



20 mile/30km 6-Week Training Plan

This training plan is aimed at those who are new to cycling, not cycled for a long time, or are occasional cyclists. As you would before starting any new exercise regime, be sure to seek medical advice from your doctor, particularly if you've not ridden for a while.

Things to remember:

It's important to remember to eat and drink at regular intervals during training (eat before you're hungry, drink before you're thirsty). Always carry refreshments with you.

As well as a bike suitable for riding long distances off-road, you'll also need suitable clothing for the conditions and some lights if riding after dark or in shade. Plus, a well-fitting helmet.

Always take a spare tube, puncture kit, and a pump with you on your rides.

Make sure your tyres are pumped up to the correct pressure before each ride. You'll find the recommended pressure on the side of your tyres, so best to get a pump with a gauge.

If you don't already have one, treat yourself to a cycle computer. It doesn't have to be fancy, just one that measures distance travelled, ride time, current speed and average speed will be useful.

Any time spent on your bike will help you get fitter and improve your skills but try to do as much of your training off-road as possible. Riding off-road takes twice as much effort as on road (but the views are often nicer!).

Cycling buddy – a great incentive to getting on your bike is to ride with friends or family.

Beware wet chalk! Our chalk down land is beautiful but although muddy tracks can be tricky, wet chalk is like ice! Take care.

Hills – there's no shame in walking up the hills. If you're climbing speed has dropped to walking pace just hop off the bike and save your energy.

When you're training make a note of how far you get up a particular hill before you have to get off, then watch over the weeks as you reach higher and higher each time, until finally...

Where to ride off-road: Cycling on bridleways is allowed, cycling on footpaths is not. Not sure what track you're on? If you come to a stile where you have to lift your bike over a fence you're on a footpath.

If you need inspiration West Sussex County Council have a nifty little online cycle route planning tool here: <http://cyclejourneyplanner.westsussex.gov.uk/>

Week 1	
Monday	Day One. No riding today but if your bike's not been used for a while maybe it's time to get it serviced. Pump the tyres, check the brakes and gears are working properly. Check the weather forecast and get your clothing sorted. Where's that drink bottle? That way there's no excuses on Day 2...
Tuesday	Ride for 30 minutes with easy effort. A ride along the prom having a chat with a friend is ideal.
Wednesday	Day Off. Time to sort any bike or clothing niggles.
Thursday	Ride for 30 minutes with easy effort.
Friday	Day Off
Saturday	Ride 5 – 8 miles on flat ground (if possible) with easy effort.
Sunday	Day Off

Week 2	
Monday	Day Off. Are you keeping those tyres pumped up? It makes a big difference. About 35 – 40psi is a typical pressure for a mountain bike tyre.
Tuesday	Ride for 30 minutes easy effort
Wednesday	Day Off
Thursday	Ride for 30 minutes with easy effort.
Friday	Day Off
Saturday	Ride 8 - 10 miles on flat ground (if possible) with easy effort.
Sunday	Day off

Week 3	
Monday	Day Off
Tuesday	Ride for 30 minutes easy effort.
Wednesday	Day Off
Thursday	Ride for 45 minutes with easy effort.
Friday	Day Off
Saturday	Ride 10-12 miles on flat ground (if possible) with easy effort.
Sunday	Time to up the ante this Sunday with a 45-minute ride: 10 minutes easy warm up/10 minutes steady (you should be able to talk but in short sentences between breathes)/ 10 minutes easy cool down.

Week 4	
Monday	Day Off
Tuesday	Ride for 45 minutes with easy effort but put in three 5-minute stints during the ride at a harder pace. A chance to throw in some hills?
Wednesday	Day Off
Thursday	Ride for 30 minutes with easy effort.
Friday	Day Off. How's the bike doing? Sort any problems now.
Saturday	Ride 12-15 miles on flat ground (if possible) with easy effort.
Sunday	Ride for 45 minutes: 15 minutes easy warm up/15 minutes steady (you should be able to talk but in short sentences between breathes)/ 15 minutes easy cool down.

Week 5	
Monday	Day Off
Tuesday	Ride for 45 minutes with easy effort but put in three 5-minute stints during the ride at a harder pace.
Wednesday	Day Off
Thursday	Ride for 60 minutes with easy effort.
Friday	Day Off
Saturday	Ride 15-20 miles with easy effort. How's your average speed?
Sunday	Day Off

Week 6	This is when all your hard work pays off...
Monday	Day Off
Tuesday	Ride for 60 minutes with easy effort.
Wednesday	Day Off
Thursday	Ride for 45 minutes with easy effort.
Friday	Day Off
Saturday	Tomorrow's the big day. Is your bike ok? Checked the weather forecast? Got your clothing sorted? Nutrition sorted? Know where you're going to get to the start and what time you need to leave to get there on time?
Sunday 11 October	The big day. All will be well. Good luck!

Note: This programme is only a guide to help you build up to riding a 20-mile ride. Remember this is not a race - it's all about building up to the distance rather than how fast you can do it.

With thanks to Giant Shoreham for producing this training programme.