GET READY TO RIDE!

Walking into a bike shop can be a dizzying experience, especially if you haven't ridden a bike since you were kid. Fortunately, today's bicycles are lighter, faster and more adaptable to an enormous range of riding styles. No matter what type of riding you do, there is a bike for you.

THE BASICS:

Just as a car dealership features comfy sedans and snappy sports cars, a bike shop is lined with everything from cushy cruisers to stiff racing machines. Choosing the best one for you will depend on the kind of riding you wish to do and, as always, your budget. Listed below are some of the main categories you can expect to find in your local shop.

ROAD BIKES:

Bicycles made for road riding generally have downturned “drop” handlebars and skinnier tires. Most road bikes boast 18 to 30 gear combinations, which are easily accessed by shifters conveniently located on the handlebars. Road bicycles are among the sleekest and lightest available; with race-inspired technology that infuses the entire category. Some road bikes are built for comfort and durability for general riding or touring. Others are ultra-light and stiff for fast riding or outright racing. Fitness Road Bikes provide many of the benefits of traditional road bikes, but incorporate a flat handlebar for those who prefer a more upright riding position. If you love to see the road wind for miles ahead of you, then a road bike is the way to go.

COMMUTER BIKES:

These workhorses are built for comfort, versatility and durability, yet are still incredibly fun to ride. Whether you commute to stay fit or to reduce your carbon footprint, commuter bikes can take you from home to office and back again, safely and efficiently. Commuter bikes come in a variety of configurations, including multi-speed, single-speed, flat bar, drop bar, skinny tire and fat tire models. Like Path & Pavement bikes, they offer increased options for attaching lights, fenders, locks and racks.

MOUNTAIN BIKES:

These bikes are recognizable by their fatter frames and wheels. Like their motorcycle brethren, many mountain bikes incorporate suspension front and/or rear-ends to cushion the ride over bumpy terrain, while maintaining more tire contact with the ground to improve traction. Mountain bikes are heavier than road bikes to withstand the punishments delivered by single track trails. They also feature a broader range of gears to help you stay in control as you climb the steepest of hills, and descend the dusty slopes. If you view the road as just the way to get to the trail, a mountain bike is in your future.

PATH & PAVEMENT BIKES

Think you’ll spend time both on- and off-road? Bikes that encompass the Path & Pavement category might just be the way to go. These bikes provide the ability to comfortably ride on different types of terrain. Some bikes in this category incorporate suspension componentry to provide a cushy ride, while others provide a slightly stiffer ride akin to road bikes. They also offer increased options for attaching lights, fenders and racks to carry your gear or shopping treasures. Even if you primarily ride a road or mountain bike, a Path & Pavement bike is a great second bike due to its versatility and value.

CRUISERS

These timeless bicycles feature wide handlebars, super fat seats, balloon tires and other comfort features for short strolls on the bike path or beach. They typically have a single speed and coaster brakes, which make them easy to ride and maintain. Cruisers never learned to diet, and are typically heavy. Not that there’s anything wrong with that! They are best for flat riding and just plain looking cool. Sunglasses and flip-flops not included.

WOMEN’S BIKES

Women’s bikes are no longer differentiated by a sloped top-tube and floral decals. Today’s bikes are designed to meet the demands of today’s female cyclist: to be just as light, technical and aggressive as bikes for their male counterparts…with just a touch of style added for good measure. Most, but not all women have longer legs and

Tips & Tricks:

1 Test ride, test ride, test ride. Any quality bike shop will let you test any bike so that you can make an informed purchase. Be sure to wear a helmet when you ride, even in a parking lot.
2 Remember to leave some budget dollars available for necessities such as a helmet, pump, gloves and water bottles.
3 Finding the right sized bike for children can be a challenge. When a child falls between sizes, choose the larger bike so that the child can grow into the frame. As long as they can mount/dismount the bike on their own and clear the top tube, the seat height and handlebar tilt can always be adjusted to help the bike fit.
a shorter upper-torso than men. Women-specific bicycle designs take this into account by decreasing the reach from the seat to the handlebar. Many also provide a shorter reach to the gear shifters and brake levers, taking into consideration slightly smaller hands. Handlebars also come in widths more consistent with the width of female shoulders, solving a dilemma for women who previously felt like they were driving a bus rather than riding a bicycle. While women-specific bicycles are designed to accommodate a broad range of female body styles, they should not be considered the only solution. Just about any bicycle can be adapted to fit a female rider, so select the model that best matches your riding style, technical demands, visual preferences and budget.

**FRAME DESIGNS:**

A bicycle’s frame is truly the heart of the machine. Its design, materials and angles (“geometry”) make all the difference between a comfy day-tripper and a rip-snortin’ racer. Many frames are designed with either men or women riders in mind, however a broad range of bikes will comfortably accommodate either gender. As noted above, a sloped top tube is no longer the sole indicator of a gender-specific model. Many bikes now incorporate lower or sloped top tubes for easier mounting and dismounting. A frame’s geometry can greatly affect the ride you experience. Racing bikes and competition-grade mountain bikes typically incorporate a tighter, “steeper” geometry to enable optimum control and quickness. A more laid-back or “shallow” geometry is typically found on touring road bikes, mountain bikes, path and pavement bikes and cruisers to allow for a more comfortable, terrain absorbing ride. Depending upon the type of bike you want to purchase, be sure to ask your salesperson about the frame geometry of the models you are considering. This will help to ensure that you not only purchase the right bike, but can anticipate how it will handle once you’re in the saddle.

Frame materials vary based upon intended use, weight, rigidity and price point. Ultra-lightweight carbon fiber and titanium frames provide a premium feel, which is typically accompanied by a premium price tag. However, current carbon fiber technology has resulted in frames that are quite affordable. Aluminum frames are slightly more rigid and economical, with application to a broader range of bicycle styles and rider weights. Steel frames typically feature a CroMoly blend, which provides a light and supple ride.

**SIZE MATTERS:**

Riding a bike shouldn’t hurt. At least not beyond the hard breathing and occasional leg burning part. Many people are surprised by how many specific components
and adjustments are required to properly “fit” a bike. However, once you’ve experience a fully dialed-in ride, it will all become crystal clear.

Stand-over height is often the first acid test of proper bike fit, but is not the sole determinant. As a rule, you should be able to comfortably stand over the top tube with at least one inch of clearance for road bikes, and at least two to three inches of clearance for mountain or hybrid bikes. You should also be able to comfortably reach the handlebars while seated, with slightly bent elbows and relaxed shoulders. Different types of bikes provide varied overall positioning.

Other than overall stand-over height, there are a number of factors that will be dialed-in by a Spin Doctor® when you purchase your new bike at Performance Bicycle. These include fore/aft adjustments, as well as stem height and position adjustment - all are part of our Free Basic Fit Service. If you plan to use clipless pedals, you should also seek assistance in adjusting the cleats, to experience optimal power and alignment.

STAYING ON A BUDGET:
Once you’ve identified the type of bike you’d like to buy, the next task is to determine how much you can spend. The elements that drive price variation from bike to bike include frame materials, component mix, the wheel set and brand name. You can typically find a low-cost version of any category of bike, but expect the price to increase (sometimes significantly) as you add features to decrease weight and increase ride quality.

When you buy your bike at Performance Bicycle® you’ll find greatly increased levels of quality, safety and service than at department stores or other bike shops. Every bike sold at a Performance Bicycle® store is assembled by a Spin Doctor® professional mechanic, has Lifetime Free Adjustments, and comes with our 90-Day Low Price Guarantee and 100% Satisfaction Guarantee.

Additionally, join Team Performance and you’ll get 10% back of every purchase – including your new bike – to use toward future purchases at Performance Bicycle stores, PerformanceBike.com, phone orders and in-store Red Phone and kiosk orders. Performance Bicycle® stores also offer flexible payment options, such as lay-a-way and 0% financing that give you easy payment options to help you purchase your new bike.