

# Commuting by Bike

Tips for a smooth ride



My name is Ross and I started commuting by bike in 2010.

The greater Puget Sound region is a wonderful place to bike, with increasing bicycle infrastructure and a large amount of people who use their bike for both transportation and recreation. With a little route planning, proper gear and necessities you will be all set to give biking a try. Here is a list of tips for a smooth ride.

## Biking Basics

- If you have a bike you have not used in some time, it might be a good idea to take it to a bike savvy friend or local bike shop for a tune-up.
- Check out [www.mindthegapmovie.com](http://www.mindthegapmovie.com) 'Urban Biking Tips' for useful videos on buying a bike, riding in the rain, optimizing your commute and getting over the fear of urban bicycle riding.
- Learn how to fix a flat. The necessary tools you'll need include: tire levers, an extra tube, patch kit, travel pump and wrench (if your wheel is not quick release).
- Bike lights are essential for safety! Install white lights in the front and red lights in the back. Purchase bike lights at any local bike shop.
- Helmet laws vary by city and county but are recommended for everyone – safety is key!
- Buy and use a good lock. Most bike shops recommend a U-Lock.

## Bike Commuting Tips

- Try Google Maps Bike Directions and the [Snohomish County Area Bicycling and Trail Map](#) to plan your route.
- Depending on the weather, you may want to bike to work in gym clothes and bring your work clothes in your bag to change into.
- Roll up your pant legs or put a rubber band around your pants near your ankles to avoid getting caught in the bike chain and getting grease on your clothes.
- A bike rack is helpful to attach bike bags, panniers, and a basket or crate so you do not have to carry everything in a backpack or shoulder bag.
- If you are carrying a laptop, camera or any important electronics to and from work, keep those items in a backpack or shoulder bag because the bumps you go over on your bike could damage these items if they are in a crate or bag attached to your bike.
- Don't be afraid to sweat – it means you're getting a good workout! Bring a hand towel to freshen up.
- Always carry a rain jacket, poncho and/or rain pants in your bag just in case of a shower.
- Have fun! Biking allows you to enjoy the scenery and find new reasons to love Washington State!

[communitytransit.org/bikes](http://communitytransit.org/bikes)