

For a step-by-step pedaling process, download our

Learn-to-Pedal Guide

www.StriderBikes.com/learn-to-ride



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We love to see pictures of kids on Strider Bikes. Submit your photos at www.StriderBikes.com/photocontest



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Learn to Ride



Stride Guide



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What makes Strider 14x the best bike for your child?

The Strider 14x is the total package bringing the entire learn-to-ride process together with one product. Because it starts as a balance bike, and transitions into a pedal bike, it allows your child to learn the balancing skills and confidence needed to safely transition to pedaling.

When your child is proficient in balance-bike mode, you can easily convert the bike they already love to a pedal bike in just a few quick steps.

Once the 14x pedal kit is attached, the narrow pedals allow your child to stride around the outside of the pedals to gain the momentum needed to begin pedaling.

With the Strider 14x you can skip the banged up shins and frustrations that come with learning to ride on a typical pedal bike.

We've stressed the importance of not rushing into pedaling. However one of the most common questions we get about transitioning is:

“What first pedal bike do you recommend?”

After years of struggling to come up with a good answer to this question, we finally just came up with a good BIKE for this question instead. The perfect bike is lightweight, low to the ground, easy to transition, even easier to pedal, and perfectly fits a 3-7 year old. Now we have an easy answer to the age-old question and that is: a Strider 14x is the best bike for your child—hands down.



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Teach your child to stride

At Strider, we love riding bikes and we love inspiring kids to ride. Strider Balance Bikes are designed with only foot propulsion to teach the fundamentals of riding. When balance and steering are mastered, transitioning to a bicycle with pedals or a motorcycle is easy.

While learning to ride, a child needs to experience the feel of leaning and how steering affects the balance of the bike. Without leaning, such as on a tricycle or bike with training wheels, a child isn't learning to ride at all. Tricycles and training wheels give a false sense of balance. When a child turns on a tricycle or bike with training wheels, the bike leans to the outside against the outside wheels. This is opposite of proper riding technique which requires leaning into the turn. And, this has to be "unlearned" in order to ride on two wheels.

Congratulations on taking the first step to teach your child to ride! We are so happy to welcome you to Team Strider; you are one of the early adopters that are changing the paradigm of how kids learn to ride and setting the new standard for how young children explore the world on two wheels. 1.6 million parents can't be wrong, and we're excited to take this journey with you.

Signs that children are ready to transition

- They can propel the bike and then glide for long distances.
- They can handle the bike on a downhill slope without putting their feet down.
- They can effectively steer through or around obstacles in their path.
- They *want* to transition to a pedal bike.



A reminder for parents

Don't rush pedaling. Striding and practicing balance are fun! Even if children appear to be striding like a pro, moving to a pedal bike too soon can derail progress. Let them continue to practice and perfect their balance and bike-handling skills. Be confident that the time spent on their Strider Bike will help them easily transition to pedaling when the time comes. And, with the improved skills they gained it will be a safer and more enjoyable ride.

Is pedaling the most important thing?

No. Loving to ride is the goal.

What defines riding? Does pedaling define riding? Downhill mountain bikers don't pedal, road bike riders descending a highway don't pedal, BMX riders in a half-pipe don't pedal, and motorcyclists don't pedal. They are all riding. So what do they all have in common? The ability to balance on two wheels and lean through turns, regardless of what put them in motion. For children, walking and running are the natural means of propulsion. The simplicity of Strider Bikes allows children to concentrate on the fundamental skills of balancing, leaning, and steering while propelling the bike in a natural way.



There are so many different things you can do on a Strider Bike! Help your child expand their imagination and their riding skills by introducing them to new obstacles, games, and activities before transitioning to pedals.



Strider Bikes encourage the development of spatial awareness, balance, and basic motor skills as early as possible so all children can reach their maximum riding potential. To ensure your child's bike riding success, we have developed this simple guide to help you along the way.

Follow these 4 simple steps to striding success!



Keep an eye out for expert tips and activities along the way!



Obstacle course

This activity can be as simple or elaborate as you would like. This is a great way for kids to show off their skills. Use things like bubble wrap, tunnels, boards, gravel, homemade ramps, or any other obstacle.



Simon says

Played just like traditional Simon Says, only with a bike! When you say "Simon says... knock on your helmet," the kids all do what "Simon Says." Riders are eliminated from the game by following instructions not prefaced with "Simon Says." The last child riding wins! If you are working with really young children don't focus too much on the "I didn't say Simon Says" part, or even eliminating players at all. This is just for practice and to incorporate new biking skills. Be sure to always include "Simon Says, get on your bike" and "Simon Says, get off your bike" to make the most of practicing getting on and off the bike without assistance. Once your Strider rider is proficiently gliding, you can call out more advanced skills, like "Simon Says ride for 5 seconds with your feet on the footrests!"

1 Adjust the bike to properly fit the child

Seat height is the most critical adjustment. Adjust the seat of the bike so both of the child's feet are flat on the ground and there is only a slight bend in the knee. A good starting height is 1" less than the child's inseam. Kids grow quickly. Be sure to adjust the bike every few months. If you are seeing your child struggle with becoming comfortable on the seat, try different height adjustments until you see an increase in their confidence which is the key to success.



2 Support the child—Not the bike

We instinctively want to help the child by holding onto the bike to keep it from tipping; **don't do this.** If the adult supports the bike when it tips to one side, the child mistakenly thinks the most stable place for the bike is tipped over to the side. If the child needs assurance, walk next to them and hang onto the back of their shirt so they feel safe.



3 Let your child set the pace

Some kids are cautious and may not even sit on the seat at first. This is OK! Their security is in their feet at this point, and we want them to feel secure. As they become comfortable walking around with the bike between their legs and using the handlebar, they will start to “trust” the seat. Some kids get to this point within minutes, and others may take weeks, but all children will eventually get there. Let them transition at their own pace... they’ll be striding along with their feet up on the footrests before you know it!



Balance and gross motor skills go hand in hand. Gross motor skills are important to enable children to perform every day functions, such as walking, running, climbing and playing as well as sporting skills like throwing and catching a ball. These skills help everyday self-care skills like dressing, brushing teeth, eating with utensils, and much more! Gross motor skills also help develop endurance, which can help your child concentrate and participate through a full day of school more easily.



Make it a family affair!

We have heard success stories of kids on Strider Bikes going miles with the family, keeping right up with the pack! Riding a Strider allows kids to go longer and further, with less stress than other ride-on toys or bikes with training wheels. Parents will be amazed at what their children can do! Strider Bikes offer riders the opportunity to ride on new terrain and the chance to practice on obstacles.



4 Be a cheerleader more than a coach

Many children will instinctively throw a leg over the Strider and want to go, go, go. Some children only want to spend a minute or two walking their Strider around at first. Praise them for any amount of time they spend on the Strider.

Positive encouragement is great. If your child is progressing, show them you notice by telling them what you see and offering a well-earned high-five!



Family walks are also a great opportunity to promote good safety practices, like wearing a helmet and crossing the street. Children will be so excited that mom and dad are now trying to keep up with them, instead of the other way around!



Why balance is so important

Balance is key to almost every physical sport and activity. Kids need to be active on a daily basis and balance plays a big role in the development of our children. People of all ages and abilities can benefit from working on their balance and from being active.

Balance strengthens all of these important developmental building blocks:

- Attention and Concentration
- Body Awareness
- Bilateral Integration
- Crossing Mid-Line
- Hand-Eye Coordination
- Hand Dominance
- Muscular Strength
- Muscular Endurance
- Self Regulation
- Postural Control
- Sensory Processing
- Isolated Movements



1 Adjust the bike to properly fit your child

Seat height

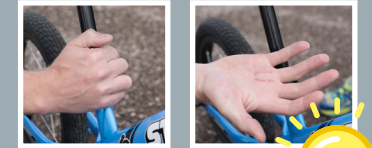
If you have not purchased a Strider Bike, you can determine what size bike you need by measuring a child's inseam and subtracting 1". The seat height is the most crucial adjustment when fitting the bike to your child. Ensure your child's inseam falls into the seat height range of the Strider Bike you are purchasing.



Start by having your child stand next to the bike and adjust the seat so that it sits slightly lower than the top of their inseam.

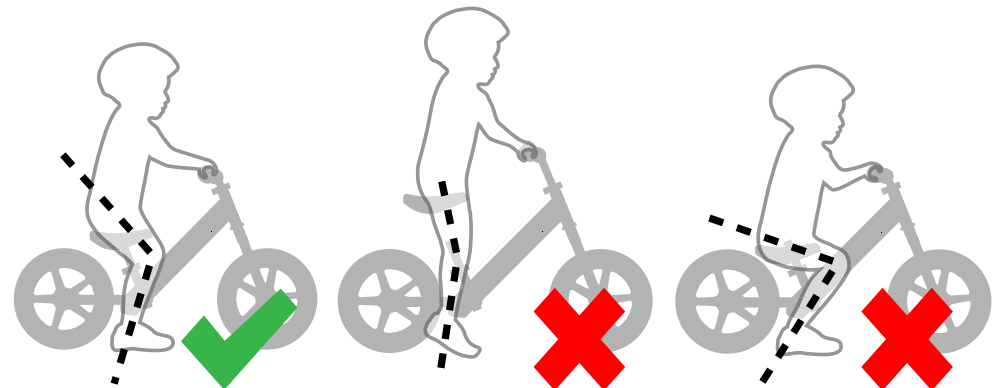


To open the quick release clamp on the seatpost, open the lever with one hand, and slide the seat to the appropriate position with the other.



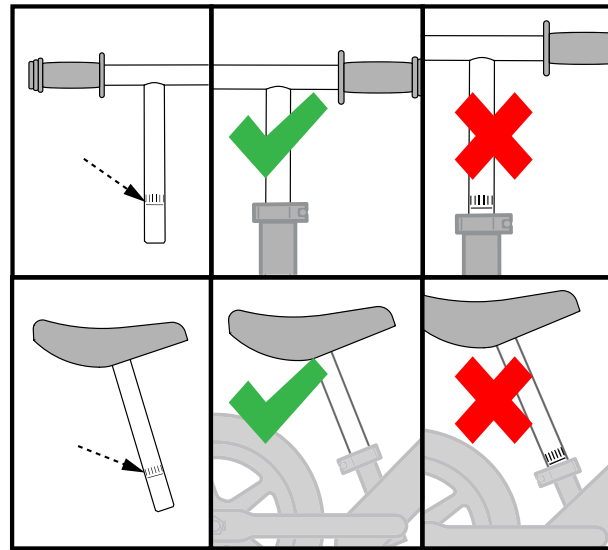
To tighten a quick release clamp, press firmly with the palm of your hand to close. If it leaves a mark on the inside of your hand, it should be perfect to make the seat stay put but also easily allow for future adjustments.

Typically when your child is comfortably seated on the bike with shoes on there should be a slight bend in the knees (see the photos below). This is the most efficient and enjoyable position for children to get the best striding movement as well as maintain control while riding. However, every child is different. Feel free to try a few different seat heights to accommodate your child's comfort level.





Does your child have the tendency to hit the frame of the Strider Bike while running? Try lowering the seat to allow more leg clearance.



On both the seatpost and handlebar, there are minimum insertion marks. For your child's safety, insert the posts into the frame far enough so the dashed lines do not show (see diagram above).



Handlebar height

The second most critical adjustment is handlebar height. The best starting point for handlebar height is to set it with respect to the seat. If the seat is at its lowest setting, set the handlebar to also be at its lowest setting, etc.

Typically the handlebars are set about belly button level, but feel free to try out different heights and see what makes your child feel the most confident.



The idea for a scavenger hunt is to help children improve balance and coordination by exploring places where they may not typically ride.

Examples of things to include in the scavenger hunt:

- Find one big and one little pine cone.
- Pick up a piece of trash you find on the ground to show you love our planet.
- Stop to take a picture of a bird with mom or dad's phone.
- Find a stick in the shape of the letter Y.
- Find and stride around 5 trees or shrubs.



Practice makes perfect

Looking for some activities for your rider?

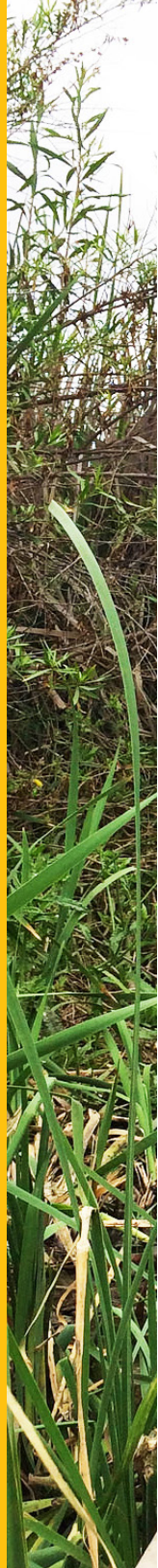


The rocket game

The Rocket Game is a super fun way to encourage your child to improve their skills and practice gliding with their feet up through imagination and play.

Have your little Strider rider run with their bike to gain some speed. When you say “3...2...1... Blast Off!” encourage them to pick up their feet to build their balance and coordination by coasting.

It helps to keep the activity and momentum moving by playing in a big circle (like in a driveway or parking lot).



Safety gear

Adjust the crown of the helmet so it doesn't move while the child rides. The helmet should be worn low in front, slightly above the eyebrows to protect the forehead. The helmet should fit snugly, but not uncomfortably tight. The chin strap should be worn well back against the throat, not on the point of the chin. If a child opens their mouth wide the helmet should pull down on the head.

To check the basic fit, hold the helmet with both hands and twist it gently to the left and to the right. If the helmet fits properly, the skin on the forehead will move as the helmet moves. To check the strap tension, hold the helmet with both hands and try to remove it by rolling the helmet forward and backward. If you can roll the helmet forward so far that it blocks the child's vision or backward far enough to expose the forehead, it doesn't fit correctly. Repeat sizing steps until helmet movement is minimal.

Don't forget shoes! Children should always wear closed-toe shoes while riding. Remember, these are their brakes, and they need to protect those precious piggies! Lead by example. Parents should always wear a helmet and proper safety gear as well.



Remember, riding is fun! A great way to learn and practice is by playing exciting games and activities.



Follow the leader

This is an excellent activity to observe your child and make sure their bike is fitting properly while still being active and having fun.

Encourage your child to go around obstacles and ride on various types of terrain like grass, sidewalks, or rocks.



Practice your balance

Although balance may seem effortless to an adult, it's still a fairly new concept to a toddler. There are several ways to practice balance on and off the bike. Try balancing on a board on the ground like a tight rope, or practice balancing bean bags on your head, just for fun!



4 Be a cheerleader more than a coach

Nothing ruins the fun more in a child's eyes than being told what to do. We want your child to have the most enjoyable experience possible when learning to ride their Strider Bike as well as when they are ready to transition to pedals.

If your child doesn't seem interested in riding, try having a Strider play date or have your child watch some cool videos at www.Striderbikes.com/learn-to-ride for stride-spiration! You'll enjoy them too!



Never force your child to sit on the seat. Most children will start off with the bike between their legs and not sit at all. Allowing them to do this is an important part of the striding experience. When a child feels the bike tipping beneath them, they learn to hold it up. (Remember hold the child not the bike?) It also helps them gain the beginning skills to balance. Striding is attained when kids transition from 100% of their trust in their feet to 100% of their trust in the seat (feet off the ground and balancing). This will come with time; it's imperative not to rush this process.



Sleepy bear (animal game)

It's time to break out your imagination! This game is all about fun and learning new skills while kids pretend to be animals. When you shout out an animal, have your child ride around imitating what that animal would do on a bike! When you say "Sleepy Bear," your child should stop and yawn and pretend to take a nap on the handlebars.

Other animals include:

Elephant (stomping)

Jack Rabbit (jumping with both legs)

Cheetah (go as fast as you can)

Bird (try to keep your feet up and out like wings)

Mouse (tiny quick steps)

Sleepy Bear (pretend to sleep)

Feel free to let your child suggest other animals as well. When your child pretends they are an animal, it helps them maneuver their bike in different ways without giving it much thought. This helps your child improve their riding skills at their own pace with support from you!


2

Support the child—Not the bike!

Avoid the urge to hold your child's bike up for them. They must be allowed to feel the bike lean from side to side to learn how to keep it from tipping over completely.

Strider Bikes have a very low center of gravity, which makes it easy for your child to get on and off the bike, as well as handle it with control. Your child always has 4 points of contact with the ground: two wheels (one in front and one in back) and two feet (one on each side of the frame). In fact, if they let go of the bike when standing still, it might not even tip over at all. Because it's so lightweight and has a low center of gravity, the bike will most likely stay upright between their legs without them even having to hold on at all.

Many children make exceptional progress by watching someone demonstrate what they want the child to do. Try dusting off your old bike and show them how you would stride!



Is your child having trouble getting on and off the bike on their own? Try having them step over the frame of the bike while it is laying on the ground and then lift it between their legs by grabbing onto the handlebar and pulling it upward.



3 **Let your child set the pace**

Riding a bike is more than the time you spend in motion. Help your child enjoy the entire riding experience by mixing it up, taking breaks, and making the entire ride an adventure. Every time they push the bike, pick it up, play with it, or ride, it is progress!



Walk the line

Using sidewalk chalk or tape, make a straight or curved line for children to practice walking on. The goal is to stay on the line without falling off.

As children progress, you could turn this activity into a race for some friendly competition.



Try building some confidence first. In Strider Education Classes, Certified Instructors have their students use small dowels about 15” in length to practice steering and turning. This is especially helpful for children who are a little apprehensive about trying new things, or doing too many things at once.

While holding a dowel—or imaginary handlebar—have your child practice turning by walking and pretending to steer through turns. Make it fun, try pretending they are airplanes! Encourage holding the dowel away from their body with arms extended like they would if they were on the bike.

Once your child has practiced a few “imaginary turns,” draw a curved line with sidewalk chalk and have your child try to balance by walking and steering all at once. When your child has this mastered, have them try on their bike. For an extra challenge, try steering around obstacles.



View more tips and activities at www.StriderBikes.com/learn-to-ride