

My 12 Top Cycling Tips

I know that there are many keen cyclists out there. Here's a few tips from my experience which will make your ride more enjoyable.

1. Be prepared. In your saddlebag carry at least 2 spare tubes and an emergency energy gel. Carry your mobile phone with you, money for food/drink and your phone.
2. Get properly fitted by a professional e.g. Leon Vogels at Queensland Sports Medicine Centre, located at the Gabba Cricket Ground, Brisbane. Ph 07 3891 2000; l.vogels@qsmc.net.au
3. Hydration. Drink 1 litre of water per hour. Take care with sports drinks on the ride. They can cause tummy upsets and they will rot your teeth. I usually have a nice cold sports drinks waiting for me after I've finished riding. Then I brush my teeth shortly afterwards.
4. Wear gloves. They help wipe away sweat and cushion the bumps. Gloves will also protect your hands should you come off provided the gloves are tough enough. (Lycra gloves just get shredded when applied vigorously to bitumen.)
5. Rider comfort. Wear proper cycling shorts. Apply generous quantities of *Shammy Cream* (or similar) before setting out on your ride. Change seat and hand positions frequently. Use a sweat band under your helmet to keep sweat from your eyes.
6. Reduce punctures. Check your tyre pressure before each ride. Use hardy tyres even if they weigh that little bit more.
7. Avoid *hitting the wall* with sound nutrition. To prepare for a long ride, eat pasta the night before, then have a bowl of cereal before setting out on the morning. Eat something every hour on your ride. Don't rely on sugar alone. Include some real food, not just stuff in wrappers. I start with a peanut paste+honey sandwich (cut into quarters for ease of digesting). Then I progress to a sports bar or two e.g. *Power Bar*. In the final hour I'll move to sugars in the form of energy gels or snakes.
8. Bike service. Get your bike cleaned and serviced in the lead up to a big event. Make sure you have at least one training ride after the service though, in case there's something that happened in the service which needs fixing. Better to have this sorted before race day!



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9. Wet conditions. I avoid riding in the wet wherever possible. But if you get caught in the rain, take it very easy going around corners. Apply your brakes frequently to dry out the rims and allow more time to bring your bike to a stop.
10. Be seen. Wear light coloured clothing, particularly in dark or gloom conditions. At night wear reflective anklets and wrist bands. Also a good front and back light is a must.
11. Wear I.D. Have a ready means of identifying you in the event of an accident. I wear a dog tag around my neck when riding. It contains phone numbers of next of kin and my doctor.
12. Stretch afterwards. After each long ride I have a little routine which includes hamstrings, quads, calves, glutes and hip flexors.

Enjoy your ride!

Scott.

