

BEFORE YOU GO

*A Handbook for Adventure Cycling's
Van Supported Tours*



adventurecycling.org/tours

Congratulations! You have taken the first step in fulfilling your cycling dreams by registering for an Adventure Cycling tour. Whether you are a seasoned or first time cyclist, preparing yourself physically, mentally, and logistically for your tour is a crucial part of enjoying your adventure.

Please take time to carefully read this booklet as it will help you prepare for, and will enhance, your experience on tour. We have made several revisions to this Before You Go booklet including changes in Adventure Cycling policies, gear checklists, and what to expect on your tour. Reading it now will save anxiety later on.

Of course you can also always call the Tours Department at Adventure Cycling with questions about your tour or the information in this booklet. Happy trails!

-Adventure Cycling Tours Team

In addition to this brochure, you will receive a detailed information packet approximately 60 days prior to your tour departure date. The packet will provide logistical details about transportation, shipping your bike, and where to meet at the start of the tour.

IMPORTANT

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Adventure Cycling Association's tours team sincerely wishes for every trip participant to attend and complete the tour of their choice. In an effort to plan for unexpected personal emergencies, health issues, weather, and transportation problems that might cause you to cancel or shorten your trip, travel insurance is strongly advised. Adventure Cycling recommends that you purchase travel insurance from **TripAssure** at: adventurecycling.org/travelinsurance/



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PREPARING FOR YOUR TOUR

The demands placed on you and your bicycle by a multi-day tour are much greater than those encountered on a casual day-ride. Use the following checklist and the tips that begin on page 8 to get ready for your tour. Refer to page 5 for on-tour policies and procedures.

PREPARATION CHECK LIST

Upon receiving your confirmation packet:

- Please read all materials sent to you from Adventure Cycling. If you still have questions, call the Tours Department at 800.611.8687, or e-mail us at tours@adventurecycling.org.
- Trip insurance is highly recommended.
- Before purchasing non-refundable travel tickets, call the Adventure Cycling office to make sure your tour is a definite "Go." We determine this at least 60 days prior to the trip start date.
- Ride your bicycle as much as possible!

90 DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

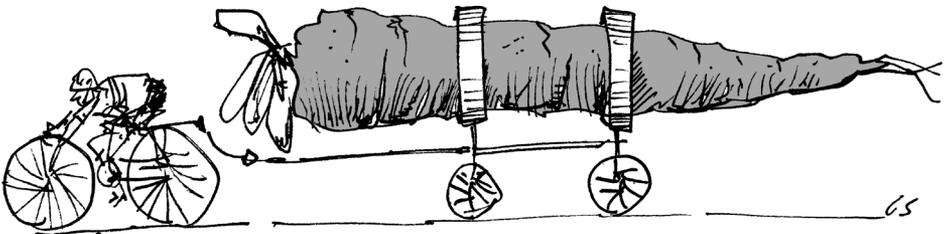
- Final balance due.** Pay online or call the tours department.

60 DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

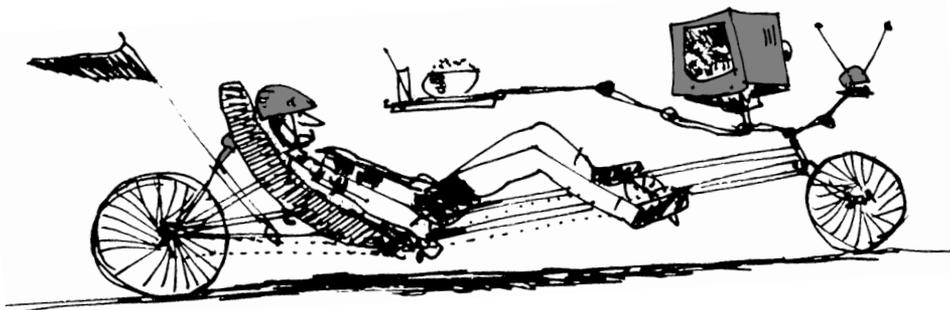
- If you haven't already started, don't wait any longer to begin training. Begin with rides of 20 miles or more a day, several times a week, working into longer day rides on the weekends. If weather or other circumstances prohibit this, use an indoor trainer, stationary bicycle or other form of exercise that taxes the cardiovascular system.
- Arrange transportation for yourself and your bike.

45 DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

- Continue your training rides. Work up to 40- to 60-mile rides on at least one day each week, depending on the tour for which you're preparing.



PREPARING FOR YOUR TOUR



30 DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

- Make final purchases of clothing and equipment.
- Make certain that all repairs and maintenance, including lubrication, are made on your bike.
- Buy an extra pair of glasses or contacts and get a copy of your prescription.
- Continue your training rides, working up to 50- to 70-mile day rides on weekends. (You might try for a century - 100 miles in a day - if you're taking a trip of more than three weeks.) Seek out hills and varied terrain, attempting to simulate the type of riding you'll encounter on your tour.

14 DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

- Be certain you've used all your equipment and know how it works.
- Make sure your bike is fully tuned and ready.
- Continue training rides; try to do at least one overnight "shakedown" trip. It's better to discover and take care of problems before your tour begins.
- Pack your bike in a reinforced box and ship it, if it's not traveling with you (see page 19).

7 DAYS BEFORE YOU GO

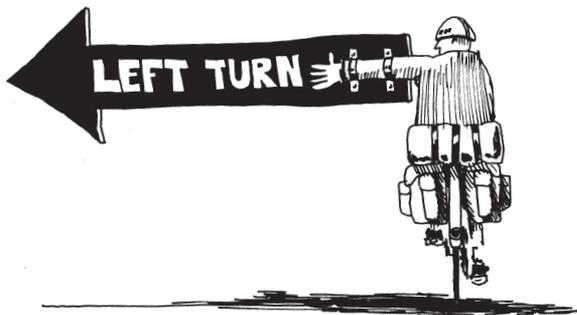
- Fill medical prescriptions to last longer than your trip.

ADVENTURE CYCLING RULES OF THE ROAD

These “Rules of the Road” are important tour policies. They’ve evolved during the four decades that Adventure Cycling has been leading tours, and are based on what we’ve learned from actual on-the-road experience. Please heed these rules; remember that a group, with its diverse personalities, requires a basic structure in order to function smoothly.

- A helmet (Snell, ASTM, DOT or CPSC approved) **MUST** be worn while riding, both during the day’s ride and on any short trips from your overnight destination.
- Display the provided safety triangle on yourself or your bike so that it is visible from behind.
- Headphones or dual earpieces (except hearing aids) are not allowed while riding.
- Obey all traffic laws and ride single file; drafting is discouraged.
- Whenever stopping, get at least 10 feet off the road. If there isn’t room then move to a safer area.
- Don’t park bicycles against windows, gas pumps or near doorways or stairs.
- Tour staff has the right and responsibility to insist that a participant receive professional medical attention.
- Alcoholic beverages will not be purchased with group funds.
- Never operate a stove on a table where people are sitting.
- Do not use personal eating utensils, knives, etc. to prepare group food
- Wash dishes at your campsite or in a designated “slop sink.” Do not wash dishes in restrooms, at pumps or at water taps. Soap should never be used in streams or lakes.
- Never take personal food into a restaurant.
- Do not hitchhike.

NOTE: Failure to follow Adventure Cycling’s “Rules of the Road” or to carry out your share of group responsibilities is grounds for dismissal from an Adventure Cycling tour, as is any other behavior determined to be detrimental to your group’s well-being.



YOUR GROUP AND TOUR LEADERS

YOUR GROUP

Your group will be comprised of riders covering a broad spectrum of age and experience. We generally have a mix of men and women, most of whom come solo. We also welcome riders from all over the world, and every imaginable occupation is represented. Many participants are seasoned cyclotourists, while some are first-timers. To facilitate the exchange of pre-trip information, you and your fellow participants will be added to a Google Group approximately 60 days before the start of your tour. More information about how to use the group will be included in the Tour Information Packet.

While Adventure Cycling tours are designed to allow as much personal freedom as possible, each group member will have certain responsibilities to the group. As in any group travel situation, flexibility and the ability to compromise are essential. New friends and great camaraderie are the end results.

TOUR LEADERS

Adventure Cycling leaders are experienced bicycle travelers who have

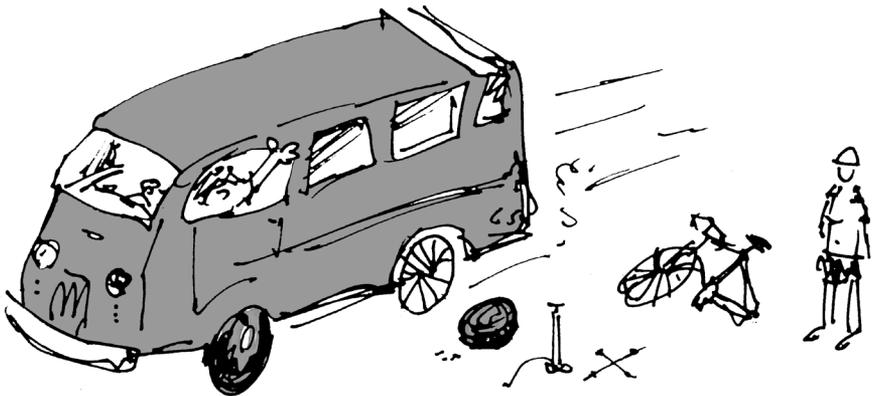
completed Adventure Cycling's training programs. They attend to the logistics of your tour and help the group reach a consensus when decisions need to be made. They're certified in first aid and CPR, and many are trained bicycle mechanics who can assist with simple, on-the-road repairs and maintenance.

The leaders can't do everything for you, however. Their purpose is to facilitate your touring experience. They will provide leadership and support, but in many ways you must rely on yourself. Please know how to read a map, set up your tent, and repair a flat tire prior to your arrival at the tour start.

WHAT YOU RECEIVE

Van-supported tour prices include meals, group accommodations and/or camping fees, maps, safety triangle, cycling swag, and vehicle support/transportation of luggage.

Items not included are transportation to/from the tour, personal spending money, overnight accommodations (other than those used by the group), bicycle parts (for repairs), extra snacks and alcoholic beverages.



GUESTS AND PERSONAL VEHICLES

Due to liability factors, no personal vehicles or non-riding participants are allowed to accompany any of Adventure Cycling's van-supported, self contained, inn to inn or educational tours. If you are interested in SAG support or non-rider accompaniment, please look into our fully supported tours.

INSURANCE

Health Insurance: We strongly suggest that you continue, or obtain, major medical coverage during your tour. Existing homeowner's, tenant's, or auto insurance could be useful in case of theft during your tour. Check with your insurance agent before you suspend existing coverage.

Travel Insurance: Our sincere wish is for every trip participant to attend and complete the tour of their choice. In an effort to plan for unexpected personal emergencies, health issues, weather, and transportation problems that might cause you to cancel or shorten your trip, travel insurance is strongly advised! Adventure Cycling and TripAssure are now working together to offer comprehensive travel insurance packages, which you can find at: adventurecycling.org/travelinsurance/ or by calling 800.423.3632.

LEVEL OF SUPPORT

The availability of a vehicle and two co-leaders will bring a level of support, flexibility, and dining quality to this trip that is far above what is possible on our classic, self-contained tours. However, Adventure Cycling's van-supported tours do not include the full array of services provided on

our fully-supported, catered events. For example, and in keeping with our established practices for long-distance bicycle travel, participants on this camping tour will share in the daily cooking and clean-up duties and will be fairly self-sufficient in their daily travels. Each participant must also bring their own dining set (plate, bowl, cup, and eating utensils).

The van's primary purpose will be to: carry luggage, assist each day's assigned cooks with the daily grocery shopping, and provide several necessary shuttle rides along the route. The van will also: provide water stops in areas where services are not reasonably available on or near the route, and transport individual riders in emergency situations.

Please note, however, that the van will not serve as a "sag wagon," except in emergency situations. Thus, you must come to this tour prepared to ride the entire route.

YOUR LUGGAGE

Although you'll have a support van on this trip, you should plan very carefully about what luggage to bring - just as you would on one of our self-contained tours.

Each participant may bring no more than two medium-size bags, and the weight of either single bag may not exceed 25 pounds.

All of your camping gear (tent, sleeping bag, inflatable pad, etc.) must also be packed in your two pieces of luggage - no loose items, please. Loose items in the van can easily become damaged or lost.

These practices help everyone because smaller luggage fits more easily

VAN SUPPORTED TOURS

into the available van space; and participants must be able to load and unload their own luggage each day, and often must move other people's luggage to locate their own gear.

YOUR DAILY ON-THE-ROAD GEAR

You should also bring with you either a bike trunk rack, a daypack or hydration pack, or small panniers for carrying the following items that you will need with you on your bike during each day's ride:

- A rain jacket and other extra layers of cycling clothing.
- Bike repair tools or a multi-tool, tire pump, and at least one spare tube.
- Lunch, snacks, water, camera, sunscreen, cell phone, etc.

GROUP EQUIPMENT

Adventure Cycling provides each group with stoves, stove fuel, cookbook and group cooking gear (pots and lids, skillets, knives, spatula, spoons, ladle, can opener, and cutting board). Note that you must provide your own eating utensils (plate, bowl, knife, spoon, fork, etc.). A first-aid kit and basic tool kit are also supplied. Please review the tool kit list on page 18, and bring with you any unique tools (or spare parts, spokes, etc.) that your bike may require. You are also responsible for your own bicycle, panniers, tent, sleeping bag, pad and ground cloth.

WEATHER

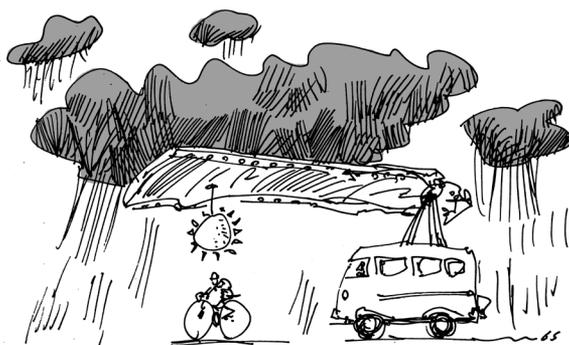
The rule regarding weather is: prepare for the worst,

but hope for the best. In the western states, expect any kind of weather at any time of the year. You may encounter hot days (100° F), cold nights (below freezing), rain, snow and parching sunshine. Because the humidity is typically lower in the west, dehydration can occur without sensible perspiration loss. Be sure to consume plenty of fluids even if you don't feel thirsty.

In the Midwest and East, the humidity often rises above 90%, and when combined with high temperatures, can be especially energy-sapping. The rule of thumb for avoiding dehydration and low energy levels is to drink before you are thirsty and eat before you are hungry. Some tour groups opt for early morning departures to avoid midday heat. In mountainous areas, the weather can be particularly varied and unpredictable, and people vary in their abilities to adapt to high altitudes. Being in good physical condition seems to help, and participants often elect to arrive early in order to acclimate themselves to higher elevations.

START POINT FACILITIES

Your tour will begin with registration and an orientation meeting at the



VAN SUPPORTED TOURS

date and location listed in your Tour Information Packet. The meeting typically starts in the late afternoon or early evening, and lasts for several hours. The exact time of the meeting and information about the starting point facility will be listed in your information packet.

Allow time before the meeting to assemble your bicycle, since you will begin riding the next morning. Many participants arrive at the starting point a day or two early, which helps them acclimate to higher altitudes and makes for a more relaxed beginning to the trip. Check to see if lodging or camping will be available at the starting point prior to your actual start date.

DAILY CYCLING DISTANCE AND CONDITIONS

Adventure Cycling's van-supported trips operate on relatively fixed itineraries. The group generally rides a prearranged route each day, but there is some room for flexibility in the travel schedule. While your group may adapt its daily riding distances to meet its members' needs and desires, you need to be prepared to ride the entire route each day, as described in the itinerary. Typically, you'll ride from 50 to 70 miles a day, depending on surface and terrain. Tours on gravel roads and/or dirt trails cover fewer daily miles; 35-50 miles on rough surfaces is equivalent in difficulty to approximately 50-70 miles on pavement.

For any tour, it is important to train prior to your departure. Even with preparation, it is challenging to pedal long distances for several consecutive

days. Weather can be unpredictable - you may find yourself riding through rainstorms, oppressive heat or fighting headwinds. You may also need to climb mountain passes or share the road with vehicular traffic, depending on which trip you're taking.

The advantage of touring with Adventure Cycling is that you meet these challenges at your own pace. You have a lot of freedom on an Adventure Cycling trip, as the main group normally splits into sub-groups during the day to allow for varying interests and riding speeds.

RIDING PACE

Some folks ride quickly and arrive in camp as soon as possible; others take their time and get there just in time for dinner. Participants are encouraged to ride in groups of five or fewer cyclists. Most individuals end up riding with others who ride at a similar pace. All riders will receive maps as well as a briefing on the day's designated route, but each cyclist is responsible for finding their way during the day. The leader or other designated person will normally be at the rear of the entire group, "riding sweep."

LAYOVER DAYS

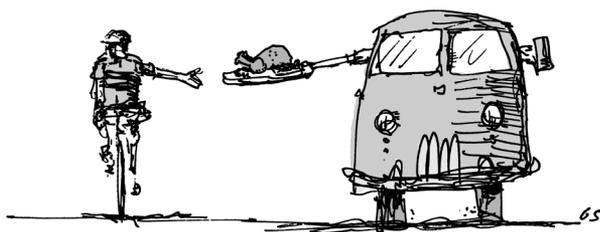
The time allotted for each tour includes a layover day every seven to ten days, taken at the group's discretion. Some of our supported tours feature layover days. Layover-day locations are often selected in areas of significant interest, such as national parks or monuments, or other locations that offer special services (i.e., bike shops). On these days, you may participate in a variety of activities: you can go for a day ride, choose to explore off-the-bike possibilities, relax, etc.

VAN SUPPORTED TOURS

MEALS

Group members and the leader, working in pairs, share in food purchasing, cooking and cleanup on a rotating schedule. Simple, nourishing dinners with lots of carbohydrates are the norm, supplemented with salads, vegetables, bread and dessert. Lunches usually consist of sandwiches, cookies, drink mixes, fruit, etc. Breakfasts often consist of dry cereal and/or oatmeal, fruit, bread and hot or cold beverages.

Grocery stores in smaller towns often have quite limited stock. Because of this, and since food is purchased for the entire group, you'll need to be flexible about your diet. It is not uncommon to have vegetarians on



our tours. In such cases, meat can be cooked and served separately or mixed into only a portion of the main dish. It is not possible to completely cater to any one type of food preference, be it vegetarian, macrobiotic, gluten free, junk food, or whatever. Please trust that there will, however, be sufficient and nourishing food for everyone.

PERSONAL FINANCES

Some cash would be handy to have, along with a major debit/credit card for emergency purposes. A budget of \$10 to \$15 a day is typical for incidentals such as postage, snacks, souvenirs and beverages.

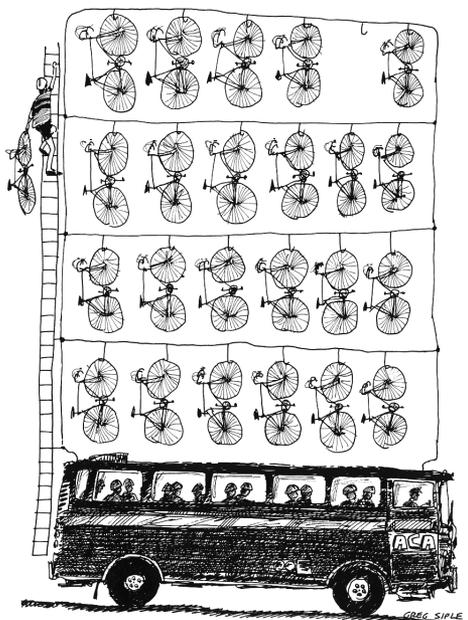
Group funds are carried by the leader to cover group meals, overnights and miscellaneous expenses.

SIDE TRIPS

Each side trip can be no longer than three days, with a total of ten side-trip days per tour. All side trips require the consent of the leader. During the side trip, your portion of group funds is surrendered to the group. You are responsible for arrangements to leave and rejoin the group.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY TOUR TERMINATION

Sorry, but there will be no refunds for arriving late to a tour or for leaving the tour early.



The main factors to consider are comfort and function. We've seen people enjoy themselves on nearly every type of bicycle. We've had traditional touring bikes, racing bikes, mountain bikes, recumbents, hybrids, tandems and even triples join our events. The key is to make sure that you choose the appropriate type of bike for your tour and that you're comfortable on it.

Listed here are some bike characteristics that you'll want to consider:

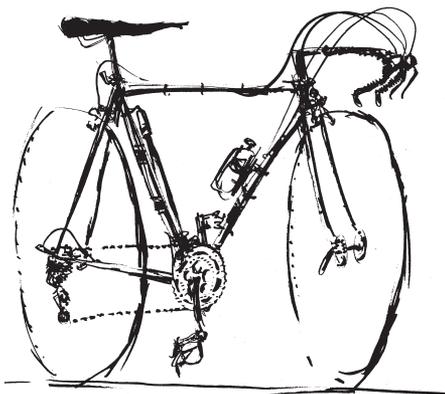
BICYCLE TYPES

Since on our van supported tours, we transport riders' gear, many elect to ride their best or favorite bikes. On paved roads, standard touring or racing bikes are equally appropriate. On our dirt tours, mountain bikes or hybrid/cyclocross bikes typically fit the bill. Regardless, the most important thing is to use a bike that you're comfortable with and that is mechanically sound.

WHEELS AND TIRES

There are numerous wheel options available these days. Some feature low weight or better aerodynamics; others offer greater durability and dependability. Whichever you choose, be sure to select high-quality wheels that are tailored to the types of roads and terrain that you'll be riding.

Similarly, selecting the appropriate tire for your tour can enhance your experience. If you'll be traveling smooth, paved roads, you can choose a slick or semi-slick tire. Avoid tires that are too narrow, though, as they'll yield a harsher ride and be more susceptible to punctures. For 700C-size wheels, we recommend tires that are at least 28 mm wide. If you're touring rough gravel or dirt surfaces, it's best to have a tire with an aggressive or knobby tread. And, you'll want a wider tire (700 x 32 mm or greater) to give you better traction and more cushion. For those running 26" wheels, 1.25-1.75" slick tires work well on pavement, while 1.9-2.25" widths are optimal for gravel and dirt.



CHOOSING A BICYCLE

GEARS

Most of our riders find that a triple crankset, combined with a wide-ratio cassette or freewheel, best provides the broad range of gears needed to get over and through the varying terrain on our tours. Stronger riders may get by with a double crankset and/or narrow-ratio gearing on trips without much elevation change. In technical speak, high gears of 100-110 inches and low gears in the mid-to-upper 20s, are generally adequate for most of our tours. If your tour is particularly hilly or mountainous, it would be wise to have as low a gear as your bike will accommodate.

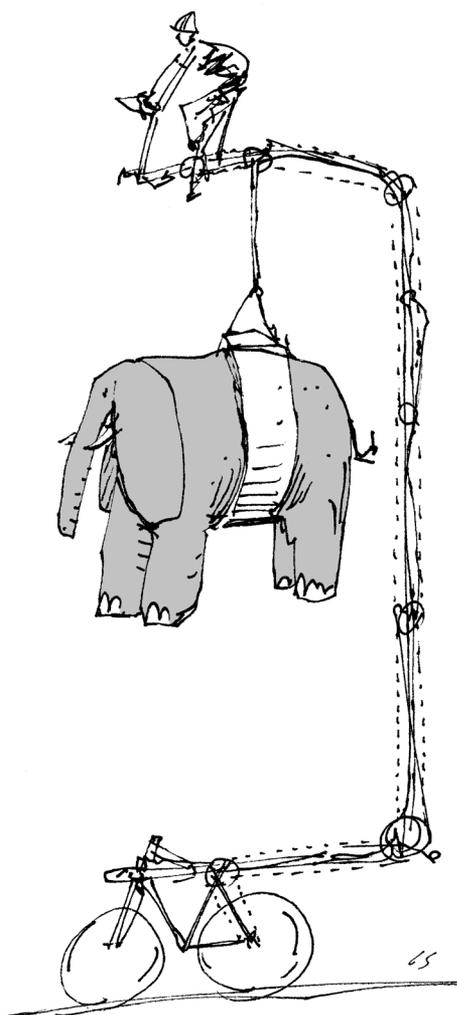
BICYCLE FIT

Comfort during long hours in the saddle is essential to enjoyable bicycle touring, and proper positioning is the key to being comfortable on the bike. Take the time to ensure that your bicycle fits you well; your local bike shop can help assist you with this.

Improper saddle height often causes knee pain. Pain in the inner or front portion of the knee is generally caused by riding with the seat too low. Pain in the outside or back of the knee is usually due to the seat being too high. Your saddle should be raised to the point where there is only a slight bend in your knee when your foot is at the bottom of the pedal stroke. If your hips rock or swivel in order to reach the bottom of the pedal stroke, your saddle is probably too high.

Most touring cyclists prefer their handlebars placed level with or, at most, an inch lower than the height of the saddle. This position is more upright than the traditional aerodynamic "racing" pose, but it

often affords cyclists greater comfort over the long haul. Similarly, you may choose between standard drop handlebars or flat bars (with bar-end extensions). The goal is to have and use multiple hand positions so that upper body fatigue and numbness can be avoided. Experiment with different adjustments and styles to determine what works best for you.



You'll be surprised by how well your body will adapt to new physical challenges. But, unless you adequately prepare yourself, the first few days on a tour could be unpleasant - or even bring your trip to a grinding halt.

CAUTION: *It is advised that you receive a thorough physical exam by a medical doctor before your tour. If you have any doubts about your condition, consider having a stress test and EKG. A sports-oriented physician should be well-versed in the special demands placed on the body by cycling.*

PRE-TRIP PHYSICAL

Let your doctor know that you will be doing a bicycle tour, and discuss your daily target mileage and the type of terrain that you'll be covering. Remember that riding at higher elevations presents significant challenges, as do extreme weather conditions.

Tell your physician about the special stresses your body will experience while touring. Your cardiovascular system, eyes and skin (from sun and wind), muscles and connective tissues (especially knees), nerves in your hands (from road shock), and your gastro-intestinal system (from varied water sources, irregular meals, and sustained daily exercise) all may be affected to a certain degree.

CONDITIONING

Begin your training at a distance that feels comfortable, whether it is 5 or 25 miles. Try to ride 3-4 days per week. Gradually increase your mileage over the course of several weeks, working up to 70-mile rides (or more). In training for a tour, riding speed is less important than endurance and time spent on the bike. The goal is to eventually ride several consecutive days (as you will on your tour) and

spend 3-5 hours in the saddle each day. Commuting to and from work is one way to help achieve this.

It's also important that you avoid overtraining. If you begin to feel increasingly tired, depressed, irritable or start to dread riding, you may be training too hard or too often. When your tour starts, you don't want to feel "burned out," or suffer from sore knees or other overuse maladies. Listen to your body and rest when necessary.

A FEW TIPS

- Relax as you ride, and take a break and stretch every couple of hours
- Eat and drink frequently, in small amounts
- Drink 4 - 5 quarts of water daily
- Avoid injuring your knees; "spin" at a cadence of 90 to 110 rpm
- Avoid sore hands (and road rash in the case of a fall) by wearing cycling gloves. Change hand positions frequently
- If you're not already wearing cycling shorts with a synthetic chamois, get some! And, remember, cycling shorts are designed to be worn without underwear
- To avoid or treat chafing/saddle sores, apply chamois cream (sold at bike shops) or other lubricant to the irritated area or the chamois in your cycling shorts
- Bathe frequently
- Launder your cycling clothes frequently. It's best to rotate your cycling shorts so that you wear a clean pair each day

TOURING TECHNIQUES

RIDING SKILLS

Good cycling skills will increase your enjoyment and safety on your tour. Practice riding so that you can look behind you without veering to either side. Although not required, Adventure Cycling recommends the use of a rearview mirror. A mirror attached to your helmet or handlebars can make checking behind you easier. Don't make abrupt steering movements, especially on downhill or on slippery surfaces, because you may lose traction. Avoid pedaling when you're leaning into a turn; your pedal or toe clip could catch on the pavement and cause you to fall. Hold the inside pedal at the top of the revolution when cornering.

CADENCE AND GEARING

The system of gears on multi-speed bicycles lets you select different pedaling rates, or cadences. The optimal cadence range for most cyclists is between 90 and 110 rpm. Spinning a gear that is too low causes your cadence to be too high. This is tiring and makes you bounce on the saddle. Pushing a gear that is too high (a common error) causes your cadence to be too low. This can cause knee pain, which is the main reason people are forced to stop cycling on a tour. Any time you feel the slightest twinge of pain in your knees, stop riding. Check your position and saddle height to see if an improper adjustment is causing strain on your knees. When you resume riding, check your cadence. Skillful cyclists use their various gears to maintain a brisk, but steady cadence over changing terrain.

BRAKING AND EMERGENCIES

A cardinal rule of bicycling is to brake before you must, especially on curves and downhill. Brake prior to going into a curve; then, if you need to slow down more, brake gently while in the curve. In general, your front brake has greater stopping power. Take care not to apply it too forcefully - you'll risk locking up your front wheel and doing an "endo." Your rear brake stops in a more measured fashion; use it to "feather" or modulate your decelerations. Always apply your brakes gradually, especially if there are other riders near you. Use special caution on downhill: bicycles accelerate rapidly, and loose gravel, rocks, vehicles and cattle guards can appear quickly when you're moving fast.

CHALLENGING CONDITIONS

Motorized traffic presents the greatest danger to cyclists. If a vehicle overtakes you on the road, assume that there is a line of traffic following it, and that the following drivers have not seen you. Towing units and RVs are often equipped with mirror extenders that can clip unsuspecting cyclists. Be attentive and ready to leave the road if necessary.

Watch for oil, wet leaves, loose gravel, railroad crossings and foolish cyclists stopped in the roadway.

Be aware that when you are heading directly into the sun, motorists behind you are doing the same and they may have difficulty seeing you. Try to avoid night riding, but if you must ride after dark, use lights and wear reflective clothing. Fog can be just as dangerous; it distorts depth perception and drivers generally have less experience navigating through it.



A FEW WORDS ABOUT MOUNTAIN BIKE TOURS

If you can ride a bicycle, you can ride a mountain bike. To best prepare yourself physically for your tour, ride your mountain bike as much as possible. If you don't own a mountain bike and will be renting one specifically for the tour, ride your road bike as much as possible before the trip begins. If you have hills nearby, seek them out to prepare yourself for the ascents and descents found on most mountain-bike routes.

We offer a wide variety of mountain bike trips. Some are on dirt roads; others are on single track. Please read the tour descriptions thoroughly or call the office if you are unsure about the type of mountain bike trip you're considering.

Because of the upright positioning and the need to occasionally "hop" your front tire around in rough terrain,

mountain-bike riding requires more upper body strength than does road touring. You would be wise to include some upper-body work in your training program: push-ups, pull-ups, workouts with weights or on a rowing machine, or anything else that gives your arms and upper torso a good workout.

Opportunities to refill water bottles can be very limited along mountain-bike routes. Plan on carrying 2-3 large water bottles or a large hydration pack.

Participants who live at low altitudes may want to arrive a few days early to adjust to the higher altitudes generally associated with mountain-bike riding. Steep climbs at high elevations can cause shortness of breath and general fatigue. Be prepared to climb more slowly as you adapt to higher altitudes.

WHAT TO TAKE AND HOW TO PACK

CLOTHING

Versatility, function and suitability for anticipated conditions are the primary considerations when deciding what to take along on your bicycle tour.

When it gets chilly, it's best to layer your clothing for warmth. Avoid cotton undergarments - they trap moisture, chafe your skin and are poor insulators when wet. Instead, it's best to choose synthetic fibers that wick moisture away from your skin. Next comes a wool sweater or synthetic fleece jacket; both are good insulators, even when wet. Your rain/wind jacket serves as the outer layer. A breathable waterproof fabric, such as Gore-Tex®, will keep you dry and is an effective windbreak. Coated, waterproof raingear tends to dampen your clothing from the inside and is not a good choice.

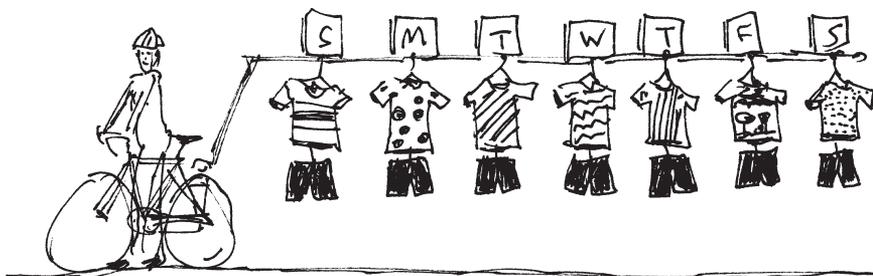
NOTE: Adventure Cycling's Cyclosource catalog includes some of the best cycling gear available; it's selected using the recommendations of Adventure Cycling staff and participants. adventurecycling.org/store

Carry a light, loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirt to protect your skin from the sun. Clothes should do double duty: For example, your off-bike outfit should double as a sun protection or warmth layer.

Cycling shoes have stiff soles to increase pedaling efficiency and to protect your feet from the sustained pressure of pedaling. Good touring shoes can double as riding and walking shoes. Feet often swell slightly when riding, so choose shoes that allow free movement of your toes.

PACKING

While on Adventure Cycling's supported tours, you'll enjoy the luxury of having us transport most of your gear. We do recommend keeping your wallet, camera and often-used items in your jersey pockets. Always take these with you when you leave your bike. Tools for fixing flats can go in a small saddle bag for easy access.



TIPS ON BICYCLE CAMPING

On most trips, we use commercial campgrounds with showers, laundry and a store on the premises. Our tours may utilize primitive campgrounds with only a pit toilet, picnic table and a water supply. Between these two extremes are campgrounds at county, state and national parks, which we utilize from time to time.

CHOOSING A CAMPING SITE

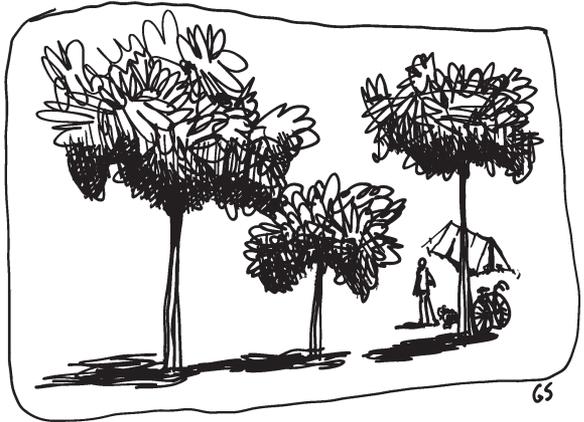
Look for level, dry ground with natural cover (grass, pine needles, or leaves) located at least 200 feet from water sources (lake, river, stream). Avoid gullies and damp areas which are colder and harbor more insects. On warm nights, an open, breezy site will have fewer bugs. Check for trees and other objects around the campsite that gusty winds could send crashing down on you. If electrical storms threaten, don't sleep near a solitary tree, as it may act as a lightning rod.

DRINKING WATER

Giardiasis, a debilitating intestinal illness, is caused by a protozoan that is found in surface water throughout north america. Even the clearest mountain streams may be contaminated, so never drink untreated water.

FOOD

Food purchasing, preparation and cleanup are done by pairs of group members on a rotating basis, in conjunction with the tour leaders. Normally, dinner and the next day's breakfast and lunch supplies are purchased toward the end of the cycling day.



COOKING

Never put a working stove on a table where you or others are sitting! Keep the fuel bottle closed and away from a lit stove.

CLEAN-UP

Before washing dishes, scrape off remaining food residue. Carry water to your site for dishwashing (don't wash under pumps, in bathrooms or in surface water). Dispose of your gray water in a service sink or toilet; if neither is available, empty it at least 100 feet away from your campsite. Food odors from wash water can attract mice, chipmunks, raccoons, bears and other pests. When leaving a campsite, make sure it is at least as clean (or cleaner!) as when you arrived.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT LIST

Modify the following list depending on your personal needs and past experiences. Keep in mind that you generally won't need any more gear for a 90-day tour than for a 7-day tour.

PERSONAL

- Cycling helmet, Snell, ASTM, DOT and/or CPSC approved (required on all tours)
- Cycling shorts, with synthetic chamois lining (2 pair)
- Leg warmers or tights for riding (rain pants could substitute)
- Short-sleeved jersey (2 or 3)
- Light, long-sleeved shirt for sun protection and off-bike wear
- Heavier long-sleeved top
- Rain/wind gear (jacket and pants) Gore-Tex® or a similar waterproof, breathable fabric recommended.
- Comfortable shorts for off-bike wear (1 pair)
- Comfortable pants for off-bike wear (1 pair)
- Underwear (2 or 3 pair)
- Socks (2 or 3 pair)
- Touring shoes, that are good for walking as well as riding.
- Cycling gloves
- Bathing suit
- Sandals (optional)

FOR MOUNTAIN OR SPRING/FALL TRIPS

- Wool or polypropylene hat
- Wool or polypropylene mittens or gloves, over thin polypro liner gloves
- Waterproof shoe covers
- Wool or polypropylene socks

MISCELLANEOUS

- Toiletries
- Towel (lightweight to enhance quick drying)
- Pocket knife (Swiss Army type is handy)
- Lightweight lock and cable (not a U-lock)
- Two or three water bottles
- Basic First Aid Kit
- Bandannas
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Insect repellent

PERSONAL TOOLS AND SPARE PARTS

- Tire levers/patch kit
- Spare tube (and tire, depending on the trip)
- Frame pump
- Spare spokes
- Rearview mirror
- Bicycle light
- *Any tools that may be unique to your bicycle, and not included in the group tools listed below.*

CAMPING

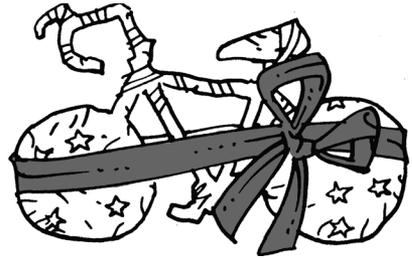
- Sleeping bag - Down-fill bags are warmer, weigh less and pack smaller, but aren't as effective in wet weather. Fiberfill bags are less expensive for comparable warmth, along with being heavier and bulkier, but will keep you warm even if wet.
- Sleeping pad - The closed-cell foam pads work well, but self-inflating pads are more comfortable.
- Tent - Lightweight and preferably free-standing with separate rain fly.
- Ground cloth
- Personal mess kit (cup, bowl, plate, and utensils in a mesh bag)

GROUP TOOLS PROVIDED BY ADVENTURE CYCLING

- Patch kit
- Tire levers
- Chain tool
- Screwdriver
- Pedal wrench
- Spoke wrench
- Open-end wrenches (8, 9, 10 mm)
- Allen wrenches (1.5, 2, 2.5, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 mm)
- Cone wrenches (13, 14, 15, 16, mm)
- Brake cables
- Derailleur cables
- Loctite
- Grease
- Chain lube
- Electrical tape
- Assorted plastic zip ties
- Hose clamps (assorted sizes)

TRANSPORTATION TIPS FOR YOU AND YOUR BICYCLE

NOTE! To be safe, ship your bicycle 10 days in advance. Even if you choose an overnight or three-day shipping option, allow two or three extra days for the bicycle to arrive. No shipping company has a perfect record!

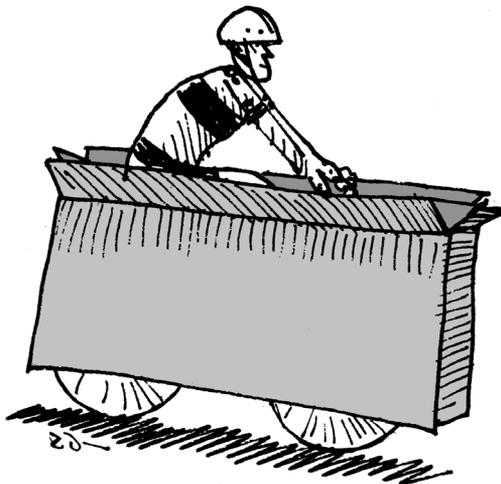


AIR VS. GROUND

You could pay up to \$150, each way, to have your bike accompany you on your airline flight. Services like BikeFlights.com will ship your bike for considerably less, but you'll need to plan ahead to utilize this option. Most bike shops at our trip starting points will accept delivery of and hold your bicycle until you arrive. Consult the shipping information in your itinerary and call ahead to make arrangements for shipment. Regardless of transportation mode, we advise insuring your bike against damage or loss.

PACKING

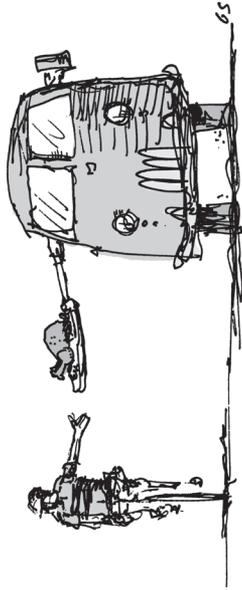
Don't wait to pack your bike an hour before your (or its) departure. Plan to do this at home several days prior. If you are not confident, your local bike shop can pack it up for you. Some seasoned cyclotourists use padded carriers or hard-sided cases to ensure that their bikes are well protected during shipment. You can purchase such a carrier from your local bike shop or online. Others will use a cardboard bike box, which can usually be obtained from your local bike shop at little or no cost. For most of our shorter tours, storage will be arranged for your bike case. Please consult your tour information packet and see our website for more information on packing your bike.





Adventure Cycling Association

150 E. Pine Street
Missoula, Montana 59802



BEFORE YOU GO
*A Handbook for Adventure Cycling's
Van Supported Tours*
Rev 9/19