

The Hills have (cats) eyes!

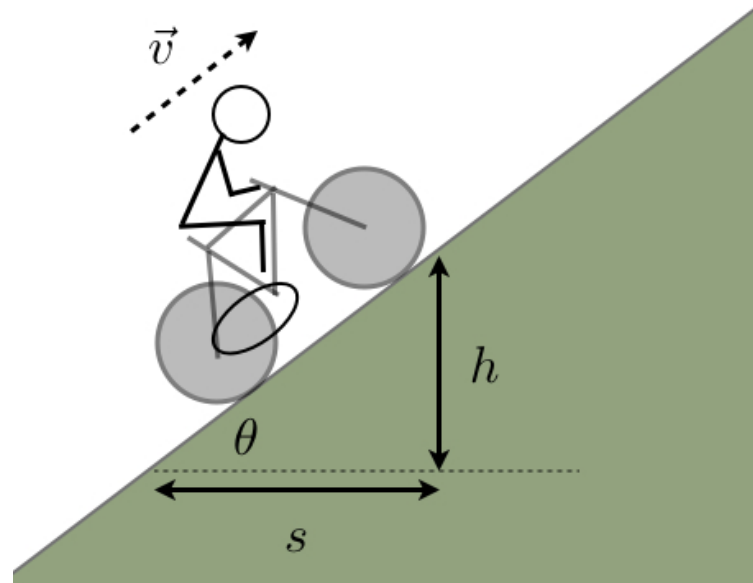
Our top tips for hill climbing mastery ☺

1) Go light... spend £0000's on some carbon fibre pants, or maybe just cut out a few of those breakfast snickers ;))

Ok going up hills involves physics, the bigger mass you're taking up the hill the more power it needs. You can spend thousands to save a few grams or sometimes looking a little closer to home can help you drop a bit of excess weight (we think you're beautiful the way you are!) But our top tip to safely drop the excess weight is to do a food diary for 7 days.

Sometimes it's about awareness and most people's diet will just improve by simply paying attention to what they eat.

At the end of the seven days you can self-reflect and have a look at the opportunities a food diary may have presented you ☺



2) Go up some hills... yup afraid so!

You need time on a hill or hills to develop the muscles and the “memory” which helps make you more efficient.

If you live in Lincolnshire (which is pretty flat) then find a hill and do reps vs a hilly ride out. Ideally a 2-3 min climb, but work with what you've got!

3) All the gears and no ideas ☺

Use what you've got on your gearing set up and make the most of it... or pop to a bike shop if you're really struggling and get some advice on your gearing, they could swap your cassette and make your life a whole lot easier!

Go up efficient and with as high a cadence as you can, especially on those long rides or you'll burn out plus it's slower to use a bigger gear!

Don't change gear under great leg pressure, remember to back off pedalling before swapping to an easier gear (that's why you get an awful noise)

4) What goes up!

Has to come down, so don't forget that being great at climbing hills is all lost if you can't descend safely and confidently. As well as practicing the climbs practice the descents.

Also, as many rides feature “rolling hills” gaining speed on the descent will give you that boost for the next hill, always nice to start a hill 100m further up because you've carried momentum through from the last descent ☺

5) Sit down!

Staying sat down is the most efficient approach to tackling a hill ☺

Stay in the saddle for as much of a climb as possible will recruit your glutes, giving the large muscles at the back of your thighs more leverage to pedal.

Standing up may be more powerful but it will use up your energy stores much quicker and is far more demanding. Go for a high cadence and stay seated!

Standing up is still ok to give your body a bit of a rest and stretch things out helping to vary your muscle groups getting used (and look cool going through villages ;))
Shifting the bike a round a lot is a no no (it's called honking) keep it as still as possible! ... again it wastes energy

6) Be psychic!

Two parts to this...

Firstly – Read the route ahead of event day, pay attention to when the hills come. Smashing in the first half of a long ride only to find out the second half you're climbing the north face of Mont Blanc is not going to end well. This allow you to plan fuelling and pacing, saving a little in the tank for when you need it.

Secondly – When in the ride look at the next hill ahead and plan, use the current downhill or flat to build up a bit of speed and think about your gearing so when your momentum stops moving you forward you're in the right gear to attack the climb.