

## Plus, don't forget...

### Snacks for long journeys

You'll burn up plenty of energy on a long cycle trip, so remember to carry some spare fuel.

### Maps/guidebooks

There is a wide range of these, covering all parts of the country.

### Spare clothes

On day trips, pack an extra layer as your body temperature may drop when you stop for a break.

### Sunscreen

Even on days where there's not sunshine, lengthy exposure in the open air can lead you to get sunburnt quicker than you would normally.

### Lock

You'll need to take a lock if you plan to leave your bike unattended anywhere, but they can be heavy to carry around if you are simply going out on a bike ride.

### Journey Checklist

- ✓ Essential items: lights, a pump, gloves for winter cycling, puncture repair kit or spare inner tube. Mobile phone
- ✓ Longer-distance cycling: Layers of clothing, water bottle, snacks, maps.
- ✓ All-weather cycling: waterproof jacket and trousers, reflective clothing.

## Cycling clothes

For the majority of short local cycling trips, there is generally no need for special clothing. In fact most of the time it's possible to cycle in smart clothes, provided they allow you the right movement. It is possible to fit bikes with skirt / coat guards and chain guard to prevent a long skirt, coat or other trailing clothes getting caught in the chain or wheel.



### Other leaflets in the series:

Leaflet 1: basic bike maintenance

Leaflet 3: security matters

Leaflet 4: with children

Leaflet 5: electric bikes

Leaflet 6: the right bike for you

### Acknowledgements

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For further information about Cycling in Swindon, visit

[www.swindontravelchoices.org.uk/cycle](http://www.swindontravelchoices.org.uk/cycle)

[www.cycleswindon.org.uk](http://www.cycleswindon.org.uk)



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# Cycling: Clothing and Accessories



## Leaflet 2



## Cycling Clothes

### On top

On longer journeys, several layers will allow you to adjust to different temperatures. T-shirts, thermal vests and jackets should be long enough to cover your back. A fleece is ideal for keeping warm on chilly days and a shower/waterproof top with zips (to help adjust to temperature changes) can be packed in your bag just in case. Breathable waterproof clothes tend to be expensive, but are a good investment for regular cyclists offering maximum protection while allowing sweat to escape.

### Shorts & trousers

You can buy padded cycling shorts or underpants, but these are not essential and the best way to guard against discomfort on long journeys is to cycle more often to get your muscles used to the saddle. Leggings or tracksuit trousers are comfortable in the cold weather and a pair of waterproof trousers is essential if you intend to cycle in all conditions.

### Gloves

Your extremities are much more susceptible to cold on a bike than when you are out walking so a pair of gloves is a must in winter.

### Shoes

Trainers or everyday shoes are fine for most journeys. If you take up specialised riding – such as road racing or long distance touring – then shoes which clip into the pedals are available for the really dedicated.

### Helmets

Wearing a helmet is personal choice – they can provide vital protection if you fall off your bike, so they are a particularly recommended for young children learning to cycle. You should only buy a helmet if it carries a CE mark and one of the normal safety standards. It is essential that it is comfortable and fitted correctly – a badly fitted helmet can be a liability not a protection. A good cycle shop can help you choose the right size. If a helmet has been involved in a serious accident or fall then replace it. If fitting a helmet on a child, take great care not to pinch the skin under the chin, as this is a sure way of putting them off wearing it. Never borrow / lend helmets, nor buy second hand.

### Reflective clothing

Wearing a reflective vest or jacket will make you substantially more visible to other road users and is highly recommended if you are going to do much cycling at night, in poor weather or in heavy traffic. High visibility clothing is available from work wear shops as well as cycle retailers.

## Cycling Accessories

### Carrying loads

For small loads, a bum bag will suffice and small rucksacks are fine for carrying light loads but can make you hot.

For heavier loads it is advisable not to use a rucksack (this can make the bike less stable,



especially when cornering) so it's better to invest in some panniers. These are specially adapted bags that fit onto a cycle rack usually fitted over the rear wheel. Front racks and panniers are available and are useful if you have a child seat on the back of your bike or when combined with rear panniers for cycle touring.

Bar bags that fit onto the handlebars or pouches mounted underneath the saddle are useful for lightweight items such as maps, money and tools – but remember to remove these from your bike when locking up. It's not safe to carry anything in your hands when you cycle nor dangle anything from the handlebars, not matter how small or light.

### Pumps

You will usually have to buy this essential tool separately. There are two basic types of tyre valve: the traditional Presta valve and the wider Schraeder valve (like that on a car tyre). Make sure you get a pump that fits the right type of valve – or choose one that fits both types. Inflate your tyres to the recommended pressure specified on them (eg 60psi). Correctly inflated tyres make cycling a lot easier, improve handling and reduce the risk of punctures.

### Puncture repair kit or spare inner tube

Available from any bike shop, a puncture repair kit will contain rubber patches, glue, marker crayon and abrasive paper. For advice on mending punctures, see Cycling: basic bike maintenance leaflet in this series. It may be more practical to carry a spare inner tube rather than attempt to mend a puncture on the side of the path / road.

### Lock

This can be a cable lock, a chain with padlock or ideally a rigid metal D-lock. More information on different types of locks is given in the Cycling: security matters leaflet in this series.

### Lights

A white light on the front of the bike and a red light on the rear are required by law when cycling in the dark. Most lights are designed to be quick release so always remove them when leaving your bike.

### Water bottle

When cycling long distances, or in warm weather, it is possible to become dehydrated so don't forget to take plenty of liquid. Bottle carriers that fit to the bike frame are available cheaply from bike shops together with bottles, but can usually take one litre plastic squash bottles.