



## Bike

### I DON'T KNOW HOW TO RIDE

- Learn to ride at any age! Register for a lesson by a League of American Bicyclists Certified Instructor. Lessons usually last 1 hour and cost \$50/hour.
- Visit [chicagobicycle.org](http://chicagobicycle.org) or email [info@ChicagoBicycle.org](mailto:info@ChicagoBicycle.org) for more information.

### I'M CONCERNED ABOUT BIKING IN CAR TRAFFIC OR AM A BEGINNER

- Try quiet neighborhood streets and nearby trails where cars are not allowed.
- Bike with others for safer riding.
- Connect with Women Bike Chicago ([womenbikechicago.org](http://womenbikechicago.org)) and get a bike mentor who will help you navigate the streets of Chicago.
- Connect with Chicago Bike Buddies ([chicagobikebuddies.com](http://chicagobikebuddies.com)) to find an experienced bicyclist who will help you gain confidence on the road.
- Active Trans holds monthly 3-hour classes to introduce the basics of riding a bike safely in traffic. Register online at [activetrans.org/resources/member-discounts/safe-cycling-class](http://activetrans.org/resources/member-discounts/safe-cycling-class)

### WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

- You can generally wear everyday clothes when you bike. If you prefer, choose thin natural fabrics and sweat-wicking polyester fabrics for staying cool and looking nice.
- Wear bright/reflective clothing and use appropriate lighting (e.g.- white in front, red in rear) and reflectors at night to maximize your visibility.
- Consider an upright riding bike with a chain guard, skirt guard and fenders to keep your clothes free of debris. Use an ankle strap to keep your pants' cuff clean.

### I'M CONCERNED ABOUT GETTING SWEATY

- 1 mile of walking is equivalent to 3 to 5 miles of biking. If you can walk one mile without breaking a sweat, you won't have a problem on a short bike ride.
- If needed, plan ahead by bringing deodorant, a towel, or a change of clothes. Store professional clothes at your office to wear once you arrive.

### I DON'T WANT TO MESS UP MY HAIR

- Consider a simple hairstyle that is less affected by helmets. Or bring a brush.
- Wear a hat or bandana under your helmet to reduce marks from helmets and the effects of wind on your hair.

### WHERE CAN I BUY BIKE GEAR OR A NEW BIKE? WHERE CAN I GET MY BIKE REPAIRED?

- Try local bike shops for bike repairs, purchasing lights, helmets, locks, clothing, new and used bikes, etc.

### FIND THE BIKE SHOP CLOSEST TO YOU IN THIS CHICAGO BIKE SHOP DIRECTORY:

- [chicagobikeshops.info](http://chicagobikeshops.info)

### WHAT IF I'M NOT IN GOOD SHAPE, HAVEN'T BEEN ON A BIKE IN A WHILE, OR HAVE HEALTH ISSUES?

- It's all about baby steps! Try riding a block or two on a side street and see how you feel. Most people are surprised at how quickly they are able to build up stamina on a bike. Start by visiting nearby shops, restaurants, parks, and other destinations that are less than a 10 minute bike ride away.
- Bike slowly and at a pace that's comfortable for you. It's not a race! Enjoy the breeze, the view, and have fun.
- Try shorter trips or combine trips with transit. Walking and transit may be better options in some cases.

### HOW CAN I CARRY MY GROCERIES OR OTHER ITEMS?

- You can purchase a bike basket, front and/or rear rack, or panniers at any bike shop in the city.
- You can also make your own basket - try a milk crate!
- A good old-fashioned backpack works too.

### WHAT IF THE WEATHER GETS BAD WHILE I'M ON MY BIKE?

- Be prepared - bring layers and a rain jacket if you are going on a long bike ride.
- You can also bring your bike on the bus or train if needed (see below).
- To keep your bike seat dry, store a shower cap in your bag or under your bike seat, and put it on your bike seat if it might get wet.

### HOW DO I LOAD MY BIKE ONTO A BUS OR TRAIN?

- Bikes can be rolled on the CTA trains any time except during holidays and rush hours (7am to 9am, 4pm to 6pm).
- Bikes are welcome on the front racks of buses at all times.
- Visit [transitchicago.com/bikeandride/](http://transitchicago.com/bikeandride/) for more details.

### I'M AFRAID OF GETTING MY BIKE STOLEN

- Invest in a secure U-lock to lock your frame and at least one wheel to a bike rack or immovable object. For added security, secure your other wheel with a second lock or chain. Never use a chain lock without a U-lock.
- Register your bike with the Chicago Police Department online. Search for "bike registration" at [chicagopolice.org](http://chicagopolice.org).
- If your bike is stolen, you should report it with the police and on the Chicago Stolen Bike Registry: [chicago.stolenbike.org](http://chicago.stolenbike.org).

### HOW DO I CHOOSE A ROUTE?

- Request a free Chicago bicycle map or download online ([chicagocompletestreets.org/resources/cycling/](http://chicagocompletestreets.org/resources/cycling/))
- Plan your route with Google Maps ([maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com)), Goroo Chicago Trip Planner ([goroo.com](http://goroo.com)), or any number of smartphone apps, such as RideScout ([ridescoutapp.com](http://ridescoutapp.com)) or CityMapper ([citymapper.com/chicago](http://citymapper.com/chicago)).

### WHAT ARE SOME BASIC BIKE SAFETY TIPS?

- Ride with traffic, not against it.
- Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals. Cross major streets at traffic signals.

## BIKE CONTINUED

- Communicate with drivers and signal your intentions using hand signals.
- Ride on streets with bike lanes and enough room to ride outside of the “door zone” when riding alongside parallel parked cars.
- Consider riding on residential streets when starting out, even if they take you a bit out of the way.
- Do not ride on the sidewalks. It is illegal for adults (age 12 and over) to ride on sidewalks in Chicago and cars and pedestrians are not expecting it.
- Take the Ride Illinois safety quiz to learn more: [bikesafetyquiz.com](https://bikesafetyquiz.com) and learn about bike laws at [chicagocompletestreets.org](https://chicagocompletestreets.org)

### I'M CONCERNED ABOUT BIKING WITH MY KIDS

- If you have younger children, you can use a child trailer, child seat, or trail-a-bike.
- Balance bikes help kids learn to be comfortable when bicycling. We recommend children wear a helmet on all rides.
- Neighborhood streets with low traffic volume are great for biking with kids. Children 11 and under are permitted to ride on the sidewalks, but adults must ride on the street.
- Join a Chicago Kidical Mass ride. Kidical Mass is a national movement to encourage more families to ride bikes together. The rides are 2 to 4 miles at a 5 to 6 mph pace on quiet residential streets, typically 1 hour. More information at [chicagokidicalmass.org](https://chicagokidicalmass.org).

### HOW CAN I TRY OUT DIVVY BIKE SHARE?

- Purchase an annual membership online or a 24-hour pass from any Divvy station using a credit card or debit card.
- Riders get unlimited trips of 30 minutes or less for the duration of your membership or pass. When you're done, dock the bike at any station.
- Find a station near you and learn more at [divvybikes.com](https://divvybikes.com).
- The Chicago Department of Transportation's Divvy for Everyone (D4E) program offers \$5 memberships for those who can't afford the regular membership price (no debit or credit card required). Visit [divvybikes.com/d4e](https://divvybikes.com/d4e) for more details.



### HOW DO I BUY A TRANSIT TICKET?

- Ventra is a combined fare card that can be used on CTA trains and buses, or Pace buses. Learn more at [ventrachicago.com](https://ventrachicago.com).
- Visit [transitchicago.com/fares](https://transitchicago.com/fares) for up-to-date pricing information on single ride tickets, day passes, or multi-day passes. Buy your ticket at any CTA stop, on the bus (cash only), a participating retailer, online, or over the phone.
- Metra is a suburban commuter train system with several downtown Chicago terminals. Riders can use the Ventra mobile app to purchase tickets through their smart phone. Otherwise, if the station's ticket window is open, riders must purchase tickets prior to boarding. Failure to do so will incur an additional fee. Learn more at [metrarail.com](https://metrarail.com).

### HOW DO I KNOW WHICH BUS/TRAIN TO TAKE?

- Visit Google Maps ([google.com/maps](https://google.com/maps)), the CTA website ([transitchicago.com](https://transitchicago.com)), or Metra Rail ([metrarail.com](https://metrarail.com)) for bus and train routes and times.

### IS THE BUS/TRAIN A CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION OPTION?

- In many cases you can save time and money by taking transit. You don't need to find OR pay for parking.
- You can make transit more convenient by timing out your trip. Download one of several CTA smartphone apps to track the bus/train ([transitchicago.com/tracker](https://transitchicago.com/tracker)).
- Fun Fact: Did you know the average annual cost of owning a car is over \$8,000? You can save thousands of dollars every year by taking public transit more often.



### HOW CAN I MAKE WALKING MORE SOCIAL?

- Make walking fun and social by spending time with friends and family — take a walk for errands, after a meal, or for anything you want.
- Join or form a walking group or hold a walking meeting at work.

### HOW CAN I CREATE A WALKING CLUB?

- Recruit Members: Talk to your family members, friends, neighbors, and work colleagues about your idea to start a walking group.
- Get Organized: Gather and share everyone's contact information. When you're in it as a group, you can help keep each other motivated! Determine when, where, and how often you will walk. Figure out your route and decide if you plan to walk indoors and/or outdoors.
- Get going! Try it out (even if it is only once) and walk your way towards better health while reclaiming your community in camaraderie.

### I'M CONCERNED ABOUT MY PERSONAL SAFETY WHILE WALKING

- Walk with others.
- Be aware of your surroundings. If you feel unsafe, pop into a local shop. Take your cell phone in case you need to call 911 or a friend.
- Avoid walking late at night.
- Avoid areas with overgrown bushes, confined spaces, or poorly lit areas. Try to find routes with plenty of people around.
- Making eye contact with drivers can help you know whether they see you in crossings. Remember to look both ways before crossing — it's not just for kids.

### WHAT IF I'M NOT IN GOOD SHAPE OR HAVE HEALTH ISSUES?

- Take shorter trips and add more walking into your life one step at a time. Try walking around the block first.
- Make a plan - what are some local businesses or organizations you could try walking to?
- Walking is a great low-impact way to improve your health. Over time you will lower your risk of health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes. You will tone your muscles, strengthen your bones, burn calories, and lift your mood.

### I HAVE TOO MUCH TO CARRY

- Plan ahead and bring along a cart or backpack. In some circumstances, other forms of transportation may be more appropriate.