

TRAINING BASICS



Benefiting



How do you train for an endurance bike ride? The answer is different for everybody, but here are some training basics to get you started. Use the worksheet on the reverse of this sheet to start planning. If you crave greater detail, have specific questions or want to hammer out a detailed training schedule, contact your rider coach, who will be happy to help you.

1. How to Build Your Mileage — In a word... gradually. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Find your “base mileage.” As soon as possible, get on your bike and see how far you can ride comfortably right now. This is your base mileage for your weekly long ride.
- Every one to two weeks, increase that distance by no more than 10–15 miles, or less at first if your base mileage is less than 20 miles. For example, if your base mileage is 30 miles, schedule a 40-mile ride. If your base mileage is 15 miles, schedule a 20-mile ride.
- Plan to do a long ride every 1–2 weeks. That will only happen if you plan ahead. Wherever you keep the schedule for everything else in your life—a calendar, Outlook, your smart phone—schedule your weekly (or bi-weekly) long rides. Do that now so that you’ve put your plan in writing. (You can always adjust it when life inevitably throws you a curve.)
- Ideally, your goal is to build up to a ride equal to or slightly shorter than the distance you are training for by the end of September. Again, if you schedule your weekly (or bi-weekly) long rides now, you’ll see that you can do it.
- On weeks that you are not building your long ride, do a shorter ride at a more strenuous pace.
- When you miss a ride, relax. It’s inevitable. Just get back on your bike as soon as you’re able and pick up where you left off.

2. Your Weekly (Or Bi-Weekly) Long Ride — Since you are training for an endurance event, distance—not speed—is your primary concern. Repeat after me: This is a ride, not a race. Concentrating on distance will build not only your endurance, but also your confidence. Your long ride should be about one-third to one-half of your total weekly mileage; for example, if your long ride is 50 miles, your weekly mileage should be 100–150 miles.

3. Other Rides and Cross-Training — Ideally you should be on your bike three to five days a week. This could be bike commuting to work, a few quick spins around the park or even an indoor cycling class. The more time you spend in the saddle, the better shape you’ll be in and the more fun you’ll have on the ride—and fun counts! Substituting other aerobic activities is fine (especially during the cold winter months) but nothing makes up for time on the bike.

4. Time for a Little R&R — Schedule one or two days a week away from your bike/cross-training. Over-training is the most common cause of injuries. You are asking a lot of your body. Be kind to it.

5. Guidelines — Remember, the main point is to build up gradually. A 60-mile ride is not nearly as daunting when you rode 50 miles a couple of weeks before. Schedule your long rides now and stick to them as best you can. If “life happens” and you get off schedule, simply redo your schedule from your last long ride.

6. If the Bike Fits... — Few things are more uncomfortable than putting in long miles on a bike that doesn’t fit. Please get your bike into a shop to be professionally fit to you. It takes about half an hour and makes all the difference. Contact your rider coach for a list of bike shops that give discounts to our participants.

Please call your rider coach with questions or for help with your training schedule. He’ll be more than happy to help.

TRAINING SCHEDULE WORKSHEET

How far can you ride comfortably today? **1** miles

How many weeks are there before The RIDE for Our Vets? . . . **2** weeks

Do you have any major conflicts between now and the ride? How many weeks will you NOT be able to train between now and the ride? **3** weeks

Schedule gradually increasing long rides. How much should you increase each week? Complete this chart to find out:

Your goal of 25, 50 or 100 miles per day miles

Minus miles you can ride today (from box #1) miles

Equals = **A** miles

Number of weeks before the ride (from box #2). weeks

Minus number of weeks you are not available to train (from box #3) weeks

Minus 2 (to reach your goal two weeks before the ride) weeks

Equals number of weeks available to train = **B**

Miles from box A. miles

Divided by weeks from box B. weeks

Equals YOUR GOAL: miles per week to increase training. We'll call this "C." = **C** miles per week

If you find that your goal is to increase by fewer than 8 miles per week, congratulations! That gives you extra flexibility. If you prefer, do a long ride every two weeks instead of every week, and increase by twice as much each time.

Now here's the important part: In your date book, iPhone, Outlook, wherever you schedule everything else in your life, schedule your long rides. The easiest way is to:

- Schedule in your longest ride (10/25/50/62 miles) around the weekend of June 1.
- Cross out all the dates that you are not available to train.
- One week before your longest ride (avoiding the dates you cannot train) schedule a ride that is "C" miles shorter. Each prior training week, schedule a ride that is "C" miles shorter than the one before. This should bring you back to today and your current "comfortable ride."
- Feel free to play with the numbers a little. If you can currently ride 10 miles and the formula says you should increase your longest ride to date by 10 miles per week, you might consider increasing the first few weeks by 5 miles (10 to 15 miles, 15 to 20 miles), then by 10 miles, then by 15 miles. Increasing from 85 to 100 miles is much easier for most people than jumping from 10 to 20 miles.
- Be willing to reschedule. Things will come up. There is no limit to how many times you can redo your training schedule.
- These rides should be done at a comfortable pace. It's an endurance event, not a sprint. Take your time—enjoy the ride. Take breaks to stretch and HYDRATE! HYDRATE! HYDRATE!



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June 15, 2019

THE RIDE
FOR OUR VETS

Recommended Stretches

We often hear the question, when should I stretch—before I ride, during, or after? It's always a good time to stretch! Stretch lightly before you begin riding for the day (don't overdo it before you've warmed up), whenever you step off your bike, and then thoroughly at the end of the day. In short, stretch early and often.

The stretches below are particularly good ones for cyclists.

HAMSTRINGS

Standing stretch: You'll need a low bench, step or box (about 12–18" off the ground). Stand up straight, lift one leg and place the heel on the step. With both knees slightly bent, flex this foot toward you slightly. Place your hands on the thigh of this leg, and slowly lean forward until you feel a gentle stretch along the back of the thigh. Hold this position for up to 30 seconds while breathing slowly and deeply. Repeat with the other leg.

QUADRICEPS

Standing stretch: Find something to lean against. A wall will work nicely! Stand straight (with a normal curve to your back) and hold onto the wall, etc. with your right hand for balance. With your stomach tight and eyes looking straight ahead, grab your left ankle with your left hand and gently bend the knee, pulling your foot toward your buttocks. Make sure you keep your knee in line with the hip and shoulder—don't let the knee slip outward, and don't arch your back. Breathe deeply and hold this stretch for up to 30 seconds while breathing slowly and deeply. If you can handle a slightly deeper stretch, clench the muscle of your left buttock. Repeat with the other leg.

LOWER BACK AND GLUTES

Lie on your back. Bend your knees and place your feet on the ground. Now take your left leg and place the outside of your left ankle across your right knee. While tightening your stomach for support, grasp behind your right knee and gently pull your right leg up toward your shoulders. You'll feel the stretch along your right hip. Hold this position, breathing deeply, for 30 seconds. (Use your arm to hold the stretch in place.) Repeat on the other side.

CALVES

Find an upright object, such as a railing or wall. Stand about 30 inches away, and place your arms on the railing. Standing upright and looking forward, place your left foot forward about halfway between your right foot and the railing. Both feet should be flat on the ground and pointing straight ahead. Lean forward on your left leg, bending it gently while keeping the back leg straight until you feel a stretch in your right calf. Breathe deeply and hold the stretch for 30 seconds. Repeat on the other side.

NECK

Clasp your hands behind your back. (Believe it or not, this step is important!) Stand in a comfortable, upright position, looking straight ahead, with your shoulders relaxed and level. Slowly bend your head over to the right side. Keep your hands clasped behind your back to keep the left shoulder down. You will feel a stretch on the left side of your neck. Breathe deeply and hold this position for 30 seconds. Now bring your head back to upright, bend it over to the left side, and stretch the right side of your neck for 30 seconds. Finally, bring your head back to upright, lean it forward (keeping the rest of your body upright) and hold for 30 seconds to stretch the back of your neck.

