

Preparing for winter cycling...

It's a good idea to get some basic kit but remember not to wear too much. Wear what you can comfortably cycle in, as you warm up quickly when cycling. Here is a suggested kit list:

For you or you

A light, waterproof coat and some over trousers are useful for rainy days. Some people wear a cape. These won't win any fashion awards, but they are practical. Reflective ankle straps with a Velcro fastening keep trousers away from the chain.

Wear layers rather than a single heavy outer layer. Warm gloves that allow you full control of the cycle are essential.

You may wish to wear a hat or helmet. Either way be sure that you can see all around you clearly. If you wear spectacles a soft peaked cap can help to keep rain off the lenses.

Help people to see you. Consider having some reflective material on you or your cycle, or wear some light clothing.

Depending on type and length of the journey, some people change clothes at work completely, others just cycle in work clothes.



For your bike

Good lights are a must; buy the best you can afford. When you fit them on the bike make sure they can be seen by others and are not obscured by your clothing.

Get your bike serviced by a qualified bike mechanic before the winter starts. Swindon Travel Choices offer many free Doctor Bike sessions, where a safety check on your bike is carried out. Keep an eye on the events section of www.swindontravelchoices.org.uk for details.

Ensure appropriate tyres are fitted and everything, such as brakes, work even when the weather is at its worst.

If you cycle regularly and carry luggage, consider a rack and panniers, it is more comfortable than when wearing a rucksack, and the bike takes the weight!

Mudguards will help protect you from being splashed by rain.

If you work in the town centre, you can leave your bike in one of our two undercover, locked cycle parks. A one off fee of £10 will get you a swipe card for access. See the cycle pages of www.swindontravelchoices.org.uk for details.

Winter cycling



Leaflet 8

Other leaflets in the series:

Leaflet 1: basic bike maintenance

Leaflet 2: clothing and accessories

Leaflet 3: security matters

Leaflet 4: with children

Leaflet 5: electric bikes

Leaflet 6: the right bike for you

Leaflet 7: Safe cycle commuting

Acknowledgements

This leaflet has been adapted from articles on Bikeradar.com. It has been amended with the help of Swindon Bicycle Users Group and a variety of volunteers in Swindon; many thanks to you all.

For further information about Cycling in Swindon, visit

www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk/cycle

www.cycleswindon.org.uk



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Keep cycling and make your winter warmer

There's no need to put your bicycle away just because the weather turns cold. With a little advice and some basic equipment you can cycle just as easily and safely in winter as you can in summer.

Cycling throughout the winter really is possible. On clear sunny winter days it can actually be very enjoyable, you don't tend to worry about traffic jams, breakdowns or delays, and in the winter you get some valuable fresh air just when you need it most. That's better than being stuck inside all the time.

You'll find a list of useful local bike shops and suppliers on our website at www.swindontravelchoices.org.uk who can advise on clothing and equipment for winter.



Local cycling information and links

Swindon Bicycle User Group (BUG) www.cycleswindon.org.uk

Working in partnership to increase the number of people cycling in Swindon.

Sustrans www.sustrans.org.uk

A leading charity enabling people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with a Swindon based team.

Cycling UK (formerly CTC) www.cyclinguk.org

National cycling charity inspires and helps people to cycle and keep cycling.

Swindon journey planner www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk/jplanner/

Compare routes by cycle, foot, car or public transport

Don't stop just because the temperature drops...



Local cycling information and links

If you cycle regularly throughout the summer you don't need to let your fitness drop just because the thermometer does. Carry on, watch the seasons change and keep the winter blues at bay.

Cycling is reliable

Allow a few more minutes for your journey if the weather is bad. That way you can travel a little more slowly and carefully."

Cycling is economical

Even in winter, once you have the bike and suitable kit, that is all you should need. You can save money on your commute for when you may need it most, such as at Christmas.

Whatever the weather

Here in the UK we sometimes feel the weather can be pretty harsh, but the Dutch and Scandinavians have similar or even greater levels of rainfall than we do, and they don't stop cycling.

On average according to the Met Office you are only likely to encounter heavy rain on 50-70 days in a year.

Even in snow?



If you can, adapt your commute to use the clearest routes, and walk where necessary.

If it is really cold and icy, don't take a chance. Just take the day off cycling and use the bus or walk instead.

