

Winter Riding Tips

Condition	Clothing and Bike Tips	Riding and Safety Tips
Wet: Raining or wet roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May use fenders, shoe covers, rain pants, rain jacket, rain-cape, water-resistant gloves, helmet cover/head beanie, eye protection if you can still see. ● Bike should have front and rear lights, wear bright and reflective clothing. ● After the ride, clean/lube chain and derailleur. May wipe down wheels/brake pads. ● There are some “winter tires”- may work better than your regular tires. ● Some brake pads are designed to work better in wet weather- ask your local bike shop! ● A seat cover is a cheap way to stay dry if there are showers while you grab coffee, groceries, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Surfaces will be very slick after the first rains of the year, especially any metal on the road. Also painted lines may be slick. Wooden bridges on trails may also be slick. ● Leaves on road can be slick and hide hazards- it is safer to go around leaves (use hand signals when leaving your lane). ● Reduce speed and sharpness of turns. Keep upright as much as possible. ● Braking will be reduced- act accordingly.
Windy: Head wind, Cross wind, Tail wind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wear windbreaker if too cold. ● Build in extra time for your trip- wind slows you down just like hills. ● In severe wind, you may want to avoid bridges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Riding low (“in drops”) can help w/headwind ● Side wind can blow you off course, especially if you have panniers or a pack. Be ready. ● Tail wind: Woohoo!
Cold Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wear layers. If you are a little cold before starting, you are dressed about right. A thin windproof jacket with wool or other layers underneath works better than one big winter coat. ● For head: Can wear ear covers or a beanie. Many hats work fine with a helmet, just readjust the straps so you still have a snug fit. ● Long fingered gloves, lobster claws. ● For feet: thick wool socks, double socks, and warm shoes can all keep you warm and dry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If your hands get too cold, braking ability may decrease. ● Metal (such as manhole covers), bridges, and overpasses may freeze sooner and thaw later than other roadways/paths. ● If you encounter ice, do not turn or brake suddenly as this can throw you off balance.

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Dark, includes twilight and fog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wear bright reflective clothing. Use white front light(s) and red rear light(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be prepared to ride slower- hazards harder to see and motorists have a harder time seeing you. ● Your lights may get “lost” in the other lights, so don’t assume motorists see you. ● Be extra careful at intersections. Don’t get caught in an intersection when the light turns red.
Snow and Ice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay home. Otherwise, see Cold above. ● There are studded tires available, or use aggressive treads/knobbies. ● Lower your tire pressure to provide more surface area, and lower your seat to lower your center of gravity and give you the option of using your feet for balance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Everything will be slick- no sudden turns or quick stops. ● Choose your route carefully. Major streets are more likely to be plowed, but bike lanes and shoulders on those streets might be filled with snow or gravel. Side streets and paths are unlikely to be plowed. Following a bus route gives you another option if conditions prove too challenging.

*Everyone has their own strategies to beat the rain, heat, or cold. Experiment and find out what works for you!

*Combine a bike trip with a trip on public transit. Buses and trains accommodate bikes so bike one way or part of your commute and take transit the rest of the way. More information to help plan your bike + transit trip: communitytransit.org/bikes

Winter Riding Tips- Bike Maintenance

- Wet roads cause dirt and debris to stick to your bike, wheels, chain, etc.
 - Clean and lube your chain often- after every ride is not too often.
 - Lube your derailleur, too.
 - Use a lube that is meant for wet weather- it will not be washed away as easily.
 - You may want to wipe down your bike after every ride, or more often than in summer. Pay particular attention to your rims and brake pads.
- Pay extra attention to your wheels (rim brakes only). The grit that collects on your rims in wet weather can wear your rims much faster than in dry weather.
 - Check your rim braking surface for wear by checking for “dishing” where the pads rub, or looking for a small dimple in the rim. This is a wear mark- when it is gone, the rim should be replaced. Not all rims have this dimple.