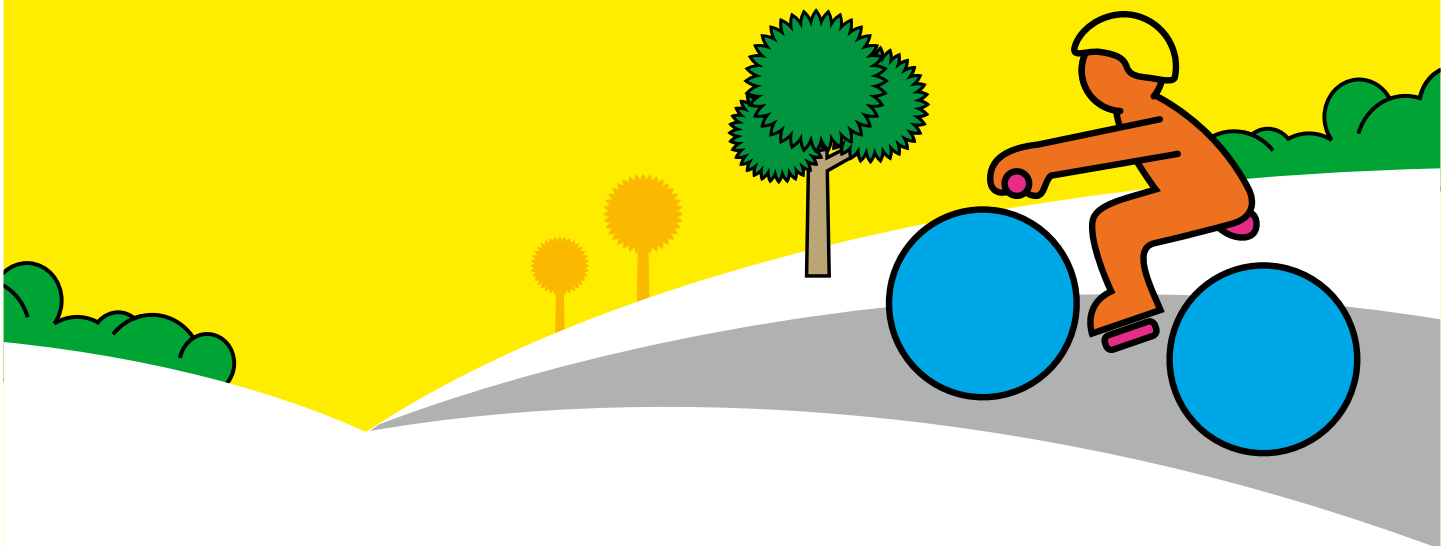


bike 4 life

fun ideas for cycling

Remember how much fun you had riding a bike when you were younger? Now you can do it all over again with your family and friends. Once you all have a bike, there's nothing stopping you – have a look at our guide on “Getting and looking after your bike” [here](#) for help on getting the right bikes for you and your family.

Don't forget, when your children are confident on their bikes, they can go out on their own, play with friends or even go to school the easy way – by bike!



Created in partnership with



Eat well Move more Live longer

half the fun is deciding where to go

There are so many ways to have fun on bikes. If you have younger children, most local parks have family-friendly cycle routes for you to try out. It's a great way to get some fresh air in a safe environment and improve everyone's confidence on a bike.

Once you have explored all your favourite local places, it's time to venture a little further. A good map can help you plot a route off or away from main roads, letting you explore the National Cycle Network and other cycle routes, quieter roads, country lanes and bridle tracks that bring you closer to nature.

When you're ready to go a bit further afield, try exploring the countryside on hidden back-roads and twisting lanes or forests and local woodland. Better still, why not build a cool destination into your ride? The children will love a trip that includes a visit to a play-park, castle, beach or cinema. If the weather's nice, bring a picnic! If it isn't, a nice warm café or family-friendly pub is a great resting spot.

It's a good idea to get the children involved in planning the route – that way they're more likely to enjoy the trip and see things they're interested in.

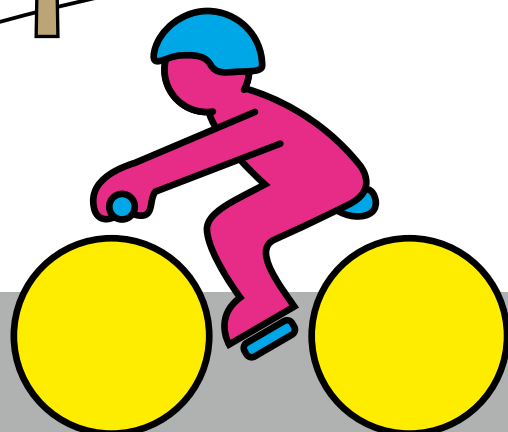
The internet is a great way to plan your trips. Check out the Sustrans website (www.sustrans.org.uk) to find out about cycle routes near you by using their interactive map tool, or by ordering an information pack about cycling in your area. You can also visit your local authority's website – just search for the name of your borough or council online – to find information on cycling in your area.

The Forestry Commission has also built a whole network of off-road cycling centres for all abilities, many with bike hire.

British Cycling offer many opportunities to provide Led Rides for beginner and recreational cyclists for you and your family from ages 5 years and upwards. We operate a calendar of recreation friendly cycling events so we can help you choose a suitable local ride in your area. Contact us at www.britishcycling.org.uk



Did you know? The Sustrans National Cycle Network passes through the centre of every major town in the UK (75% of us live within just a couple of miles of a route) and a third of them are traffic-free. There are also lots of other cycle routes all over the country – just look out for the signs near you!



and for the more adventurous!

When you are ready to get really adventurous, you can visit events, festivals and shows in your area. Make a day of it, or even pitch a tent and camp. Look out for information on events, festivals and shows in local newspapers and on the radio.

For the really keen and experienced among you, you can join a local cycle group or a Bike Club. That way the children can get expert tuition, perhaps venture off-road and even try the thrill of mountain biking!

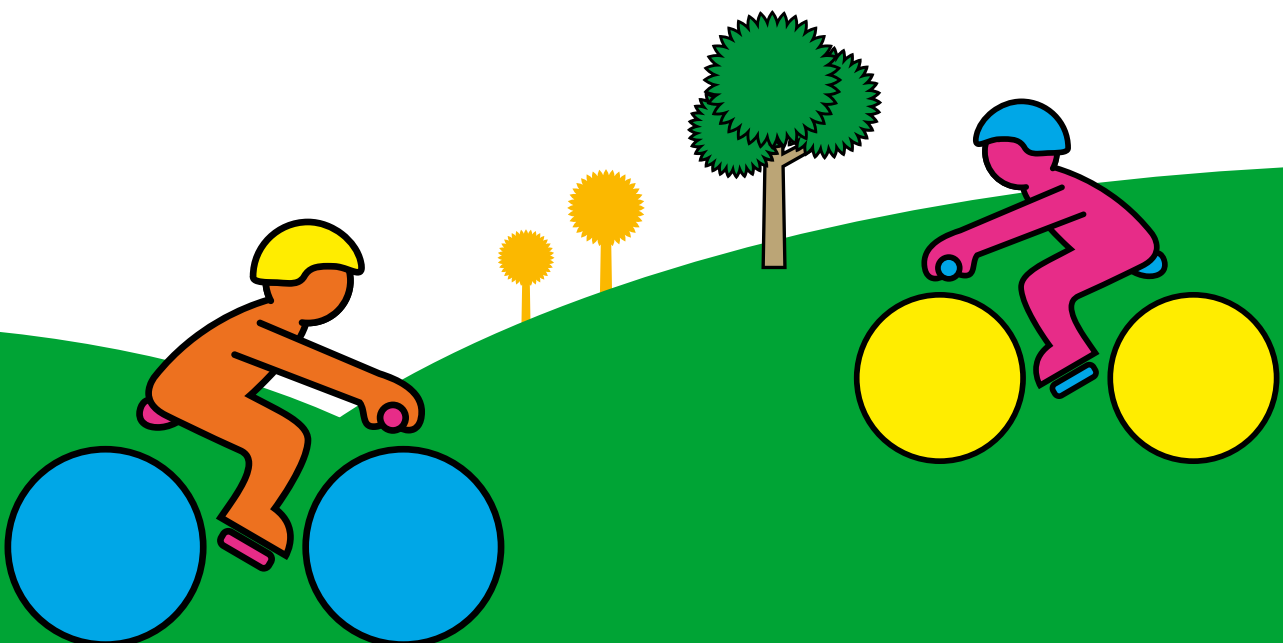
British Cycling offers organised recreational bike rides for all levels of ability from ages 5 years and upwards. Try www.britishcycling.org.uk to find a gentle ride for all the family in your local area.

Getting there

Remember to check your bikes the day before your trip, so there are no last-minute problems when you are trying to get everyone out of the door.

Here's a handy checklist of things to take along on the day:

- Mobile phone and a little cash always come in handy.
- Extra layers in case the weather turns cold or rainy, and a hat for when you stop if it's sunny.
- Plenty of water and healthy snacks like fruit, carrot sticks or rice cakes.
- Puncture repair kit (these are cheap and can be bought from cycling shops). For a step-by-step guide on mending a puncture, click [here](#).]
- Fun and games like balls and frisbees.
- First aid kit, including sunscreen in the summer.



make it fun, keep it fun

If the kids enjoy themselves, you'll all enjoy yourselves, and you'll be more likely to go out on your bikes together again.

Start slowly and keep your trips short to begin with. Remember, one mile can seem like five to tired little legs, so let the slowest family member set the pace. If you haven't cycled for some time, you'll be surprised how tiring the first couple of trips may seem.

Stop to play games or to eat if the kids are hungry, or even turn back if one person is really tired. Cycling has to be fun for kids to want to do it again.

Useful links and maps

www.bikeforall.net
www.bikeweek.org.uk
www.britishcycling.org.uk
www.ctc.org.uk
www.cyclenation.org.uk
www.goldeneyemaps.com
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk
www.sustrans.org.uk
www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk

Practical tip

If you're on the road with kids, take up a position behind them. That way you have a clear view of them and the road ahead, and you won't accidentally speed up and leave anyone behind! If there are two adults in your group, it's a good idea to have one at the front to see what's ahead.

