



Bike 100 Miles This Month

CHALLENGE
Bike 100 miles
this month.

Requirements to complete this WELLNESS CHALLENGE

1. On your monthly **Wellness Challenge Calendar**, record the number of miles you bike each day.
2. Read “Why ride a bike?” and “How to get started.”
3. To complete the Challenge, you must bike at least 100 miles in one month.
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

Why ride a bike?

There are many reasons to start bicycling. It’s fun; it’s better for the environment; you get to see beautiful scenery; it’s cheaper than driving a car; and it will help you get and stay fit. Health benefits include:

- Improved cardiovascular health
- Lower triglycerides and blood pressure
- Improved lung function
- A healthier weight
- Reduced risk of diabetes and colon cancer
- Higher HDL cholesterol levels (the “good” cholesterol)
- Stronger muscles and well-toned legs
- Sharpened coordination
- Improved mood



How to get started...

BIKE STYLE. If you are not used to riding regularly, you may find that a mountain bike with upright handlebars and peddles that leave your feet free are more comfortable and easier to ride. Unless you like riding off road, however, use smooth tires instead of the knobby tires that come on most mountain bikes. It will peddle easier.

Be sure it has a comfortable seat, appropriate for a man or woman. You’ll find this is a good investment. As you ride, you will also get “toughened in” so that sitting on the bicycle seat becomes more comfortable. If you are a seasoned rider interested in covering miles quickly and easily, a narrow-wheeled bike with drop-down handlebars and clip-in pedals is the most efficient.

CLOTHING. If you wear biking shorts with a padded crotch, you will find the seat immensely more comfortable. (Biking shorts are designed to be worn next to your skin.) Many cyclists also like padded riding gloves. Wearing a brightly colored shirt or riding jersey helps others see you and is a good safety practice. If the weather is a little cool, a windbreaker is nice to have.

FLUIDS. Drink plenty of water while riding, especially in warm or hot weather. Fluids help keep you cool and make your muscles more efficient. If riding a long distance, fill your water bottle with a sports drink. Staying hydrated keeps your muscles working at top efficiency.

FOOD. If you intend to ride for any distance, you’ll probably want to bring along a snack, such as a banana or other fruit that fit in your jersey back pockets, plus a power bar or whole-grain cereal bar. You burn a lot of calories when riding steadily at 10-15 mph – 7 to 10 times more calories than when sitting and watching TV. You need to eat periodically to keep your energy level up.

CELL PHONE. Carry a cell phone in your bike bag. That way, if you have a flat tire you can’t fix or some other unexpected event, you can always call for help. It’s also fun to call a friend or family member while resting and let them know how you’re doing. Just don’t ride and talk on the phone at the same time. You need both hands for good balance.

RIDING COURSES. It’s very important to find a pleasant, safe place to ride. If you live in a quiet neighborhood where traffic is minimal, the streets are a good – and handy – place to start. If you live on a busy street, look for hiking and biking paths or a quieter neighborhood with fewer cars. It’s always more fun to ride when you don’t have to worry about cars.

When you buy a new bike, immediately ask them to put on the softest, most comfortable seat they sell in the store.



Look for pretty settings: beside a lake or stream, a park, or through the woods. Most cities print a map showing which roads or biking paths are the best and safest. Call your city hall and ask about biking routes in your area. Flat courses are easiest to ride. Learn to shift well and use lower gears for climbing hills. It makes a world of difference. If it is too steep, get off and push. Don't do yourself in.

GETTING THERE. If you have a sport utility vehicle or van, you may be able to easily put your bike in the back and drive to a safe, pretty setting to ride. If not, you'll need a bike rack for your car.

DISTANCE. When first starting, aim for short rides – 3-5 miles. If you ride at an easy pace (10-12 mph) you can cover 5 miles in about 30 minutes. Start with 15- to 30-minute rides. As you become used to riding, increase the time to 30+ minutes daily. Even with a half-hour ride 5+ days a week, you'll easily cover 100 miles in a month. On the weekend, try a longer ride: 45-60 minutes, or 8-10 miles. After a few weeks of riding, this distance will be easy for you.

RIDING COMPANIONS. It's a lot more fun if you invite someone to ride with you. You may want to ride out together for breakfast to your favorite restaurant or just for a bagel or muffin. If you don't have friends who ride, look for a biking club in your area. Most cities have biking clubs that plan regular rides each week – both short and long routes. When you join their rides, you'll meet new friends and likely find new biking routes in your area.

A bike path is an ideal place to cycle.

Bike gear you will need over time:

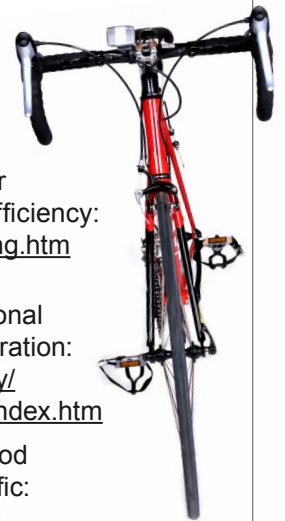
- Reflectors or lights for night riding
- Puncture kit or extra inner tube
- Bicycle pump for flat tires
- Sunglasses and sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Bicycle lock if you plan on leaving your bike anywhere
- Bike rack for your car if you plan on transporting your bike
- Padded cycling shorts, a bright cycling shirt, and reflective weather-proof jacket
- Small bike bag to carry the extra tube, lock, tools, etc.
- A bell to warn others of your approach
- Fenders and rain gear, if riding in the rain
- A backpack or rack, if commuting



SAFETY. Be sure to wear a comfortable, well-fitted helmet. Carry and use sunblock, protective lip balm, and sunglasses to minimize the sun's effects. It's also a good idea to carry a few bandages in case of a scraped knee. Riding gloves help keep your hands comfortable and prevent scrapes if you tip over. A rearview mirror on your bike, your helmet, or glasses is very helpful if you ride on busy roads. Learn the rules of the road for safe biking. Don't ride on narrow or busy roads. Use clear hand signals when turning or slowing so cars and other bikers will know what you intend to do.

Learn More:

- **Oregon Bicycle Manual** – Safe riding guidelines: www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/docs/bike_manual_06.pdf
- **Bike Sense** – A manual on safe bicycling prepared by British Columbia: www.bikesense.bc.ca/
- **How to fit a bicycle** – Make your bicycle fit you for comfort and efficiency: www.peterwhitecycles.com/fitting.htm
- **How to fit a helmet** – Helmet fitting instructions from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/EasyStepsWeb/index.htm
- **How not to get hit by cars** – Good practical advice for riding in traffic: www.bicyclesafe.com/



Use your bike to go to the store, visit a friend, or commute to work. When cycling to work, plan a safe route. Ride to work once a week, then more often. As you learn to enjoy biking, plan biking excursions with your friends. Look for biking events in your community or state. (You can find out about them on the Internet or at your local bike store.) Get your family involved in training, and take a biking vacation for a weekend or week. Many states have an annual biking event, such as riding across the state or a weekend ride of 50, 100, or 150 miles. Signing up for a biking event gives you a good incentive to train regularly.

**Wherever you bike... Have fun.
Be safe. Be fit!**

Sources:

Medicine and Science in Sports Exercise. 2007;39:788-795.

Froböse I. *Cycling and Health Study.* German Sports Academy Cologne. www.cyclingandhealth.com/CyclingAndHealth_Study_01_e.htm





Bike 100 Miles This Month

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of miles you bike each day. Use this calendar to also record your exercise program (minutes/day), weekly weight, and any other items you may want to track.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of miles you biked. To complete this Wellness Challenge, you must bike at least 100 miles during the month. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of good health!
4. Turn in your Wellness Challenge if requested, or enter your completion of this Wellness Challenge on the Health Activity Tracker report for the month, if applicable. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

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MONTH:							WC = Wellness Challenge	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of miles I biked this month.

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking or biking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

