

## First Time (learn to ride) Child course Information sheet

This course is designed to teach children aged 4 to 13 how to ride a bike. We understand the challenges that come with trying to do this on your own: it's ok, professional help is available!



Upon completion of this course, your child may be able to ride a bike. While there is no guarantee that your child will be successful, over 370 children have learned how to ride during this course. Younger children, especially those who have only recently turned 4, have a lower success rate: there is no rush!

Most First Time courses are held outdoors, so subject to suitable weather (must be dry). For this reason, courses cannot be confirmed until 36-24 hours in advance, based on the hourly weather forecast. At least one indoor course is typically run every season, which will proceed no matter the weather.

First Time is a single session course covering the following topics:

- Bike and helmet check;
- How to balance and steer;
- Pedaling (if ready);
- Purpose and operation of gears (if bike is equipped);
- Starting and stopping;
- Bike security and theft prevention.

**An adult caregiver is required to stay for the entire duration of the course, actively participating and engaging in the activities.** Depending on the age of your child, this may include, but may not be limited to:

- assisting with helmet & bike check;
- providing encouragement, support and comfort;
- physical assistance of your child;
- monitoring your child.

**You must provide the following equipment for your child:**

- a properly fitting bicycle, in good working condition; and
- a certified bicycle helmet, in good condition and with proper fit.

### *Bicycle:*

In order to participate in and get the most out of this course:

- your child **must** be able to touch the ground with both feet while seated on the bike seat (at least the balls of the feet, flat feet is better) but without significant bend in the knees;
- your child **must** be able to reach both sides of the handlebar when turned, without the knees contacting the handlebars when on the pedals;
- the bike **must** be in good working condition: tires inflated, pedals turn smoothly, brakes (coaster/pedal or hand-operated are fine) can be operated by the child;
- training wheels can be removed (if applicable).

Unsure if your child's bike is right? Need help finding the right bike for your child? Get in touch: we can guide you!

(continued on next page)

*Helmet:*

More information on helmets can be found [here](#).

1. Your child's helmet **must** be certified for **bicycle use**, not a winter sports, or skating helmet.
2. Helmet should be less than 5 years old, and have never had an impact with something hard (including falling off a shelf or being dropped onto concrete). If in doubt, get a new helmet.
3. It should fit your child's head properly: be sure to style your child's hair appropriately. See the above link for a video on helmet fit.

*Religious headwear & helmet use:*

Most religious headwear can be accommodated under a regular bike helmet, including patkas! See the above link for more information on religious headwear & bike helmets.

Your child may be more comfortable wearing knee and/or elbow pads, though these are not required. Padded cycling gloves will increase a child's comfort and reduce the risk of injury to the hands in the event of a fall. If your child tends to be sensitive, you may also want to consider purchasing padded bike shorts.

**As mentioned earlier, an adult will need to be involved the whole time.** Please do not expect to care for other children, work or read during this time.

If you have any questions or need any assistance, including help figuring out if a bike fits your child, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you,  
Melissa Malejko  
Certified Cycling Instructor  
Owner of Safer Cycling Calgary