and pick the quietest and safest routes

I lack confidence when it comes to riding

- Start by joining a ride organised by a bicycle group, ride with others who have more experience, or enrol in a cycling skills course

How will I know my bike is safe when I park it?

- It's worth investing in some good quality bike locks for peace of mind

I'm not sure where I could go riding



Where do I put my bike?

- Ask your employer or your local council (if it's a public place) to install secure bicycle parking racks

Which bike is right for me?



- There are great cycling routes all over Sydney
- Use cycling maps or books (see contact list in this brochure)
- Ask your local bicycle group or anyone else who rides regularly

- Visit your local bike shop and ask or visit the Cycling Promotion Fund website to look at some of their information sheets: www.rideabike.com.au

WHY DO I KEEP HEARING PEOPLE TALK ABOUT CYCLING?

You might have noticed that there's a lot of talk around cycling at the moment. That's because there have been lots of things happening behind the scenes to help get people on bikes. Everyone is working together to come up with the best solutions to address concerns around cycling.

Western Sydney Cycling Network and Liverpool Bicycle User Group are two local bicycle groups that support people interested in cycling. They organise free social rides, assist inexperienced riders, provide advice on cycling issues and lobby for better cycling facilities. It's also a great way to socialise and meet like-minded people.

There are many kilometres of bike paths from Fairfield to Liverpool through Canley Vale, Cabramatta, Wetherill Park, Greenfield Park, Bossley Park, Abbotsbury, Hinchinbrook and Warwick Farm. The paths are ready and waiting to be used.

Local councils build bicycle paths, install bike racks, erect destination signs on cycleways and run programs such as Fairfield City Council's Bicycle Recycling which makes bikes accessible to everyone (see contact list in this brochure).

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) builds major cycleways and produces maps and brochures that promote cycling.

Cycling skills courses increase the skills and confidence of beginner and intermediate riders. Courses include:

- Learn to Ride
- Back on your Bike
- Commuting by Bike
- Family Adventure

Sydney South West Area Health Service is organising classes to help you get started. For one-on-one help, you can work with a cycle coach. To find out how to enrol in a course, see the contact list in this brochure.

Bike shops can provide information on cycling such as what bike to buy, bicycle equipment and maintenance services.



A wide-angle photograph of a group of people riding bicycles on a paved path that curves through a lush green park. The sun is high in the sky, creating a bright lens flare effect. The path is surrounded by well-maintained grass and scattered trees. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a pleasant day for outdoor activities.

I'M STILL NOT CONVINCED.
CAN YOU TELL ME MORE?

There has been lots of research done around the benefits of cycling. Here is some evidence to show you why cycling is becoming increasingly popular in Australia:

If you incorporate cycling into your daily life, you are more likely to sustain it than if you signed up to an exercise program that's based at a gym.

Almost half the households in NSW have at least one bicycle - the number of bicycles owned by Sydney residents increased from around 800,000 in 1991 to 1.2 million in 2000.

People often cycle because it's their preferred mode of transport. 29% of people who can drive have also cycled on the road in the last year.

Cycling improves your cardiovascular fitness, strengthens your bones, relieves the effects of rheumatoid arthritis and like all physical activity, it will help you cope better with stress.

Research shows that people who cycle a lot tend to live longer by reducing their risk of diseases like diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

When someone rides a bike they are exposed to two to three times less air pollution (volatile organic compounds) compared to someone driving a car on the same road.

We only need to look to one of the world's great cycling nations to see what a great lifestyle enhancer cycling is, particularly for women. In the Netherlands 55% of all bike trips are undertaken by women, whereas in Australia, women undertake only 20% of bike trips.

So c'mon girls, cycling is a great way to stay healthy, get some fresh air and reduce your stress levels - we can't let the boys have all the fun!



ARE THERE SPECIAL RULES I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RIDING A BIKE?

Since your bicycle is a vehicle you are entitled to the same rights as drivers and you must abide by the road rules same as any vehicle. However, there are also some special rules for bikes which allow you to:

- ride two abreast on a road, no more than 1.5m apart.
- take up a whole lane if you need to. Riding in the gutter is dangerous and leaves no room for avoiding obstacles and invites being squeezed by cars!
- cycle on the path where it is indicated by signage (usually on shared paths). If the person riding is under 12 years old, they and any adult accompanying them can cycle on any footpath unless it is prohibited.
- travel in bus lanes and transit lanes but NOT in bus only lanes such as along the T-way.

BIKE PATH SAFETY

It's important to ensure your safety as well as pedestrians. When riding on shared paths remember to:

- ⦿ give way to pedestrians
- ⦿ ride at a safe speed
- ⦿ keep to the left
- ⦿ avoid blocking the path
- ⦿ warn those travelling slower than you before passing
- ⦿ treat all other path users with respect and courtesy.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO REMEMBER WHEN CYCLING IS... HAVE FUN!



CONTACTS

HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE Sydney South West Area Health Service (SSWAHS), Ph: 9828 5911, www.cyclingconnectingcommunities.net
CYCLING PROMOTION FUND (for brochures, posters, funding etc), Ph: (03) 9755 3557, www.rideabike.com.au

SOCIAL RIDING

WESTERN SYDNEY CYCLING NETWORK

(For social rides and other cycling activities in the Fairfield area)

Contact Bob, Ph: 0422 933 612, bobjward@hotmail.com

BICYCLE NSW AND OTHER BUGS (BICYCLE USER GROUPS)

Contact Bicycle NSW to find out more, Ph: 9218 5400, www.bicyclensw.org.au

To read their newsletter and social rides calendar go to: www.pushon.com.au

LIVERPOOL BUG (For social rides and other cycling activities in the Liverpool area),

Contact Maree Ph: 0438 395 690, maree.stacy@sswahs.nsw.gov.au

COMPETITIVE RIDING

CYCLING NSW Ph: 9738 5850, www.nsw.cycling.org.au

MARCONI CYCLING CLUB Ph: 0414 694 141, www.marconicyclingclub.com

CYCLING SKILLS COURSES

HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE, SSWAHS for adult or family recreational cycling or commuting, Ph: 9828 5911

CYCLING AUSTRALIA Ph: 9644 3002

ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION CENTRES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- CARES Facility, Bass Hill, Ph: 9743 9297

- Campbelltown Bicycle Road Safety Education Centre, Ph: 4645 4376

CYCLING COACHES

for individuals, schools, workplaces, etc

TANYA BOSCH Ph 9369 1436, Mob. 0419 217 974, Email: onyabike@ozemail.com.au

MATT GEALE (Campbelltown) Ph: 0412 952 626, Email: matt@soular-energy.com

BICYCLES FOR HIRE

BICYCLE RECYCLING contact Fairfield City Council. Join Bicycle Recycling at Fairfield Showground - for a very small fee you have long-term use of a recycled bike and new helmet, Phone Fairfield City Council on 9725 0222

BIKE HIRE @ SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK Ph: 9714 7888, www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au

LOCAL BICYCLE SHOPS

ABC BIKES 245 George St, Liverpool

190 The Boulevard, Fairfield Heights

FULCHERS CYCLERY Governor Macquarie Drive/Alfred Rd, Chipping Norton

FREE MAPS AND BROCHURES

DISCOVER FAIRFIELD AND LIVERPOOL BY BIKE Health Promotion Service, (SSWAHS), Ph: 9828 5911

GETTING TO SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK BY BICYCLE (SSWAHS), Ph: 9828 5911

ACTIVE TRANSPORT GUIDE : CYCLING AROUND FAIRFIELD CITY Fairfield City Council, Ph: 9725 0222

RTA CYCLING MAPS INCLUDING REGIONAL MAPS Ph: 1800 060 607, www.rta.nsw.gov.au

BIKE SAFARI CIRCUITS MAP Sydney Olympic Authority, Ph: 9714 7888

CYCLING BOOKS

Visit the Australian Cyclist Bookshop for great books like **CYCLING AROUND SYDNEY: 25 CLASSIC RIDES AROUND SYDNEY**

Ph: 9218 5400, www.woodslane.com.au/aus%5Fcyclist

THIS RESOURCE IS PRODUCED BY:

Health Promotion Service, Sydney South West Area Health Service (SSWAHS)
with funding from the NSW Department of Health.

To obtain additional copies of this resource or any other SSWAHS resource listed in this booklet, please call 02 9828 5911. We also have a number of free cycling packs available including the Family Cycling Pack and the Ride to Work Pack.



Design: Butron Art & Design
Photographs: CADmonkey Design
© 2007 SSWAHS, printed on 100% recycled paper