



Teaching your child to ride

Getting their first bike can be very exciting for your child. Here's a few tips to help teach your child how to ride.



Safety tip 1: Always wear a helmet

Bike helmets should be worn every time your child gets on their bike – especially when they are first learning to ride. Wearing gloves and knee and elbow pads to protect 'knock zones' can also be a good idea especially in warm weather when your child might be wearing a T-shirt and shorts that exposes skin areas.

Safety tip 2: Find a safe place to practise

At this age your child does not have the skills to keep the bike straight and stop safely. Find an area where your child can practise on a smooth surface and away from traffic. Watch them closely and never allow your child to coast or freewheel down a steep embankment.

Safety tip 3: Starting to ride

The 'running method' is simple and one that many parents use. Once your child is on their bike you run along next to them giving simple instructions. Some parents hold onto the seat of their child's bike and run along side which will let you correct the lean of the bike. Another way is to hold your child gently by their shoulders.

You can also teach your child the basics of riding by having them use a smaller bike than normal and without training wheels. The seat should be pushed down to the lowest setting so your child can place their feet flat on the ground while they are sitting on the seat. Have your child scoot around with the bike this way until they have learned to balance.

Safety tip 4: Stop and balance

Sometimes parents attach training wheels to their child's bike as the wheels give some stability and help children learn to keep their balance. Once your child is able to stay up with ease and use the brakes without trouble you can go out together in a safe area. Either walk or ride behind your child but within earshot. Make sure you have developed a system of communication should you need to warn your child of danger.

Safety tip 5: Bike parts

As well as learning how to ride, your child needs to learn what each part of their bike does. Point out the brakes, handlebars, chain, tyres, spokes and lights and explain what each one does.

Safety tip 6: Supervise and keep your child close

Either walk or ride behind your child so you can see them at all times. Make sure your child is in the habit of listening to your instructions and knows to follow warnings just in case you need to get them to stop in a hurry.

THANK YOU FOR
PLAYING A VITAL ROLE
IN YOUR CHILD'S ROAD
SAFETY EDUCATION.

