

# Bike Riding

## Strategies to try:

- You need to be able to balance on a bike before moving onto pedalling.
- Balance bikes are an effective way of introducing bike riding at an early age. You could remove the pedals and stabilisers to make a bike into a balance bike.
- Lie on back on the floor and practise pedalling legs in the air. This develops muscle memory and strength, and familiarises them with the movements required to use the pedals.
- If your child struggles to pedal, practice this on an exercise bike.
- Practice somewhere quiet and safe with the bike – grass can be too soft and makes pushing harder.

Bike riding takes a lot of practice to master. This is because riding a bike involves a lot of different skills working together, e.g. balance, coordination and using both sides of the body together. It is important when learning to ride a bike that the child has an interest in learning this skill.

Always follow general bike safety rules when teaching your child how to ride, e.g. wearing a helmet, bike reflectors, safe mounting and use of brakes, etc.



Practice balancing with a balance bike on a flat surface, encouraging child to walk themselves along using their feet.

Encourage child to use both feet to propel themselves forward. Keeping arms fairly rigid and looking where they are going.

Introduce a gentle slope to build up speed as the child becomes more confident.

When able, ask child to lift up both feet whilst building up speed on a gentle slope. This shows balance is developing.

When confident with previous steps, encourage child to rest their feet on the bike frame. If they can steer around paths and cope with slight bumps and changes of direction they might be ready to introduce pedals.

Introduce pedals and encourage child to start with one foot on a pedal and push off with the other.

If the child needs a little reassurance hold onto the saddle rather than them.

Practice using the pedals to propel bike forward.

Once child is happy with these steps encourage lots of practice.

Check the British cycling web page for great ideas and tips:

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk>  
- learn to ride.

