City Biking for Beginners

By Brittany Kuecker

Brittany Kuecker is a recent graduate from South Dakota State University, where she double-majored in political science and [sociology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sociology). She stayed active and physically fit during her schooling by biking to class.   
  
With each year, road biking becomes more popular. The benefits are endless: it is an environmentally friendly way to stay in shape and to save money. Yet, many people are hesitant to try simply because they’ve never done it before. Here are some tips to help you gain confidence:  
  
1. Get a bike map: Many cities offer maps of bike trails to help you avoid busy streets when possible. Find your city’s free map or use an online resource.  
  
2. Bike defensively: You should always err on the side of caution—assume that cars cannot or will not see you. Make eye contact with drivers before assuming it’s your turn to cross the road.   
  
3. Follow traffic laws: If you’re going to bike on the road like a car, you need to behave like a car. Don’t take zoom through red lights when there’s no cross traffic—wait until the light turns green.   
  
4. Be safe: Get a helmet and get lights for your bike if you plan to bike after dark.