

Learn to Balance and Pedal a Bike as an Adult!

[from League Cycling Instructor Pattie Baker](#)



Hi! Did you know you can learn to ride a bike as an adult — and that you may be just a couple of hours away from this **Bucket List goal of yours? I break it down into 4 easy steps:**

1. Visualizing Success 2. Stopping 3. Gliding 4. Pedaling

After some time practicing, you can then follow this quick class with my free [Pedal Power with Pattie Basic Bike Skills Class](#) for more skills and inspiration

to keep rolling. OR, you can just move on to your next [Bucket List](#) goal!

Let's start with what you need to be Ride-Ready, and then let's get you Traveling at the Speed of Bike!!

Note: I assume no liability for sharing my lived and learned expertise

Getting Ride-Ready



1. Use a step-thru bike in good condition with inflated tires, working brakes, and a seat you can lower so that your feet are flat on the ground.
2. Choose a place where there are no motor vehicles, a flat stretch of pavement, and a slight hill (preferably grassy, but paved works, too).
3. Wear a helmet. [See this quick Tiktok](#) for how to fit it properly.

Visualizing Success

Today let's visualize what success looks like for an adult learning to ride a bike.

[Here's a short video](#) showing what we're intending to achieve in this quick course.

If interested:

1. [Meet some of my Pedal Power with Pattie students](#). Many of them never rode a bike in their lives.
2. [Take a look at the next class](#) you can take after this one so that you know you have support if you choose to make bike riding an ongoing part of your life. (If you already know how to pedal, then just start there!)
3. Consider purchasing my book, [Traveling at the Speed of Bike](#). It's theme is Trust the Journey. All proceeds are used to provide free classes like this, specifically for women and teen girls.

You may also enjoy [my blog](#) and [my other books](#).

Stopping

Knowing you have the power to stop is what will give you the comfort to go. So, let's start there.

1. Straddle your bike with your feet flat on the ground and practice squeezing both brakes at the same time. (Never squeeze just the left brake.) Squeeze, release.

Squeeze, release. Get used to how much pressure you need to use.

2. Practice draping at least a couple of fingers over the brake levers as your hands rest comfortably on the handlebars so that you are always "brake ready."

3. Practice squeezing the brakes while you look up and ahead. Breathe in and out.

Let tension run out of your shoulders as your hands relax. You are doing great!

Stay with it!

Gliding

It's time to add movement. Everyone's afraid of falling at this point. Let's get over that. Your feet are only gonna be an inch or two off the ground. *You got this.*

1. Glide by pushing off the ground slightly with one foot, and then brake and put your foot down. There. You are in control.

2. Glide with one foot and then the other, and then brake and put your feet down. Glide, glide, glide, glide and keep increasing the distance. You are learning to balance! [See this little Tiktok where I demonstrate it for you.](#)

Important (I can't stress this enough): When you want to stop, brake first and then put your feet down to stop. Literally say out loud to yourself, "Brake, and put your feet down." If a friend helps you, they can say this to you as you are practicing.

Most loss-of-control happens if you put your feet down before braking.

3. When you feel ready, let's try this on the slight hill. Give a little push with your feet and take your feet up off the ground slightly, go a little distance, and then brake and put your feet down. Breathe in and out to stay relaxed. Practice five more times. You are doing it! Feels good, right?

Pedaling

You're ready to add the pedals. This little tip will ensure you are positioned for success. It's called the Power Position. Let's do this on the flat stretch of pavement.

1. Use your hand or foot to move your right pedal backwards until it is in the 2-o'clock position. [See this little Tiktok](#). Now, instead of gliding, put your right foot on the pedal and push down to start the bike moving. Then, brake and stop. Do this 5 more times, moving the pedal to Power Position each time. Note: If this does not feel comfortable, try it at the 10 o'clock position with your left foot instead.

2. Now, start in your Power Position, push down with your leading foot and then add the other foot. Brake and stop. Do this 5 times.

3. Get in Power Position, start pedaling, and then keep pedaling this time. Say "pedal, pedal, pedal." Keep practicing braking and stopping, and increase your distance as your comfort grows. Hello — you are now riding a bike!

[Touch base with me](#) to let me know how it's going. Trust the journey!