



What should I wear for my commute?

The important thing is to dress comfortably. For short commutes, regular clothing is adequate — just be sure to use a leg strap to keep pants legs from getting caught in the chain, or get a bike with a chain guard.

- **For longer trips**, many prefer to wear bike shorts and jerseys. Experiment with what works for you and invest in quality pieces over time.
- **For rainy days**, water-resistant and waterproof clothing specific to cycling is available. A good rain jacket with a longer flap in the back is an example. You can also buy rain pants, waterproof gloves, helmet covers and shoe covers. Another simpler option is a rain cape, which is open on the bottom to allow air flow, so you don't get overheated. (Fenders are a must!)
- **In winter**, layering and having wind-proof gloves is usually adequate. If you are warm when you start off in the morning, you'll be too hot on your commute.
- The most important part of your bicycling attire is a **properly fit helmet**. Helmets can prevent head injuries, so wear one every time you ride.
- **Gloves** can make your riding more comfortable and protect your hands.

You can start as a fair weather bike commuter. If you only ride when the forecast is good, you'll still make a significant difference. The more you bike, the more you'll look forward to that part of your day and you may find yourself wanting to bike every day. With the right clothing and gear, biking in the rain and the cold is not as bad as you think.

What about work clothes?

Some bike commuters simply ride in their work clothes, depending on the season and length of ride. Others ride in casual or bike clothes and change at the office. You can carry your work clothes with you, or drive one day a week with the clothes for the rest of the week.



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Commuting by Bicycle



**KNOXVILLE REGIONAL
BICYCLE PROGRAM**
www.knoxtrans.org

GETTING STARTED: Thinking of combining your work commute into a workout? Here are the basics to get you on the road.

How far and how long?

Base your decision on how far to bike on your experience, confidence and abilities.

Distance

Typically, 3 to 5 miles is an ideal distance for bicycle commuting. Some riders go much farther, even up to 23 miles!

Time

Riding 10 mph won't break a major sweat (except in summer), and you can cover 3 miles in less than 20 minutes. You might be able to average 12 to 15 mph, and if conditions (and your fitness!) are right, average speeds over 15 mph are possible.

Because of traffic and parking in urban areas, bicycling generally takes the same time, or less, than driving for trips of 3 to 5 miles. But even if your commute is longer, 30 extra minutes of sleep won't be as invigorating as an early morning ride. You'll arrive at work alert and ready to go! Plus, you'll save the time you usually spend at the gym (and the trip to and from).

IDEAL BIKES FOR COMMUTING

Just about any bike in good condition will be suitable for bicycle commuting, depending on your personal needs. You may want to use the one you have until you decide if you're going to be bike commuting a lot. But the right bike can make your commute a lot more comfortable.

- **Mountain Bikes** have fatter tires and endure rough streets, but they are heavier and don't make for the fastest commute.
- **Road Bikes** are the fastest but the dropped handlebars may be uncomfortable for novices, and high-pressure tires are unsuitable for some city streets or greenways.
- **Hybrids** are similar to mountain bikes but have tires and gears suited for city streets.
- **Cruiser or City Bikes** are often simple, one-speed bikes that work great for short trips. There are multi-speed cruisers available so you can deal with our region's topography!
- **Commuter Bikes** are getting popular. Some of them come already equipped with everything you need, including lights, fenders, chain guards and even internal gears so you have less maintenance.

COMMUTE GEAR

- **Fenders** (because you never know when it's going to rain!)
- **Rack, Panniers** and/or **Basket** (see the Bicycle Gear brochure for more details)
- **Lights** (if you have to work late or want to stay downtown for happy hour)

CLEANING UP

Whether you need a shower once you arrive at work depends on many factors. You may be able to use a washcloth or baby wipes for a quick clean-up. If you must have a shower and your workplace doesn't have one, see if there is a health club nearby.

TIP: The downtown YWCA has very reasonable membership rates so you could join just for the shower privileges!

