

THE RIGHT BIKE

THE RIGHT AGE:

- Children younger than 1 should not be passengers on bicycles. At this age, their neck muscles are weaker, and they may not be able to control their heads during sudden stops, especially with the added weight of a helmet.
- At 2-4 years of age, kids can start riding their own appropriately-sized tricycles and/or bikes with training wheels.
- Between the ages of 4 and 8 years, most kids have developed sufficient physical coordination and have mastered starting and stopping on a tricycle or a bike with training wheels, so they are ready to learn to ride a two-wheeler.

GET THE RIGHT FIT:

- Bring your child with you when shopping for a bike. Buy the bicycle that fits your child now, not one s/he will grow into. Also, make sure to get a helmet, too; s/he should always wear a helmet when bike riding.
- Check that the seat and handlebars are the right fit. Your child's feet should touch the ground when seated on the bike, so that s/he can control their balance when stopping.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT EQUIPMENT:

- Kids' bikes usually have coaster brakes (brakes on the back wheel that are engaged by pedaling backwards), handbrakes (brakes engaged by a grip on the handlebars that pinch brake pads against the rim of the wheel), or both.
- Until a child's hands are large and strong enough to effectively use a handbrake, which is usually around age 5, make sure they have a bike with coaster brakes.
- If the brakes utilize brake pads, make sure the pads are aligned over the rim and the nuts and bolts are tight.
- Tires should be properly inflated and secure. If you hold the tire and try to wiggle the wheel from side-to-side, you shouldn't feel any play, and the wheel should spin freely when you give it a spin.
- The CPSC requires the front wheel to have a safety mechanism, so that even if the nuts on the axle come loose, the front wheel won't fall off.
- The frame should be in alignment. You can check this by standing a couple of feet in front or behind the bike to see if both wheels line up.
- Shoelaces, pant legs, dirt and more can get caught in the bike chains. If the bike does not have a chain guard, consider buying one to protect your child from falls and the bike from wear and tear.

DOWNLOAD THE MAKE SAFE HAPPEN APP

Developed in partnership with the safety experts at Nationwide Children's Hospital, the app helps you make your home safer. Get room-by-room safety checklists, link to recommended products, and set reminders.



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