

Your first cycle training tips!

Frequency vs volume is key, whether your new to cycling, just returning or a seasoned pro frequency is important for a few key reasons. Meaning 4 x 1 hour sessions is better than 1 x 4 hour ride or 2 x 2 hours or whatever number you're working off.



- It improves your handling and bike confidence
- It develops efficiency of movement, getting the body used to riding by been on the bike more often
- Improves ride conditioning to “movements” Reduces overuse injury risk and more importantly saddle sores!

Vary your efforts, to begin with just getting out riding is a great start but very soon you want to think about how you vary your cycling efforts to improve not only performance but the enjoyment of your rides. Learning to start out steady and progress efforts is key, setting off too hard is easily done and will ruin a good ride. You can't cheat your body mechanics and if you're watching the tour you will hear the words “threshold” mentioned a lot, this refers to the point a cyclist can maintain while still processing the accumulation of lactate in the body... we will cover zones etc in a later post. Go off to hard too early and you go past this point making it harder to recover and pick up the pace later on.

However simple things like making sure your long rides are “steady” and shorter rides start with a warm up before progressing the effort, adding in short reps. Adding in a light bit of structure to your week will allow you to enjoy those sportives just that bit more... so think about a long ride, a ride with some “harder reps in”, recovery ride and a “steady” ride.

The biggest common failing for people trying to improve their pedalling (especially guys) is every ride has to be “smashed” that's not how the body works and not the best way to improve, yes you will get better but you will plateau and grow frustrated.

Name your rifle bike, ok may seem a little silly but you need to learn to look after your bike and treat it as an extension of your body. Learn simple maintenance tasks, fixing a puncture, changing a tyre, getting a chain back on, cleaning, lubricating, checking your nuts aren't loose and adjusting saddle/bars (we tried re-writing this bit a few times but it sounded worse every time!). Youtube is a great answer and of course your local bike shop is full of experts... but don't take the mic, make sure you're buying things from them... they have a business to run and aren't a charity!



And finally... **Join a club**, this is the best way of finding out what everyone gets up to and joining in on club rides. Admittedly you will find everyone has an opinion and some will be great and some will be rubbish so make sure you do your research and don't be afraid to experiment with your rides. The worse thing you can do is keep doing the same thing and expect continual improvement ... those improvements will have an expiry date on them!