

Cycling Safety Tips

- Always wear a helmet.
- Ride in the same direction as traffic.
- Wear brightly colored clothing to increase visibility during the day.
- Wear reflective clothing if riding at night.
- Equip your bike with a headlight and taillight.
- Use hand signals to indicate turning, stopping and lane changing.
- Give pedestrians the right of way.
- Watch out for stopped cars since the doors could open at any time.
- Avoid using your cellphone – use a headset if it's absolutely necessary.

THE
BUTT-
BUILDING
SECRET OF
CYCLING

Bike Ready!

Lose fat and tighten up your butt on two wheels. Then learn to mix it up:

Bonus cardio!

BY EMILIE DINGFELD | PHOTOGRAPHY CORY SORENSEN

You may know that you can get leaner on a bike – after all, just an hour of cycling can burn almost 500 calories. Hammer up a hill and you're looking at an even higher caloric burn.

What you may not know is cycling's additional asset: The ability to sculpt a great butt. Little wonder cycling is such a good lower-body workout – it's like doing a series of leg presses that you repeat over and over, says Todd Galati, MA, ACE certification manager, who has more than 15 years experience as a competitive cyclist and coach. And even with a moderate level of resistance, that's thousands of “mini leg presses.” “The average person turns somewhere around 80 to 100 revolutions per minute (RPM),” says Mark

Fasczewski, NSCA-CPT, USA Cycling level 1 coach and co-owner of Vantaggio Fitness and Nutrition. “That's 6,000 revolutions per hour!”

While we often think of cycling as a quad burner – and burn the quads it does – your gluteus maximus, not to mention your entire body, is constantly working. Your glutes are the primary hip extensor (think of the angle of your quad to your torso at the top of a pedal stroke) that works to drive your leg downward from a flexed position – and the greater the angle of hip extension, the greater the glutes activation. “Some people think of cycling as just a leg workout, but it's really not. You have five points of contact: Your two arms, your two legs and your butt are on that bike, and

ROAD CYCLING FURTHER ACTIVATES YOUR CORE, SHOULDERS AND TRICEPS – YOUR BODY IS CONSTANTLY WORKING TO STABILIZE ITSELF.

MODEL MELISSA PITTMAN HAIR & MAKEUP KRISTIN TURNER
STYLING KRYSTAL DEBORD CLOTHING ELISABETTA ROGIANI

KEEP YOUR GLUTE AND LEG MUSCLES ENGAGED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PEDAL STROKE.

WHEN YOU CYCLE, IMAGINE YOURSELF DRAWING TIGHT, TINY CIRCLES WITH YOUR FEET AS YOU PEDAL.

you're adjusting your core, your arms are holding your stability, your legs are your pistons – so the whole body is working,” says Shannon Sovndal, MD, author of *Cycling Anatomy* (Human Kinetics, 2009) and physician for the Garmin-Transitions pro cycling team.

Your Program

If you're just starting out, Galati recommends:
Step 1: Start with steady-state cycling, about 70 to 100 RPMs, to develop your endurance and to develop a smooth, efficient pedal stroke. Always include a warm-up and cool-down of five to 10 minutes.
Step 2: Once you've mastered

your pedal stroke and worked up your endurance, begin to introduce intervals of speed and resistance (hill climbing). You can also gradually increase the length of your ride. But don't increase any element in your cycle by more than 10 percent per week. Try alternating between two minutes of steady-state cardio and one minute of hill climbing. Start with two sets and work up to five. Once you've mastered that, increase the interval length to three minutes of steady-state and two minutes of hill climbing.
If you're advanced, try adding in what Sovndal refers to as “speed sandwiches” – a technique in which you start pedaling in an easy gear, and then speed up for 45 seconds moving as fast as you can, and then go back to your easy pace. Your goal is to lead into the interval and out of it as smoothly as possible – if you're bouncing, slow down and keep your core strong.

TRY SPRINTING AND BLEACHER CLIMBING TO BOOST YOUR GLUTES.

Shuffle Your Cardio to Lift Your Butt

Surprise your glutes and blast fat with these cardio options.

Sprinting

When we go from a walk to a jog to a run to a sprint we increase the amount of force on our legs to propel forward, Galati says, noting that Olympians have some of the most developed glutes out there, necessary for the force production needed to sprint.
Your Program: Try sprint intervals on a track, running at a moderate pace for two minutes, then use an all-out effort for 30 to 60 seconds, and repeat. Start out with a 20-minute session, and work up to 30 minutes. Or try sprinting between lampposts outdoors.

Bleacher Climbing

Every time you step up, you're recruiting muscle fibers in your glutes and legs to push your body up to the next step. Speed it up – even just a notch – and you'll have a serious sweat session.
Your Program: To feel the activation in the glutes, Galati suggests: “Find stairs or bleachers with good foot-gripping surface and walk or jog up them, taking one step at a time, then come back down. Then try going up the stairs taking two steps at a time at a similar pace – you'll feel it more in your quads and glutes.” At first, try for a 10-minute session; run up the stairs, walk down, then rest between climbs. Once you improve, increase the length of your session, and decrease the amount of rest between climbs. ●

YOUR CYCLING OPTIONS

Whether you choose a long, solitary road ride or an intense group cycling class, get specific with a plan. Instead of, “I want to start riding my bike,” say this: “Today I'm going to go for a longer ride,” or “Today I'm going to do those power climbs,” Sovndal says.

TYPE	WHY YOU LOVE IT!	GLUTES ACTIVATION*
Indoor group cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The program is created for you so you focus only on your ride.• Weather isn't an issue.• You burn tons of calories.	● ● ● ● ●
Stationary cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's super convenient.• It's great for beginners.• It's easy on the joints.	● ● ●
Mountain biking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can enjoy nature.• It's a more challenging ride due to the tougher terrain.• It's a great upper-body workout.	● ● ● ● ● ●
Road cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can take your cardio outdoors.• Your workouts stay fresh due to constantly changing variables (such as wind resistance).• It's more fun being outdoors so you may ride longer than on a stationary bike.	● ● ● ● ● ●

*Keep in mind that your glutes activation will vary depending on the terrain you're riding on and the intensity with which you ride.

Ramp Up Your Ride

Turning the wheel over and over without proper form will get you nowhere, but **training properly will be the defining element between a so-so butt and a butt that will fill out your favorite jeans to perfection.** Here's how to do it:
CLIMB HILLS: Your glutes are activated throughout the pedal stroke, seated or standing, but you can, however, intensify your workout by climbing hills outdoors or by adding resistance to your bike indoors. But **to seriously**

increase the work on your glutes, incorporate both seated and standing climbs. When you're seated and climbing, you recruit a lot of glute power. “You're only going to have so much muscle to use on your quadriceps. Then your body's going to have to find more muscle to utilize,” Fasczewski says.
TWEAK YOUR FORM: When standing, you get the added benefit of pushing the pedals with your body weight – which can be seen as a

temporary rest for the quads and glutes – but **if you crouch low over the handlebars and lean back over the seat, you'll feel the work deep in your glutes.** As you bend further forward, your leg gets close to your stomach at the top of the pedal stroke and the hip flexion is greater, meaning your glutes are activated more, Galati says. “Control your upper body – bend at the elbows and the shoulders to lean forward as opposed to just letting your back get really round.”

WHEN TURNING THE WHEEL, FOCUS ON KEEPING YOUR FOOT RELATIVELY FLAT THROUGHOUT THE PEDAL STROKE.