



Exploring 4-H at Home



Environment & Healthy
Living

Pillar: Environment & Healthy Living

Project: Bicycling

Activities: Tuning Up Your Bike



CANADA
4-H Saskatchewan

Bicycling

Activity
Guide

Tuning Up Your Bike

If your bike has been in a garage or shed all winter, you can bet it's got some dust and grime on it. Show your "Summer Wheels" some love and kick off this biking season with a good tune-up! Here are some quick tips for starting off your biking season right!

1. Clean your Bike

- Stand your bike in the driveway or somewhere near the hose. Wash or sponge it using water and enviro-friendly soap; Use a brush to clean the cogs; Clean the chain with a brush and then apply degreaser. Also clean your tires and look for bubbles (leaking air). Consider waxing the body of your bike for better protection against the elements!

2. Inflate your Tires

- Check the amount of air you should put in and blow them up accordingly. Re-check your tires in about an hour to see if they're lost any air. Continue to check your tires every time you use it just to make sure you don't have a leak.



3. Lubricate your Bike

- Lubricate metal parts, especially the parts that move against others (chain, pedals, etc.) Be careful not to over-lubricate (it can come off on your clothes or the ground) and wipe off any excess.



4. Check your Brakes!

- Even though we live in a pretty flat place, there are still quite a few hills around here! It's a good idea to make sure your brakes are working tip-top. Because each bike is made differently, if your brakes are not working properly, we recommend using your owner's manual to see how best to fix them.

5. Check the Tires & Wheel Bearings

- Use your bike stand or take your bike off the ground (flip it upside down) and see how well the wheels spin. If you have fenders, check that they aren't rubbing on your tires. Look for crooked or broken spokes.

6. Check your Handlebars

- If you have grown since the last time you rode your bike, you may need to have someone adjust the height of the handlebars. Make sure your knees don't hit, and make sure you are not reaching up too high so your arms and wrists get sore/tired.



7. Check your Seat

- If you've gotten taller since last year, you may need to adjust the height of your bike seat. As well, look for tears in the seat and patch them accordingly so the rip doesn't spread. (Hockey tape has many uses!)

8. Check your Helmet

- Try on your helmet, if you have one. Adjust the straps so it fits. If your helmet is too small, or has dents and cracks in it, you should get a new one.

9. Brush up on your Bike Safety

- Before venturing out, brush up on your hand signals and bike safety knowledge. See below for some Bike-Safety-Basics!

10. Take a Practice Drive

- After you have tuned up your bike, go for a quick spin around the block or yard. Listen for squeaks; Notice if you can pedal with ease or difficulty; Take note of things like crooked handlebars or seat, wobbly tires, etc. Fix what doesn't work right!

Bike-Safety-Basics!

TRAFFIC SIGNS



Arrow

Only go in the direction of the arrow.



One Way

All traffic on the road *must* go in same direction



No Bicycles Sign

No bicycling allowed. :(



Stop Sign

Come to a complete stop.



School Zone

Slow down and watch for children crossing the street.



Yield Sign

Wait for the other vehicle to go first, then proceed



Bicycle Lane Sign

You will see this sign when there is a dedicated lane for bikers.



Railway Crossing

Look both ways for train. Wait safe distance from track for train to pass.



Traffic Light

Red—Stop
Amber—Yield
Green—Go

HAND SIGNALS



Left turn signal – For this signal, lift your left arm off the handlebars and hold it straight out with your open palm facing forward, pointing in the direction you want to turn. When the coast is clear, execute your left turn.



Right turn signal – For this signal, lift your left arm off the handlebars and bend it at the elbow with your open palm facing forward and your fingertips facing upward. When the coast is clear, execute your right turn. An alternative to this signal is to do the left turn signal but on the right side, pointing with your right arm to the right. Check to see what the accepted hand signals are in your area before using this alternative signal.



Stopping signal – When you want to slow down or stop, put your left arm out and bend it at the elbow with your open palm facing backward and your fingertips facing downward. You'll have to use your right hand alone to squeeze your brake lever.