



Running a Bike Day - Tips on How to Do It

So you want to run a bike fun day. Following are a few tips as to how you might go about it.

Involving the community

The following are some ideas of who could be involved:

- Cycling Support person.
- Your local Road Safety Coordinator (check with your local council to see if you have one).
- Your local bike shop.
- Police Officers.
- Cycling club members.
- Public health unit personnel.

Purpose

Decide the purpose of the day. Is it purely for fun, educational or competitive? For example, are you planning to have a participation event, run races, or teach the participants new skills?

No matter what type of event you've decided on, preparation and safety are key elements of making it a fun and enjoyable day for everyone involved.

Safety Issues

It is important that you make the activity as safe as possible for all participants. This means giving consideration to the participants, the equipment and the facilities.

Participants

There are a number of issues you should consider with regard to the participants. You need to do as much as possible to prevent injury by paying particular attention to:

- Warm-up. Participants should do some light aerobic exercise to warm up eg. easy jog around the field, jogging on the spot.
- Fitness levels. Try to ascertain whether people are fit enough to complete the event comfortably.
- Adequate supervision eg. ensure you have enough marshals, children under 10 should be accompanied by an adult if your event is going to include an on-road component.
- A first aid attendant is recommended, as is access to a mobile phone in case of emergencies.

Equipment

The bike - It is essential that everyone is riding on a safe bike, and it's something you need to check.

You may want to undertake bike checks as part of the day (you could do this or see if a local bike shop would be prepared to do it) but you may also want to encourage people to go into their local bike shop prior to the event so a bike check can be undertaken there. If they do this they will need to bring proof of the check with them.

Alternatively, if you are planning to do the checks yourselves (though be aware this can be very time consuming) we recommend you use the check sheet below. This covers all the main areas that need to be checked. If you are uncertain about what to do your local road safety experts may be able to assist with the checking.

BIKE CHECK ✓

ANY FAULTS MARKED IN DARK BOXES SHOULD BE CORRECTED BY A QUALIFIED BIKESHOP OR ADULT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HANDLE BARS/HEADSET

- GRIPS COVER THE ENDS YES NO
- HANDLEBARS LOOSE YES NO
- HEADSET LOOSE YES NO

WHEEL HUB

- WOBBLY WHEEL (CONES) YES NO
- WHEEL NOT TIGHT YES NO

CHECKED BY: DATE _____

OWNER _____

BUDDY _____

BIKESHOP _____

RECHECKED OK _____

SEAT

- MOVES UP AND DOWN OR SIDE TO SIDE YES NO
- RIGHT HEIGHT (FOOT TOUCHES GROUND) YES NO

FRAME

- Rusty Bent Cracked YES NO

REFLECTORS

- Clean YES NO

SPOKES

- Missing Broken Loose YES NO

TYRE

- Tread worn Inflated YES NO

CHAIN

- Rusty Loose YES NO

PEDAL/CRANK

- CRANK SHAFT ADJUSTED YES NO
- CRANK NUT TIGHT YES NO
- PEDAL ATTACHED SPINS FREELY YES NO
- REFLECTORS YES NO
- SPINDLE NUT TIGHT YES NO

BRAKES/HANDGRIPS

- LEVER CLEAR OF GRIP WHEN BRAKE ON HARD YES NO
- BRAKE SHOE WORN YES NO
- BRAKE SHOE ON RIM YES NO
- RIM CLEAN YES NO

HUB BRAKE

- BRAKES QUICKLY WITH DOWNWARD PRESSURE YES NO
- CLAMP TIGHT YES NO

Check Sheet provided courtesy of Land Transport Safety Authority.

In addition to the above you should also check that the bike frame is an appropriate size for the rider. There should be at least 12cm between the crotch and the cross bar when straddling a mountain bike, and 3cm or more for a touring, hybrid or racing bike. For maximum comfort and performance the leg should be almost fully extended with the heel on the pedal when the rider is sitting on the seat.

The helmet – About three quarters of cyclist fatalities are caused by head injuries. Cycle injuries peak at about the age of 12 and nearly a quarter of these injuries involve the head. Wearing a helmet is, therefore, an integral and extremely important part of being safe on a bike.

If your event is on road it is compulsory for all bikers to wear a helmet. If you are holding your event off-road, participants should be required to wear a helmet.

Following is a helmet fitting guide. This will set the standard and is in a format that the children will be able to understand and complete.

When teaching the correct fitting procedures, it is essential that the helmet is sitting level on the head.

GETTING THE RIGHT FIT



Position flat and square on head

INCORRECT HELMET POSITIONS



NOT tilted forward so it covers your eyes



NOT tilted back so your forehead is uncovered



NOT tilted to either side so it covers the side of your head

Facilities

Next, decide where you're going to hold the event. You obviously need to hold it in an area big enough for everyone to ride their bikes and complete the activities you have planned. A local school or park may be suitable. Wherever you decide, we would recommend you do it on soft surface - for example, the school field is a lot better than the netball courts.

If you are wanting to do something that specifically looks at teaching road safety you will need to involve your local police education officer - they have the training to run that sort of event. Visit the Youth Education section of the NZ Police website www.police.govt.nz for further information.

However, generally, we recommend that the event is held away from the road due to the large number of specific safety issues this would entail.

Non-Negotiable Rules

The following are some rules you might want to adopt to help ensure you have a successful event. We suggest they be non-negotiable.

- No helmet, no ride.
- Participants must be able to ride a bike independently.
- The bike must pass bike check.

If you wish to hold an on-road event there are a number of other issues that need

considering:

- A traffic management plan (in conjunction with the police and your local authority).
- Possible road closures.
- A greater number of marshals.

Event Preparation

If your event includes a ride it's a good idea to have activities at the start/finish venue to occupy riders that return first.

As a minimum you will also need lead and tail riders plus a vehicle (with trailer) to pick up riders and their bikes if needed.

Provide participants with a checklist of things they may need to bring eg. sunscreen, water, drinks, food, warm clothing.

When marketing the event make sure participants are encouraged to have their bikes up to safety standards on the day to avoid disappointment. For larger events, pre-registration can make things easier on the day.

On the Day

Make good use of time, space and facilities by employing simple, clear methods of organisation.

Demonstration: A simple clear demonstration is much more meaningful than verbal description. Make sure all group members can see the demonstration and hear your explanation. Organise the group to ensure this happens. You may need to split the group up so it remains a manageable size.

The demonstration may need repeating so that the group members see and understand what you want them to do. Use different positions eg. side on, front on. The group should be faced away from distractions such as the sun, other groups, and traffic. A loud hailer or PA system is a good idea.

A high quality demonstration is important. If unable to give this yourself, use a skilled child, or some other available person.

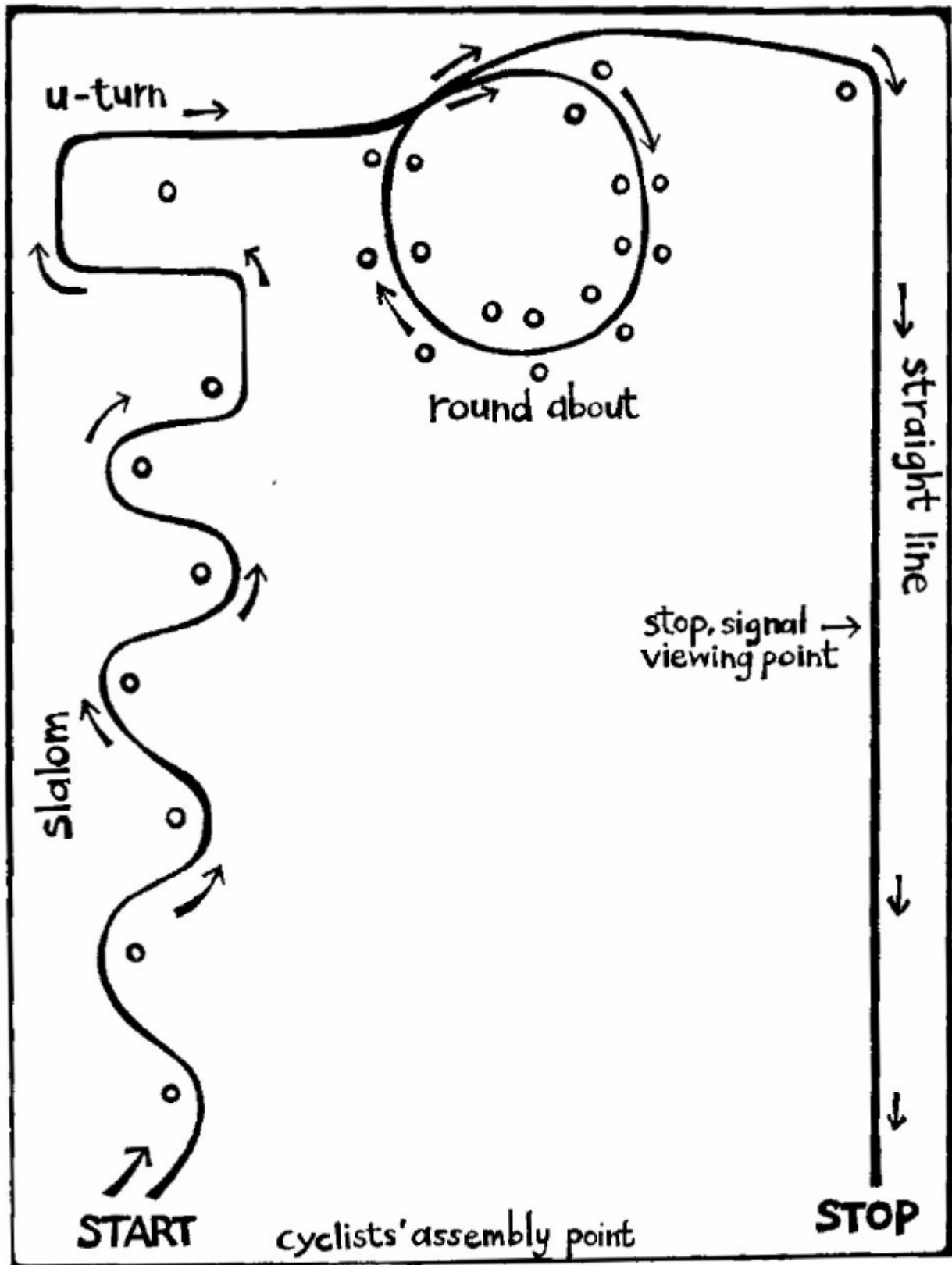
Be consistent in modeling high safety and performance standards.

Someone should have the responsibility of driving or riding around the route to ensure no overnight changes eg. road works have developed.

The Activities

What we are providing here is some information about a participation day that will teach participants some new bike skills.

What you do is up to you, but below are some activities that you might want to consider. You may wish to cut and paste these activities to suit the purpose of the event and the capabilities of participants. A practical demonstration of what you finally decide on will be very helpful for participants.



A simple cycling course could be as follows.

The slalom - 8 cones are arranged in a line with 2.5 meters in between. Children ride between the cones.

The U-turn - three sides of a 2 metre square rectangle are marked out with chalk, cones or similar. A cone is placed in the middle of the rectangle. Children ride around the cone without touching the chalk lines.

The Round About - a circle with a 6 metre diameter is marked in chalk, cones or similar. A smaller concentric circle is marked 1 metre in. Children ride between the two marked circles.

Straight Line - a 20 metre straight line is marked with chalk, a fire hose or similar. Children ride on the line.

Direction arrows or cones should be placed at intervals along the course. As participants negotiate the course, they will practise their braking skills.

The first rider moves off. The second rider follows when the first one is at the round about and so on. As riders complete the course they should sit and await a debrief.

After all the riders have finished, ask the following questions of both riders and observers:

- Which part of the course was the most difficult?
- Which part of the course was the easiest?
- How confident were the riders?
- Which skills need practise?

Riders can then try the course a second time.

A more advanced course could be as follows:

Straight riding track with parked car - cyclists ride the straight line, without wobbling with hands on the handlebars and an upright posture. They must scan for hazards, which could be placed on the track. A person in the parked car should, at intervals, hold a piece of cardboard out of the driver's window (to simulate someone opening the driver's door), put on its indicators, rev the engine. Riders must take appropriate evasive action. A non-rider could be seated in the back of the vehicle and drop obstacles, such as tennis balls, onto the track.

U-turn bikes - cyclists negotiate each box in turn, practising controlled turning, without falling off or putting a foot on the ground.

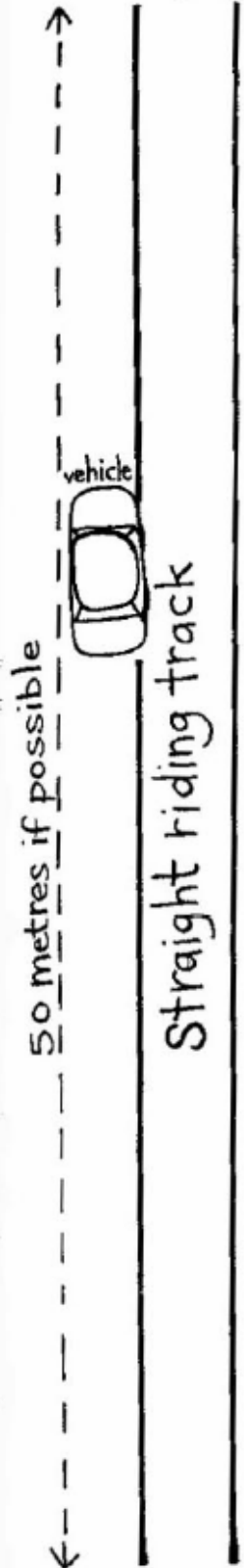
Slow riding track - cyclists ride the 3 metre track as slowly as they can, maintaining control and the correct cycling position.

Figure of eight - cyclists ride the figure of eight track in a controlled way, practising give way rules and cornering. They should maintain a safe speed and scan for other traffic.

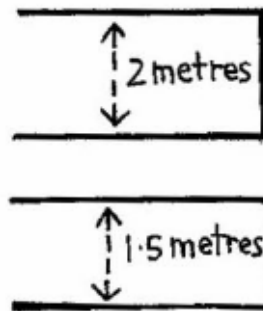
Emergency braking - cyclists are lined along a line, equally spaced. They ride in a straight line at a controlled speed, keeping a safe distance from the next rider. The command STOP is given through a megaphone (or a whistle is blown). The cyclists must react quickly, stopping by using both brakes and putting foot down for stability.

This activity should not be attempted without prior instruction in safe braking techniques eg. gently apply the back brake first and then gently increase the pressure on the front brake.

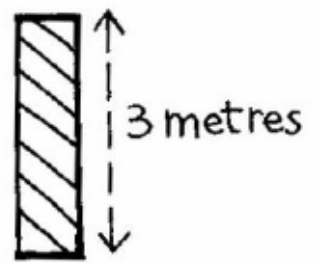
Activity 1



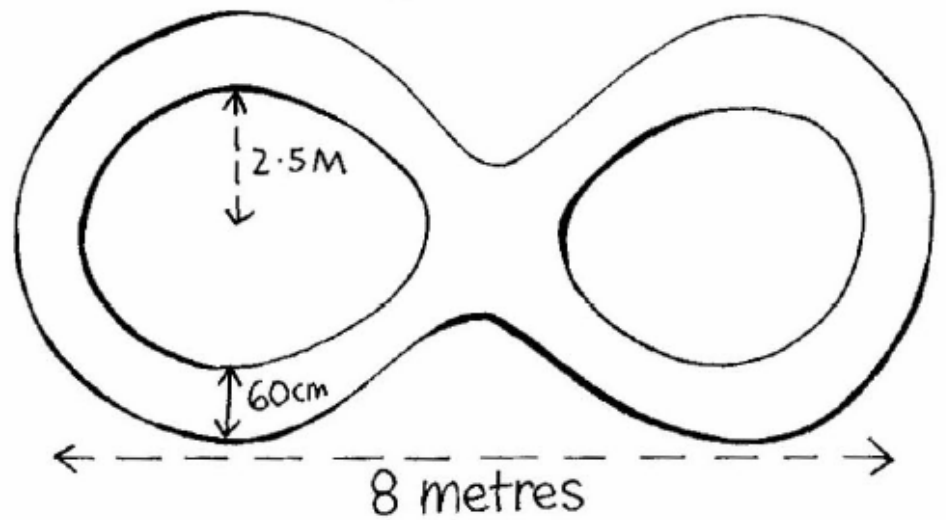
Activity 2 U-turn boxes



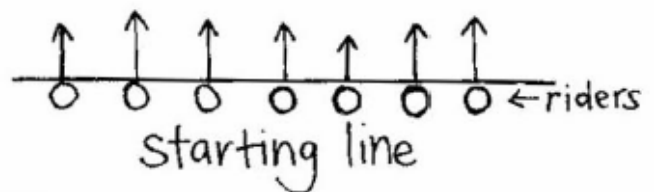
Activity 3 slow riding track



Activity 4 Figure 8 track



Activity 5 emergency braking



There should be some non-riders posted at each activity to help.

After all the riders have finished, ask the following questions of both riders and observers:

- Which was the hardest activity? Why?
- Which was the easiest activity? Why?
- At which activity did they learn the most?
- What is one new skill that they have developed?
- What is one skill they think they need to work on?

Riders can then try the course a second time.

If you are planning to provide both courses you should ensure riders are competent at the first level before moving onto the second level.

Advanced Cycling Course

Time Trial - If time allows you can extend this exercise further by holding an individual time trial.

Measure out a set distance eg. 100 metres or between goal posts. Time the riders over that distance (each rider goes individually). The person who covers the distance in the fastest time wins.

You can extend this exercise again by having a relay race.

Remember - these are only ideas about what you could do. There are heaps of other things you could do.

There are trained people in your community - make the most of local expertise.