



Cycling

Around 60% of men and 70% of women do not meet activity guidelines to benefit health. Cycling as a form of physical activity can offer people great lifestyle benefits and can help counteract issues of:

obesity, coronary heart disease, stroke and diabetes, cancer and mental well being.

Cycling is an important mode of travel with almost ¼ of all trips one mile or less and 42% of journeys within two miles. Cycling provides a vital link to public transport and with no emissions is a favorable alternative to driving this distance. Other benefits of commuting by cycling include:

reduced emissions, improved public space, clean fresh air, economic benefits.

Getting Started

A bike should always be road safe and a protective helmet is advisable. Bike shops can advise you on correct kit. Be visible with lights, reflectors and bright reflective clothing.

Getting on a bike regularly not only gets you where you want to go quickly, whatever the distance. It protects against a wide range of ill health and makes you feel better.

A small amount of cycling can lead to significant gains in fitness. A study¹ found aerobic fitness was boosted by 11% after 6 weeks of cycling short distances 4 times per week. The study concluded that cycling is one of the few physical activities which can be undertaken by the majority of the population as part of a daily routine.

The Scottish Executive's investment up to 2011 through the *Smarter Choices, Smarter Places* scheme highlights the benefit to people and their travel choices through creating more opportunities to cycle.

Cycling for fun or at world competition level is a great form of physical activity.
Some Cycling choices:

Leisure cycling

Competitive racing

Mountain biking

Touring cycling

Stunt biking

Spinning (indoor)

Useful information:

Reference: ¹ Fentem, PH. ABC of Sports Medicine, 'Benefits of Exercise in Health and Disease' in BMJ, May, 1994. Vol. 308, pp1291-1295.

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