



# Bike Right!

with **TransOptions**



#BikeRight @transoptions



**Learning to ride a bike is a rite of passage that provides a sense of accomplishment in learning a new, profound skill!**



# BALANCE FIRST

This guide will give you the tools you'll need to learn confidence on two wheels by using our safe and effective “balance first” method.

We'll discuss the basics of starting, stopping, steering, proper bike/helmet fit and seat adjustment. There are brighter days of riding in your very near future!

## **WHAT YOU'LL NEED:**

- wrench
- bike
- helmet
- flat, open space to ride in – an empty parking lot is ideal. Avoid uneven surfaces like your backyard and on grass.

## STEP 1: Remove the Pedals

Remove both pedals from the bike with a wrench (typically size 14 or 15). With one hand on the wrench and the other on the pedal arm, turn the wrench toward the back of the bike to get each pedal off. Now you've essentially created a balance bike for the rider to use their feet to move the bike forward. Balance will improve with each step!



## STEP 2: Proper Helmet Fit

- Two finger width between helmet and eyebrows.
- Side straps form "V" around ears.
- No more than 2 fingers between chin and chin strap.
- Helmet should be less than 4 years old and in good condition.

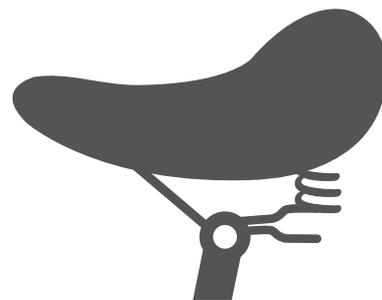


## STEP 3: ABC Quick Check

- **Air** – tires should be firm. Fill to the recommended PSI located on bike tire if not.
- **Brakes** – most kids' bikes have coaster or back brakes. If the bike has hand brakes, make sure they are working properly.
- **Chain** – check for rust and smoothness when moving the pedal arm forward.
- **Quick** – if the front and/or rear tire has a quick release lever, make sure it is engaged.
- **Check** – nothing should be rubbing or making weird noises.

## STEP 4: Adjust the Seat if Needed

- The rider should be on the balls of their feet when sitting all the way back and all the way down on their seat.
- The saddle (seat) should be flat across and not tilted up, down or to the side.



Although everyone advances at their own individual pace, 'Step 5' usually takes riders about 45 - 75 minutes to master. Don't rush this step!

Stay positive, give lots of encouragement and stay focused because with the next step comes all the fun. 😊

## STEP 5: Practice Balancing

- Take a deep breath in and have patience as this step will be where the rider puts in most of the hard work!
- Begin by sitting all the way back and down on the saddle. Arms should be stretched out straight and hands resting on the handlebars. The balls of the feet need to be touching the ground.
- Keep your head up and eyes looking in the direction you want to go in.
- Start taking steps to move the bike forward. At first, steps will be smaller and shorter. That's okay but try to gradually increase those steps. Reach the toes to the front wheel, taking a bigger, longer step with the left foot and then the right foot.
- REPEAT! REPEAT! REPEAT!
- Don't move to the next step until the rider is fully coasting/gliding and is in total control of their bike. This means they are truly balanced on two wheels.

## STEP 6: Get Excited to Pedal on Two Wheels!

Wow, take a moment to acknowledge all the hard work that went into mastering bike balance in "STEP 5" (now is also a good time for a water break!). The rider should be feeling ready and confident to put the pedals back on their bike. For those nervous to pedal, reassure them that they have come so far from when they first started. Let them know you believe in them and their new bike skills! Take another deep breath together and get ready for the fun to begin!



Pedal ready position

## STEP 7: Put on the Pedals & Raise the Seat

- Tighten the pedals paying attention to the left and right side (usually marked on each pedal bolt).
- Raise the seat so the rider is just able to touch the ground on their tip toes.
- Place their dominant foot's pedal at a 2 o'clock position and the other pedal at 6 o'clock. This is called "pedal ready position".

## STEP 8: Let's Ride!

- Hold the back of their seat, not their handlebars.
- When the rider is ready, have them push their toes forward to pedal. The rider's upper body should remain relaxed, arms straight, head up, and feet continuously pedaling.
- It may take a few goes, but they should be off and pedaling independently in no time at all!

## STEP 9: CELEBRATE, You Did It! Now Enjoy the Ride!!!