



The Charlottetown CYCLING HANDBOOK

Everything you need to know about
riding your bicycle in and around
Charlottetown — all in one book

First Edition, 2020



Cycling is for everyone!

Join hundreds of people across Charlottetown who ride bicycles because it's convenient, healthy, inexpensive and fun.

This handbook will teach you about your bicycle, provincial traffic laws and safe cycling habits. When riding your bike, always remember to use your best judgement, take your time, and to have fun!

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Reasons to Ride

convenient

A bicycle is often faster than public transit or sitting in traffic, especially downtown. You can go wherever you want, whenever you want, as soon as you hop on.

healthy

Using your bike regularly will increase your physical activity, improve your mental health and make you feel more energetic.

affordable

Owning and operating a bicycle is a fraction of the cost of a car. Once you own a bike, it is free to operate!

environmentally-friendly

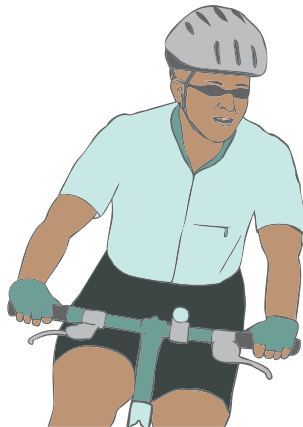
Contribute to cleaner air and less crowded streets by taking your bike instead of a car.

fun

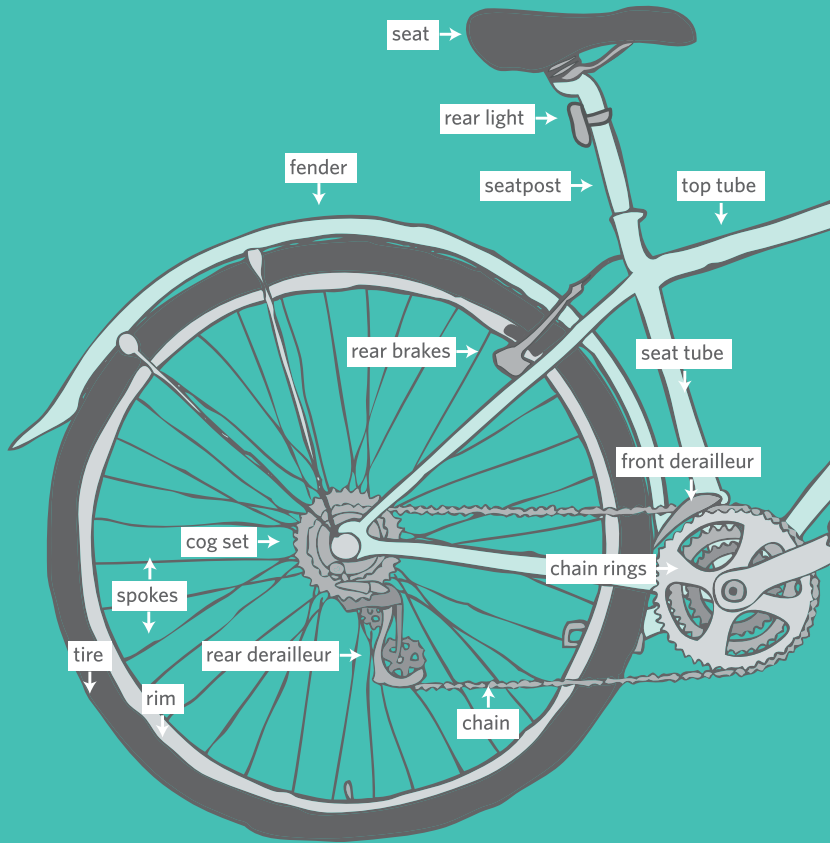
Exploring your neighbourhood and local parks with family and friends is one of the many ways to have fun on your bike.

a safe way to explore your community

A growing network of bicycle lanes, trails, and stronger traffic laws to protect cyclists make cycling increasingly safe and enjoyable.

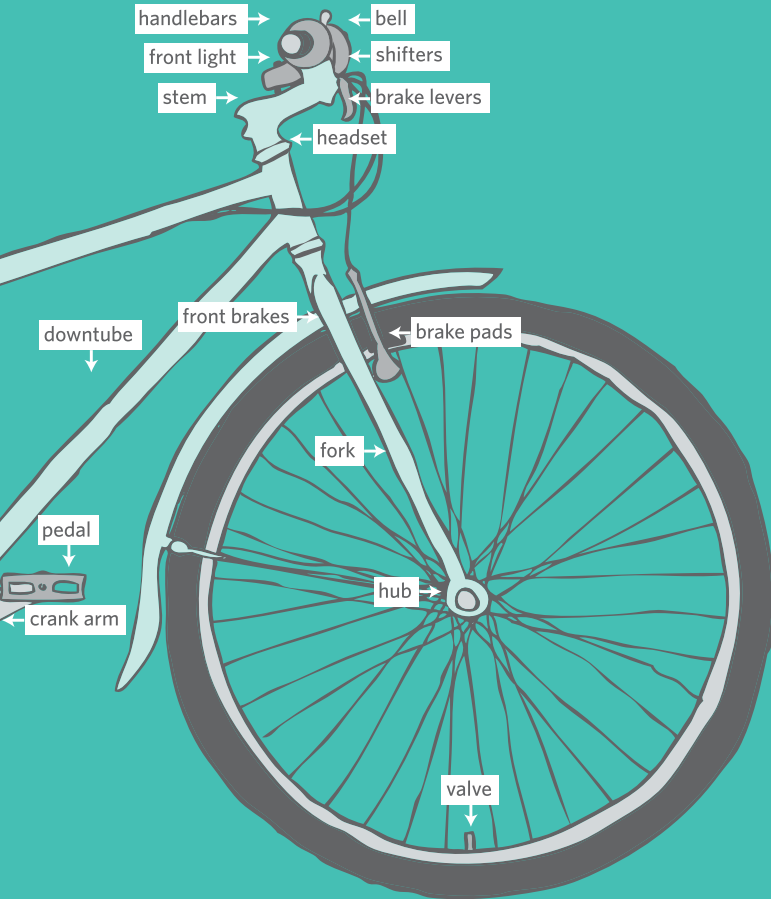


The bicycle





Check out the [City of Charlottetown's cycling map](#) for a list of local bike shops and do it yourself fix it stations: charlottetown.ca/cycling



Ready to Ride

does your bicycle fit?

Make sure you can stand over the top tube of your bike. When sitting you should comfortably reach the handlebars and your leg should be slightly bent while touching the pedal at its lowest point.

keep your ride smooth with the ABC checklist:

air

- tires have enough air
- wheels spin freely

brakes & bars

- brakes are working
- handlebars are stable




chain and crank

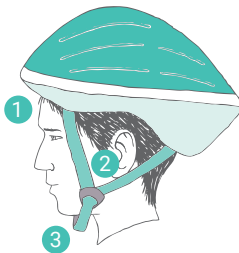
- chain is tight and lubricated
- pedals spin freely
- crank arm is not wobbly

wear a helmet, and make sure it fits

On PEI, the law states that all cyclists must wear a securely fastened helmet.

follow the 2-V-1 rule

-  2 fingers between your eyebrow and your helmet.
-  The straps should form a "V" around your ears.
-  1 finger should fit between the strap and your chin.



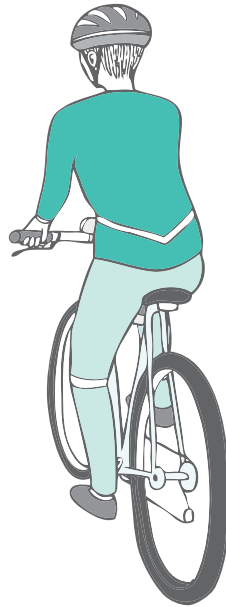
For more on helmets and bicycling safely visit:
www.charlottetown.ca/cycling

take care of children

Small children must be seated in an approved child's bicycle seat, bike trailer, or cargo bike. It is illegal for two people to ride on a bicycle meant for one person.

be seen, be heard, be safe

When riding in the dark bicycles must be equipped with a white light on the front and a red reflector on the rear. Additionally, all bicycles are required to have a bell or horn. A bell lets people know you are approaching. Ring it when passing parked, pulled-over, or turning cars to alert the driver of your presence. The more people see and hear you, the safer you are.



A cyclist is easier to see in the daytime.

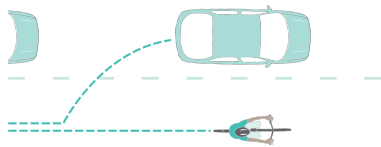
It is more difficult for drivers to see you at night.

Lights, reflectors, and reflective clothing help drivers see you at night.

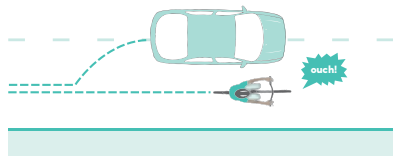
Rules of the road

Highway Traffic Act

PEI's Highway Traffic Act (HTA) outlines how all road users—including cyclists—must follow all regular traffic laws outlined in the HTA. In addition, there are also some laws that are specific to bikes.



- ✓ by law, drivers must give one metre when passing a cyclist on PEI.



- ✗ insufficient passing distance is a dangerous and ticketable offence.

cyclists and the law

Riding a bicycle on PEI does not require a license or special permit—anyone can do it! Cyclists are legally required to follow traffic rules, obey signs and use hand signals. A cyclist who has disobeyed a traffic law can be stopped by a police officer and may be fined.

riding on the road

Bikes, the slowest moving vehicles, must ride as close to the right-hand curb as is safe and practical. Keeping one metre between you and the curb, or parked cars, ensures that you are visible to other road users and have room to maneuver if a car passes you too closely.

Drivers must give one metre when passing a cyclist on PEI or face a fine and demerit points. Ride with confidence!

Examples of ticketable HTA offences and fines for cyclists

failure to wear a helmet while on bike	\$100 - \$500
improper (or no) arm signal to indicate turns or stops	\$100 - \$500
failure to stop at a red light	\$200 - \$1000
careless operation of bicycle or vehicle	\$200 - \$500
riding a bike on the sidewalk	\$100 - \$500
riding without one hand on the handlebars	\$100 - \$500

Examples of HTA offences, fines, and demerit points for drivers

insufficient passing distance	\$200 - \$1000 + 3 points
opening car door into traffic (cyclists or vehicles)	\$200 - \$500
distracted driving	\$575 - \$1,275 + 5 points

fines, not demerit points

Cyclists do not receive demerit points on their driver's licence for tickets issued while riding their bicycle. But they can be given tickets for which they have to pay fines.

sidewalks are for walking

On PEI it is illegal to ride a bicycle on the sidewalk. Riding on the sidewalk can be more dangerous than riding on the road because pedestrians and drivers won't expect you there,

especially when pulling in and out of driveways.

Cyclists may use multi-use paths and trails but should always signal with a bell or greeting when they are approaching someone from behind. This will avoid collisions and prevent startling other path users. Cyclists should also walk their bike through any crosswalks they encounter. Cyclists should not ride their bicycle on a road or highway if there is a path intended for the use of bicycles adjacent to that roadway.

Cycle safely

pay attention

Pay attention in traffic, as drivers and pedestrians might not see you. Stay alert for hazards like potholes, cars changing lanes, or car doors opening into your lane. Using headphones while riding increases chances of a collision because it prevents you from hearing horns or other approaching vehicles.

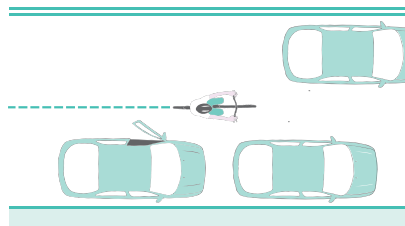
watch for pedestrians

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users and always have the right of way at crosswalks and intersections, so be sure to give them enough space to cross the roadway safely and communicate with eye contact.

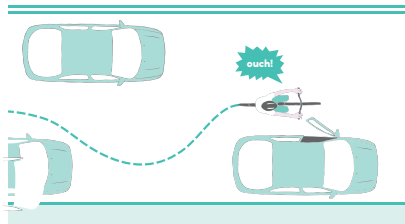
ride in a predictable, straight line

If you ride confidently and predictably in a straight line, other road users will be able to recognize your behaviour and give you room to ride. Do not swerve in and out of traffic or

construction zones. Ride away from parked cars, so that you don't ride into someone's door if they open it without looking. Always check over your left shoulder before changing lanes.



- ✓ keep a good distance from parked cars.



- ✗ resist the temptation to ride into gaps.

ride with a friend

On PEI it is not permitted to ride side-by-side with another cyclist while on the roadway. Although cycling with friends and family can add to the fun, make sure you're riding single file when on the road. Save the chit-chat for pit stops to avoid being distracted or looking backwards.

intersections

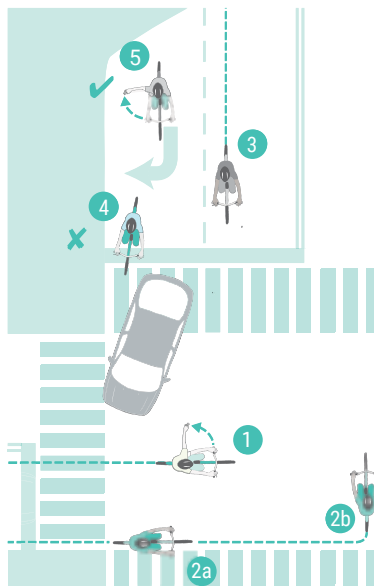
- 1 You can turn left with traffic using the far left lane or turning lane if you are comfortable.
- 2a You can turn left by riding along the inside of the crosswalk, and make a two-part left turn.
- 2b
- 3 Only enter the right-turn lane if you are turning right. Do not enter it if you are going straight through the intersection.
- 4 Do not pass right-turning drivers on the right if you are going straight, unless you are in a bike lane and the driver has given you the right of way.
- 5 If you are turning right, wait your turn behind a right-turning car.

signal your turn

Signal your turn before you reach an intersection by using the hand signals or clearly pointing. Reduce your speed on turns – especially on wet roads.



left-hand turn right-hand turn stop



Sharing the road

large vehicles

Be cautious when riding near trucks, buses and other large vehicles. Don't pass them in an intersection unless absolutely certain they are proceeding straight. Never pass them on the right if they are turning right, only on the left. Large vehicles can make wide turns.

collisions

If you are involved in a collision, be sure someone calls the police. It is also important to exchange contact information with the driver and write down their licence plate number and insurance information. Call 911 for emergencies and your local non-emergency line to file a report.

transit and school buses

When passengers are getting on and off buses, cyclists must stop a reasonable distance from the vehicle, allow passengers to safely reach the sidewalk, and for the vehicle to depart before continuing to ride.



Find legal resources: Further information about bikes, the law, and your rights and responsibilities as a cyclist can be found at www.princeedwardisland.ca/sharetheroad

Biking in the city & beyond

getting around your city

It's easy to hop on your bike to meet friends, visit local shops, and commute to school or work. Try cycling for your next errand to get started, and see how far you can go!

ride with an experienced cyclist

If you are a beginner, partner with a more experienced cyclist to learn how to ride safely in traffic and discover the best routes in your neighbourhood.

choose the best route

[The City of Charlottetown's Bike Map](#) will help you choose a route using bicycle lanes, paths through parks, waterfront trails or side streets without trucks and fast-moving cars. Try a new route on the weekend to

experience it without busy weekday traffic. Also, make sure you check out the many Bike Friendly Businesses highlighted in the [Bike Map](#). These businesses give special discounts and perks when you show your bike helmet at the register.

bike lanes and trails

The City of Charlottetown and the Government of PEI are striving to make it more enjoyable to ride a bicycle with new dedicated cycling infrastructure across Charlottetown. Use the [City of Charlottetown's Bike Map](#) to find the best routes for you.

transit with your bicycle

All of the public T3 Transit buses are equipped with bike racks from May - November. To learn more about using the bike racks on the transit buses, visit: www.t3transit.ca/faq

weather-proof your ride

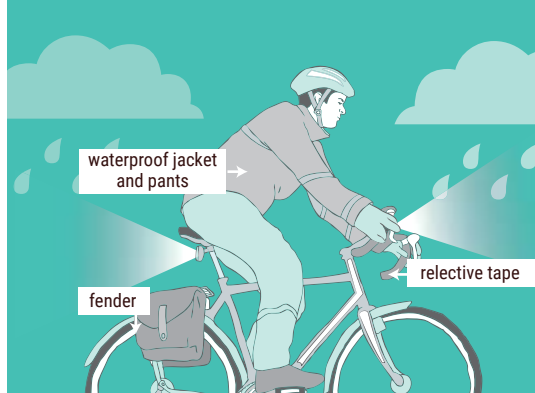
Wear whatever you feel comfortable in. Layers of light clothing that can be added or removed as needed are best in colder weather. Waterproof jackets and pants will keep you dry when it rains. Wear sunscreen in the summer, and bring a water bottle to stay hydrated on longer trips. Fenders will keep you dry when you splash through rain or snow.

bike to work or school

Commuting by bicycle is a healthy, affordable means of transportation. Charlottetown celebrates Bike Week in June every year. A Bike to Work or School Day and information sessions to help you plan your cycling route are always part of this week. To access resources and watch for events, visit www.charlottetown.ca/cycling

fight bike theft!

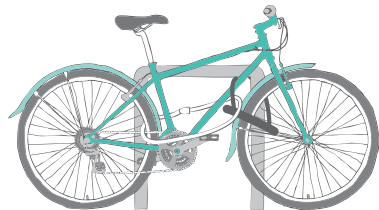
You can register your bike with the Charlottetown Police to increase the chance of having it returned if stolen. To register your bike go to: www.charlottetownpolice.com/bike-registration. If you are buying a used bike, you can check whether it was



reported as stolen by looking up the bike's serial number in the National Bike Registry: <http://app.cpic-cipc.ca/English/searchformbikes.cfm>. The serial number is usually on the underside of your bike.

lock your bike

Always lock your bike frame and both wheels to prevent theft. A U-lock fixed to a bike rack works best, otherwise try a secure post or pole. Use a second lock on your wheels for extra security.



Lock your front wheel to the rack, and use a cable lock to secure your rear wheel.

Biking as a family

reasons to ride as a family

healthy

Get active together! Daily physical activity has proven benefits for the physical and mental wellbeing of kids (not to mention you!). Kids need 60 minutes of energetic activity every day.

green

Go green as a family! Contribute to cleaner air and less-crowded streets by taking your bikes instead of a car or bus. Help your kids develop their lifelong sense of stewardship for mother earth.

fun

Biking together means exploring neighbourhoods, parks, trails and the waterfront. Enjoy the fresh air, smells, sights and sounds.

convenient

A bicycle is often faster than public transit or sitting in traffic. You can go where you want, when you want, as soon as you hop on. A bike is also a great way for kids to travel independently.

safe

A growing network of bike lanes, trails and quiet streets makes cycling increasingly safe and enjoyable for the whole family.

connected

Get to know other families in your neighbourhood. Why not start a Bike Train or Walk 'n' Roll Parade to school?

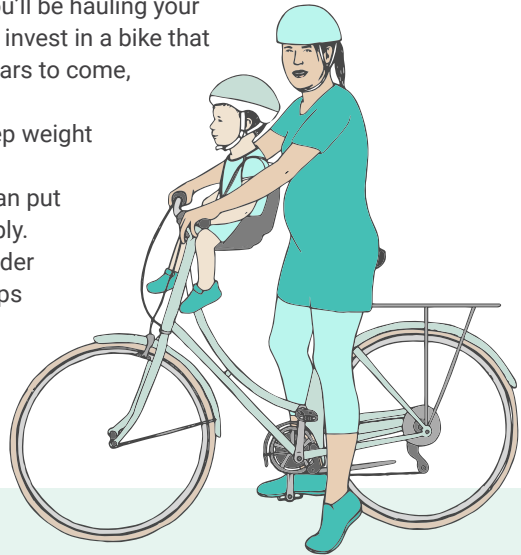
biking while pregnant

yes, you can bike while pregnant!

Many women bike while pregnant. Pedalling is a good way to get low-impact activity and, in later pregnancy when it's harder to walk, biking gets you around easily. Everyone's experience is different, so find what works for you. Go slowly, take quiet streets, and enjoy the view.

tips:

- Upright, step-through bikes are best: they're easy to mount, comfortable, and spacious for pregnant bellies.
- Think about the future: you'll be hauling your little one up to age ~5, so invest in a bike that will suit your needs for years to come, like a long-tail.
- Baskets and panniers keep weight off your back.
- Lower your seat so you can put your feet down comfortably.
- Protect your wrists: consider investing in handlebar grips that reduce the pressure.



“Biking was a fantastic way to get around the city while pregnant. I biked right up to the day I went into labour. It was much easier on my body than walking and more energizing.”

biking with babies & toddlers

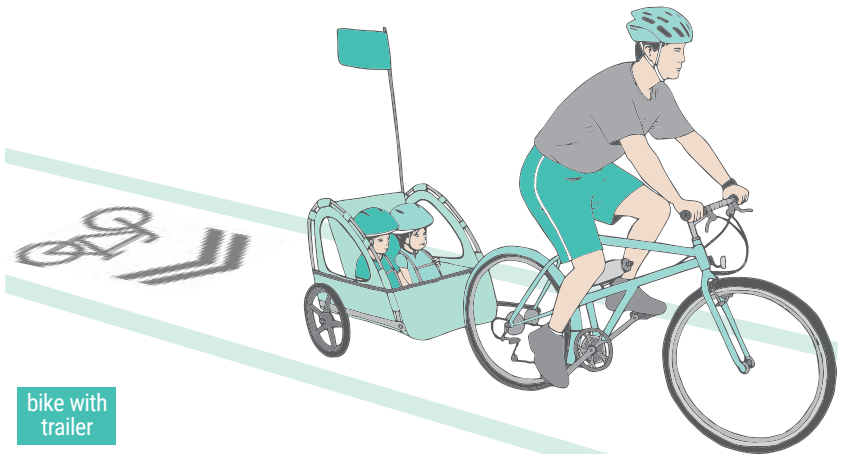
support, safety, and snacks

Biking with your baby is a lovely way to introduce them to life on two wheels. Always consult a your child's pediatrician first, and be sure to fully support their head and neck using a "car" seat in a...

- **Trailer:** one- or two-child versions... also great for hauling groceries!
- **Cargo bike:** large bike with a cargo bay... take the whole neighbourhood for a ride!

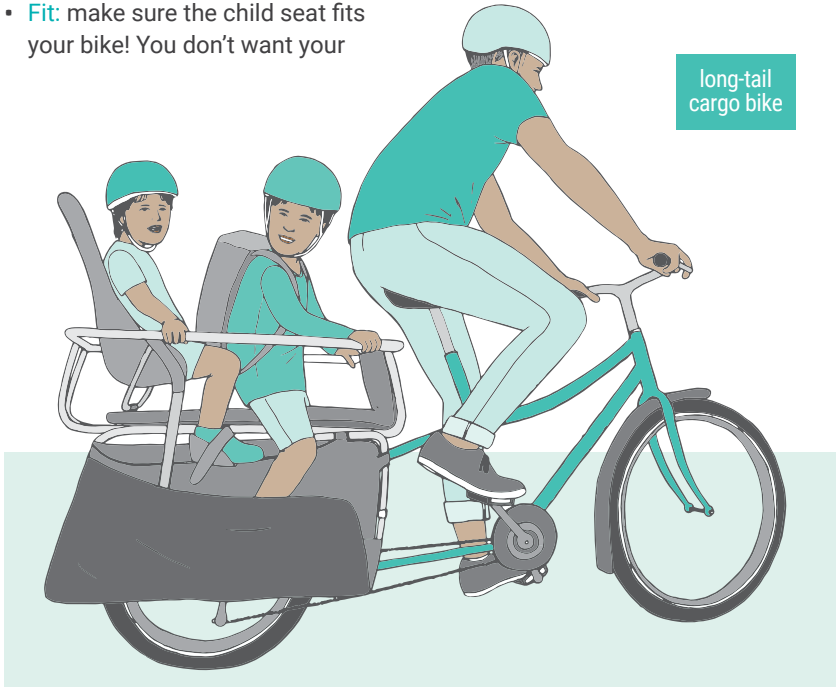
Once your little one has developed neck strength, you can transition to the toddler setup:

- **Front child seat:** mounted near the handlebars... child has a great view of the world!
- **Rear frame seat:** mounted to the frame in the rear... child has a great view of your backside :-)
- **Rear rack seat:** mounted on a rear rack... these seats run bigger, so they're great for older toddlers.



consider

- **Space:** rear bike seats need extra space, so skip the backpack and invest in panniers.
- **Balance:** child seats make your bike more top-heavy. Ride with extra caution and invest in a stable kickstand.
- **Visibility:** fun items like flags keep junior occupied while giving a visual cue to people driving.
- **Fit:** make sure the child seat fits your bike! You don't want your heels to hit the seat as you pedal.
- **The bike minivan:** long-tail bikes can accommodate two rear child seats and one front child seat, plus pull a trailer.
- **Get a boost:** if you're riding with your child using a rear trailer or cargo bike, consider an e-assist bike to carry the extra weight of growing kids.



long-tail
cargo bike

learning to ride

Find the balance

Biking with your young child opens up exciting possibilities! As your child grows out of their seat and becomes ready to learn to ride on their own, you want to help them build their skills gradually. The first goal is balance. Rather than a tricycle or training wheels, use a balance bike, a two-wheeled bike without pedals that your child pushes with their feet. A balance bike helps your child learn gliding, stopping, and starting. (Tip: create your own balance bike by simply removing the pedals from a regular child's bike!)

Once your child has mastered the basics, it's time to start practicing the next skill: pedalling on a two-wheeled bike. Make sure their feet can touch the ground when they're sitting, so there's less chance of falling. Find a flat or slightly downward-sloping area

to practice. When they're ready to try, remind them:

- "Keep your handlebars as straight as you can."
- "Push with your feet to get some speed."
- "Lift your feet onto the pedals and glide."
- "When you're ready, try pedalling."

When you're riding around town with your little learner, they can practice their riding skills in a supported way using some special gear:

- **Trailer bike:** a bike-like trailer, complete with seat, pedals, and handlebars, that gives your child the feeling of riding on their own (but you're still in control).
- **Tow bar:** a bar that attaches a regular child's bike to the back of an adult bike, creating an experience similar to a trailer bike.

“ I found that a tandem bicycle was the easiest way to get children of different ages and abilities to participate at the sametime. With a tandem, children don't get tired on long rides and as they grow older, you can feel them getting stronger and stronger. ”

riding independently

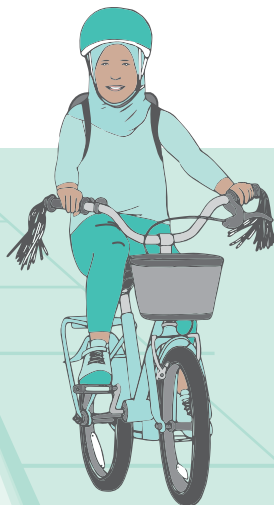
taking quiet routes to build confidence

Biking can allow your little ones to get their first taste of transportation independence! You can plan routes through parks and trails for a low-stress ride. Always yield to people travelling more slowly than you. You'll want to help your child learn to pedal and use their coaster (foot) brakes as they begin to ride faster. Consider getting a group of parents together to run a Bike Train to and from school. A Bike Train is a group of parents and children riding together, with adults rotating to act as ride

leaders. It's a fun, low-stress way to start cycling to school and to get to know other parents in your neighbourhood.

Make sure that your child's bike fits well. With a growing child, you'll want to buy used, or from a store that has a trade-in program. There are also options that let you keep riding together, like a DIY tandem or a long-tail cargo bike that lets you tow a kid's bike so your child can ride some of the way.

“ Our daughter is now 17 and bikes to high school every day. She also bikes around the city on her own—both for fun and for errands... Cycling has empowered her and made her feel like the city is hers—to enjoy and to take care of. ”



Biking will keep you happy and healthy!

Explore your neighbourhood along with thousands of other Islanders, and enjoy cycling for life!

To download this handbook, visit: www.charlottetown.ca/cycling



Start your journey to health, happiness & freedom!



The City of Charlottetown is striving to reduce fossil fuel dependency and to promote active, healthy lifestyles for residents. Cycling is a great way to do both of these things and that is why we want to create a culture of active transportation in our City.

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