



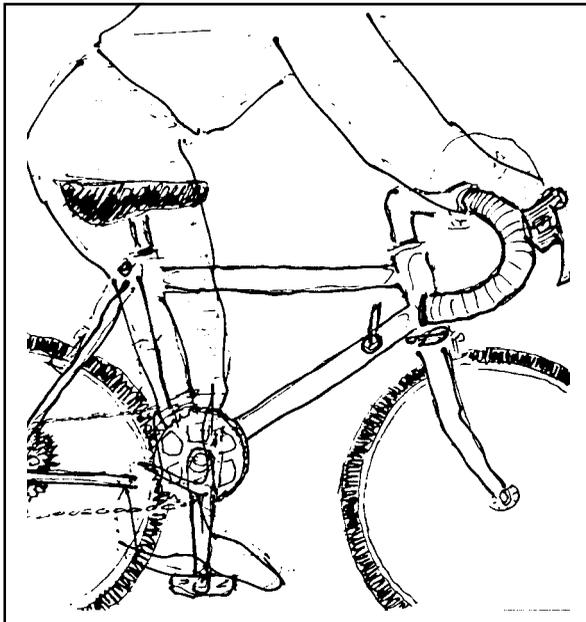
Sizing your bike:

Basic fit: The most basic test is to stand over the bike. On a diamond frame bike (so-called “man’s bike”), you should have between one and three inches of clearance.

On a mixte or open frame (so-called “woman’s bike”), you should be able to adjust the saddle to the right riding position for riding without pulling the seat post way out of the frame.

Next, look at how stretched out the bike is. Some bikes have long top tubes (the horizontal tubes of the frame). These may be suitable for you IF you have a long torso.

Some people, women in particular, need bikes with shorter top tubes for the most comfortable ride.



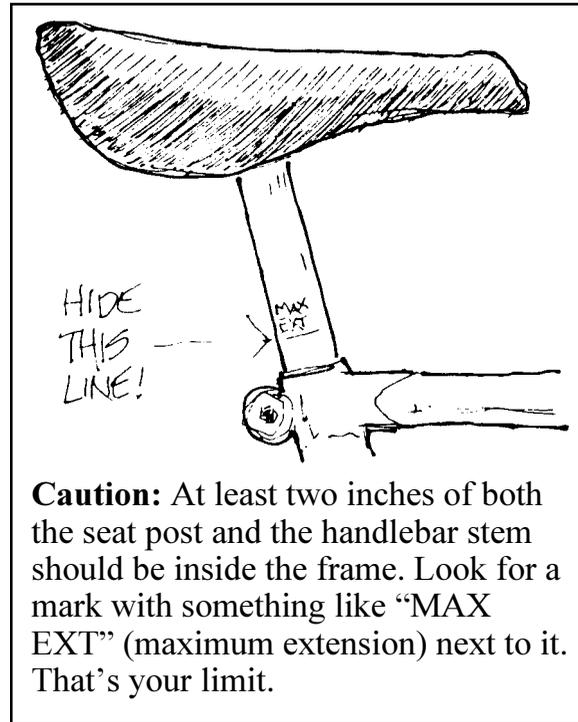
Basic adjustments:

Saddle height: When you sit on the bike with your foot on the pedal in its lowest position, your leg should be almost straight.

Saddle position: Generally, the saddle should be level. You can experiment with tipping it slightly forward or back to see if one position is more comfortable than another. The trick is to change things SLIGHTLY each time.

Handlebar position: For dropped handlebars, the top part should be roughly level with the top of the saddle. Racers tend to lower them a bit while tourists tend to raise them slightly.

For upright or mountain bike handlebars, the common position is slightly above the level of the saddle.



Caution: At least two inches of both the seat post and the handlebar stem should be inside the frame. Look for a mark with something like “MAX EXT” (maximum extension) next to it. That’s your limit.

For more information:

We’ve got all kinds bike riding info. If you want more, write to us:

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 605 Suwannee Street, MS 82
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 web site: www.dot.state.fl.us/safety

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Tips for the first time buyer

Buying your first bicycle is a heady experience! Here are some things to keep in mind...

First, how much money do you want to spend?

Be realistic. It's no good to buy a VERY fancy bike and not have enough money left to get a good lock for it... or to eat!

Try to keep back \$40 or \$60 to buy essential "accessories" if you don't already have them.

If you can't afford to get a good new bike, how about buying a used one? The used market is a great place to get a real bargain if you know what you're looking for.

If you have a friend who "knows cycling," have him or her help you.

Second, what do you want to do with it?

Different kinds of bicycles are good for different kinds of riding. Think about what you expect to do and then about what you might like to try.

A good idea is to get a bike that will handle the riding you are sure you will be doing AND that will also be good for those things you'd like to try.

If you want to ride back and forth to school or work, consider a bike that is sturdy and can accept fenders, lights and racks.

If you think you might want to go touring, get a multi-speed bike (21 speed would be a good "minimum") with dropped handle bars and medium

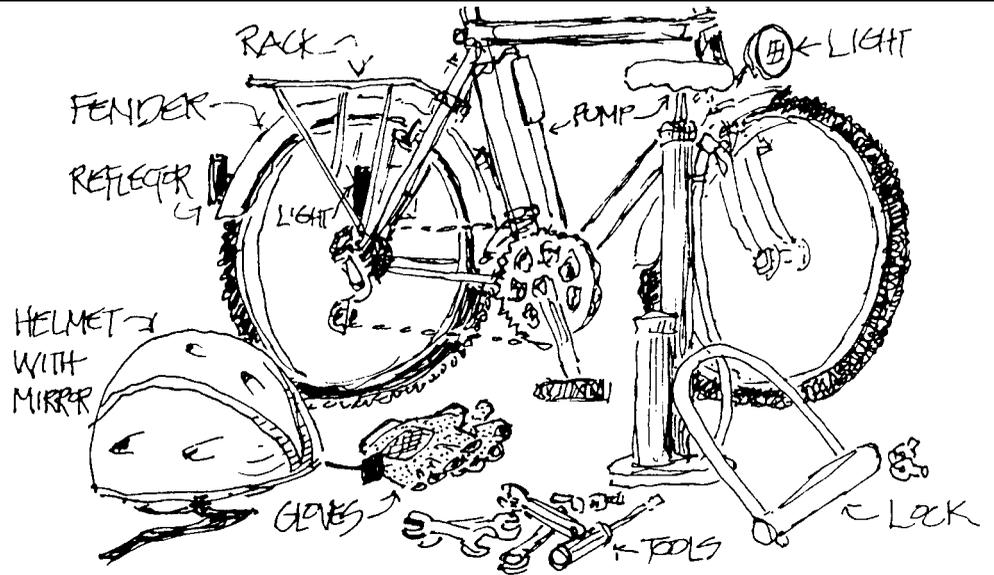
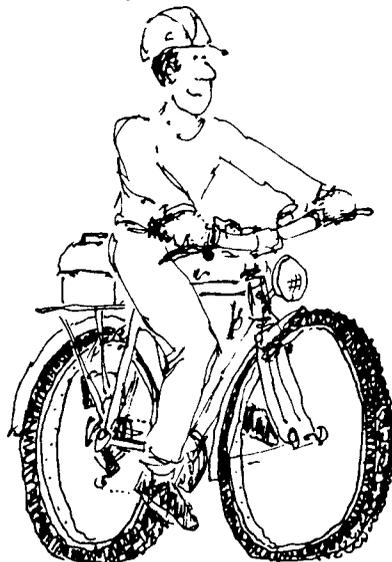
width alloy wheels. It should have "eyelets" for mounting racks and fenders.

If you think you may want to try racing or participating in triathalons, look for a lightweight fourteen to eighteen speed bike with narrow alloy wheels and high pressure tires.

To get "serious" about racing, expect to spend upwards of \$1000 for a decent bike. Triathletes can get away with spending \$500 to \$700 though.

If you want to ride in the "outback," check out mountain bikes. These bikes are fast becoming the rage and for good reason. They are lots of fun to ride and good ones are very rugged.

In fact, many people use mountain bikes or their flatland cousins, "cruisers," for commuting and riding around town. Riders like the comfortable ride and durability of these bikes.



Essential accessories.

Helmet: According to one national study, three out of every four people killed in bike crashes die of head injuries. If you value your head, get and wear a nationally approved hard- or micro-shell helmet.

Lights and reflectors: These are a "must" if you plan to ride at night. Even if you don't plan to ride at night, it's nice to be prepared if you accidentally get caught out after dark.

Gloves: Cycling gloves are very handy for two reasons. First, good ones can keep you from damaging the nerves in your hands. They also protect your palms in case you fall.

Mirror: Many cyclists swear by rearview mirrors. While you should always look back over your shoulder before making a left turn, you can use a mirror to check on traffic as you ride.

Lock: Get the best lock you can afford, preferably a U-lock. None of them is as expensive as a new bike.

Tools: Your bike shop can give you ideas on basic tools. Don't use a pair of pliers on nuts and bolts.

Rear rack: A good rack for the back of the bike will make carrying things a lot easier.

Fenders: If you plan to ride in all weather, fenders are very handy.

What about "suicide levers":

Those little extra brake levers that attach to the real controls are ok if you never have to stop in a hurry. But in a panic stop you shouldn't use them. They bottom out too soon and they don't give you a solid grip on the handlebars.