

**Biking to work** is a great way to get some ‘hidden’ exercise while reducing your impact on the environment. Go Green and get healthy with a ride to work!

**Why commute by bike?** Cycling can be a satisfying way to travel to work, school, or around town while getting some physical activity, saving money, and reducing your environmental impact. These tips will help make your first few commutes smooth and enjoyable.

**Start Small:** For those new to bike commuting, begin with an achievable distance. If you live several miles from campus, consider getting a lift into the office, then riding home. Or take the bus partway, then ride the rest. The point is, don’t overdo your first few rides until you are comfortable with your ‘system’ and have established a safe, enjoyable route.

**Pre-Ride Bike Check:** Take a few minutes to look over the bike and confirm it is safe and ready to ride. An ‘**ABC Quick Check**’ is an easy way to remember what to inspect: **A: Air** Make sure your tires are properly inflated. **B: Brakes** Ensure that the brakes are firm, responsive, and powerful enough to stop you safely. **Chain:** The chain should be clean, free of rusk and gunk. **Quick:** If your bike has quick release levers, verify they are fully closed and pointing toward the back of the bike. **Check:** Take a quick test ride to check over the bike. Ensure that everything is working properly and make note of any mechanical issues that will require future attention.

**Dress Appropriately:** A helmet is a must. Beyond that, dress comfortably and in clothes that can be seen easily by drivers. Bright colors or purpose-made reflective gear are best. Consider cycling shorts for longer rides, and rain/cold-weather outer layers if the weather looks dicey. If you have a short trip, riding in your work clothes may be easiest. If you have a longer trek, fold your clothes and think about bringing a stash of extra clothes to the office. Dress in layers.

**Use Proper Safety Equipment:** A quick checklist of some essentials: Helmet, rechargeable bike lights (front and rear), bike bell, sunglasses, reflective vest, pant-leg grabber.

**The Extras:** Water, sturdy lock (U-Locks are best), racks/paniers, fenders, multi-tool, extra tube, first aid kit, baby wipes (if no showers are available), change of clothes.

**Plan your route:** Find routes that utilize bike paths, trails, and protected bike lanes where possible. Find a route with minimal traffic, and consider doing a ‘dry-run’ on the weekend.

**Beware the Door Zone:** Stay alert for opening car doors, especially on and near campus. Drivers may not be looking for a cyclists coming behind them, so leave a space for doors to swing open.

Want to learn more about incorporating healthy habits into your everyday life? For additional resources, visit MSU Moves at <http://health4u.msu.edu/msu-moves>