



TIP OF THE WEEK # 9

What to Wear?

You totally don't have to have any high-tech cycling-specific clothing, or latest styles to ride a bike. Whatever you're comfortable exercising in at the gym, or walking or running will be sweet as to use riding a bike. But here are some tips to make the ride a bit comfier, and maybe even a bit faster!

Footwear - You've got a few options in terms of what shoes you choose to ride in.

- **Sports Shoes:** Your cross trainer/running/walking shoes are fine to cycle in. As long as your toes are covered, and the sole is a non-slip one, they'll be fine
- **Cycling Shoes:** These are a good idea to make pedaling more efficient, but certainly not necessary. In fact for the pure beginner, I wouldn't recommend them to start with. Cycling Shoes have a 'cleat' on the bottom of them that hooks into a pedal, which can make it hard to get in and out of...!

Gloves - Gloves are again, certainly not essential, but can be a good idea for a few reasons:

- **Hygiene** - your handle bar tape can get pretty grimy if you're not a big bike washer...! Gloves can provide a clean barrier between your hands (which carry heaps of germs), and your handlebars... (you can always clean your bars/tape to avoid this problem..!)
- **Grip** - they can also help to grip the handlebars, especially in hot weather when your hands may sweat more...
- **Safety** - in any event of an accident, gloves can help protect your hands from minor damage
- **Padding** - some new gloves have special padding in them that helps absorb the vibration of your handlebars from the road (which can cause numbness or pins and needles in the fingers/hands...)
- **Hanky purposes!** - They'll also be really handy for wiping your nose on...

Shorts Cycling-specific Lycra shorts - Are definitely recommended for comfort...! These have a built-in padding in the bum (called a chamois), which makes sitting on a bike seat a lot more comfortable....!

- You don't wear **Underwear** under them though! The more layers you have on, the more chances of chafing... so as odd and uncomfortable as it may initially seem it's actually a lot more comfortable, and a lot more hygienic to leave the undies at home...!
- **Women's specific shorts** - there are a lot of women's specific cycling shorts available now. Things to look for in a comfy women's short:
- **Shorter leg length** (usually women have shorter legs anyway, but it's also a fashion thing!)
- **Women's specific chamois** (no seams in inappropriate places!) and specifically designed for women's bum's..!
- The **more panels**, (sections of the short joined together), the comfier the short will probably be ?more sections of material allows the short to move around your shape, making it a better fit

Other options - any other shorts are fine. Or even long pants - but they need to be tight-fitting to avoid getting caught in your chain or saddle...!

Cycling Tops - good idea, but not essential. Why use a cycling top?

- **Comfort** - usually made of specific fabric designed to remove the sweat away from your body, so are often a lot more comfortable. (Plain cotton t-shirts tend to soak up the sweat, leaving you wet...)
- **Design** - designed with longer backs to allow for your position on the bike - preventing gaps on your lower back and resulting sunburn etc...
- **Pockets** - pretty essential food transporters....!
- **Tighter fitting** - more aerodynamic, and generally more comfortable

Sunglasses - Again, not essential...but a good item to invest in. Not only do they protect your eyes from the sun, but also from any foreign flying objects that can hit your eyes (insects, debris from the road...etc) Cycling-specific glasses are designed for maximum visibility so are definitely better than your average fashion specs..!