



Riding a bicycle is a skill a child keeps for a lifetime. Teaching children how to safely ride a bicycle:

- expands a child's mobility options,
- helps them foster independence, and
- promotes a healthy, active lifestyle.

These tips will set you up for a great day teaching bicycle riding basics and for students to enjoy learning!

PLAN & PREPARE THE RIDE

TIME:

- Provide at least 45 minutes

LOCATION:

- Flat, paved surface
- An area with little to no traffic

THE BIKE

1. **Take off the pedals** so the child can first gain their balance on a bike (skip this for children ages 6+).
2. **Lower the seat** slightly so their feet are almost flat on the ground while sitting on the bike.

MATERIALS FOR YOUR STUDENTS:

- Properly fitted helmet (see below)
- Close-toed shoes
- Comfortable clothing, with nothing hanging loose
- Properly fitted bike (see below)

THE HELMET

Using two fingers, teach the 2-2-2 helmet fit test:

1. **Ear Check:** The straps, resting flat, should form a V under both your ears.
2. **Eye Check:** Only the width of 2 fingers should fit between the brim of the helmet and your eyebrows.
3. **Mouth Check:** Only 2 flat fingers should fit between your chin and strap.

Teach the Movements

Progress through the following movements with the child, exploring each movement, pausing, and then adding on the next:

1. **Scoot** along on the bike, using feet to push forward against the pavement.
2. **Coast** along the pavement by lifting feet off the ground to build balance - like swinging one's legs!
3. **Turn** while "coasting." Consider using widely spaced cones, practicing small weaving turns.
4. **Look up** and ahead, first going straight, and then while turning.
5. **Put the pedals back on** and slightly lift the seat back up to about hip level, with their toes touching the ground.
6. **Pedal forward**, starting with one foot on a pedal and the other toes on the ground. Coasting first is normal!
7. **Turn** while pedaling.
8. **Brake** at different distances.

Tips for Teaching

- ✓ Practice patience and give plenty of time for a child to get comfortable with each movement before moving to the next.
- ✓ Don't hold on to the bike or push the bike while walking or running alongside the child.
- ✓ Consider asking for extra hands for teaching groups!

Find more walking & biking safety tips, lesson plans, and activities at eastcentralrts.org

