

Girl Scouts on Wheels – Patch Requirements



Girl Scouts at Penn’s “Stand Up and Get Fit” event, April 2013.

**Developed by Katie Monroe, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Women Bike PHL Campaign**

*In conjunction with Girl Scouts of Eastern PA
With support from the League of American Bicyclists*

Troop Leaders: You are encouraged to utilize this curriculum and purchase commercially available patches for your troop.

You probably already know that riding a bike is FUN. But biking is also healthy for your body, good for the environment, and practical for getting around town. Pedal through this patch to learn your biking basics, and then see where your bicycle takes you!

Purpose:

“When I’ve earned this badge, I’ll know how to safely ride a bike for fun, health, and transportation.”

Steps:

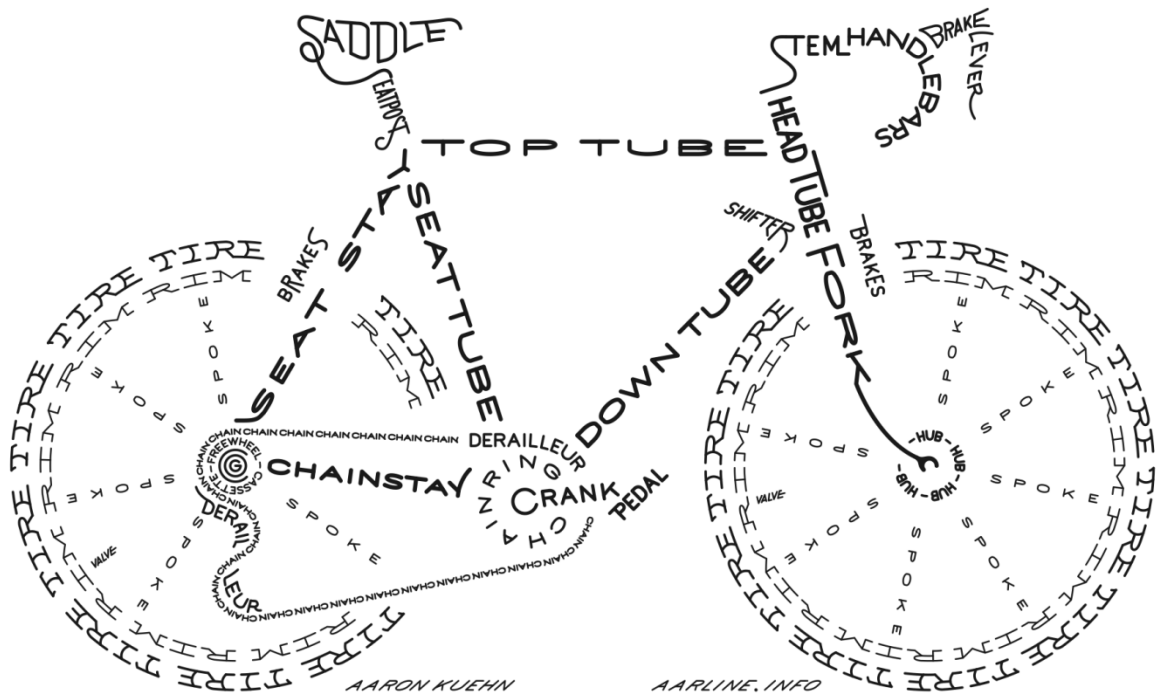
1. Know Your Bike
2. Safety Skills
3. Map It Out
4. Get Rolling
5. A World of Biking

Step 1 - Know Your Bike

A bicycle is a beautifully simple tool -- its basic design hasn't changed much since it was invented in the 1860s! Before you ride, it's nice to know what makes your machine work. Use this step to get to know your bike a little better.

CHOICES:

- ❖ **Learn about different types of bicycles.** Bicycles come in all shapes and sizes. Some are heavier, and built for commuting. Others are light and fast, for athletes to race. Some have wide tires, for riding in the woods, and others have skinny tires for pavement. What kind of bicycle do you have?
- ❖ **Discover the parts of a bicycle.** Did you know that a bicycle has at least fifteen parts? Learn and label the parts of your bike -- and then quiz yourself!
- ❖ **Try filling your tires with air.** After lots of riding, your tires will need some extra air. This is the easiest and most common piece of bike maintenance you will need to do. Borrow a bike pump from a parent, friend, or bike shop, and learn how to pump up those tires!
For more FUN: Learn how to fix a flat tire on your bicycle. Put together your own Fix-a-Flat Toolkit to bring with you on longer rides.

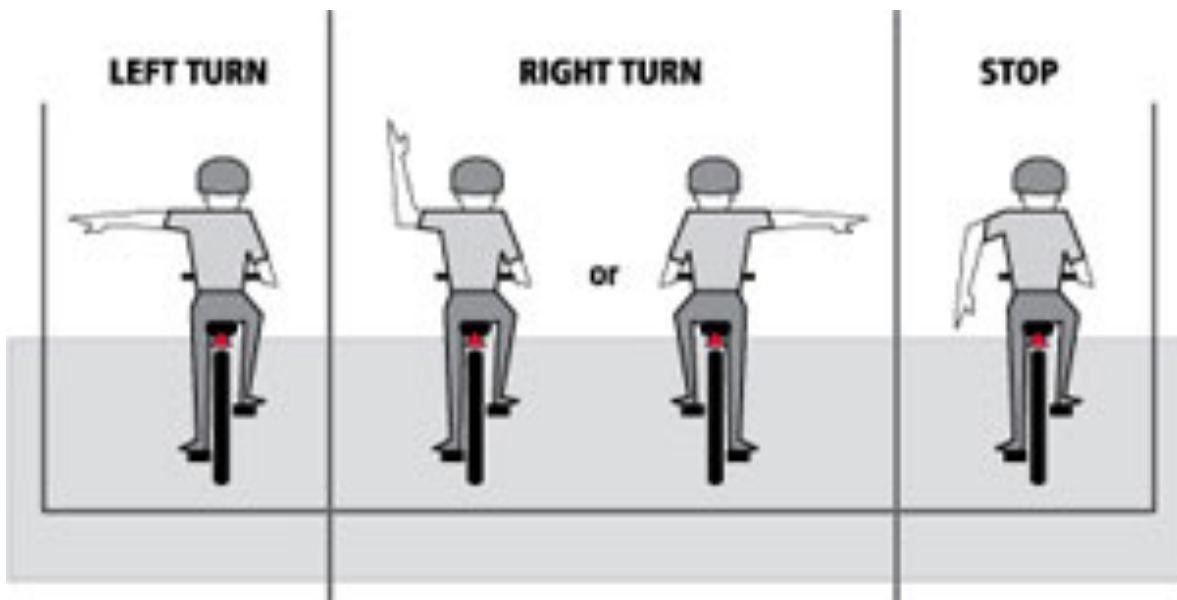


Step 2 - Safety Skills

Before you ride, it's important to know how to keep yourself safe on the road! To help you complete this step, visit www.saferoutesphilly.org, where you'll find lots of great resources and videos about bike safety.

CHOICES: (NOTE: We recommend you check out **all three** of these choices!)

- ❖ **Protect your head!** In many places, children are required to wear a helmet while riding. But it is a good idea no matter how old you are! Before you ride, find a helmet you like to wear, and make sure it fits on your head correctly. Wear it every time you ride!
- ❖ **Learn the rules of the road.** Bicycles are legal vehicles, which means a bicyclist can ride in the street with cars. It ALSO means that bicyclists need to follow all the same rules as cars -- especially when it comes to stopping at stop signs and lights and riding in the same direction as traffic. Research the rules where you live, and make sure you are following the law on your bike!
- ❖ **Know your hand signals.** To stay safe on your bike, you need to be visible and predictable. One way to do this is signaling before you make a turn -- just like a car does! Practice signaling right turns, left turns, and 'slow down' while riding your bike.
For more FUN: Ding ding! Get a bell for your bike, to help you communicate with pedestrians who might cross your path.



Step 3 – Map It Out

Where do people bike in your neighborhood? Do you see bike riders in parks, on paths, or in bike lanes? A bicycle can be a great way to get around, if you know the safe routes to take. Use this step to figure out WHERE to ride your bicycle.

CHOICES:

a) **Blaze your trail.** A bike path, separate from the road, can be a great place to ride. Is there a bike path near your house? Where does it go? Use www.connectthecircuit.org to learn about trails in your region, and choose a destination to visit on one of the paths.

b) **Choose safe streets.** Some streets have lanes just for bikes, to keep you safer when you ride on the road. A bike map shows where these special bike-friendly streets are, so you can choose a route that stays off the scary roads. Is there a bike map of your town or city? Choose a destination you can access via bike lanes.

For more FUN: Learn how YOU can be an advocate for better places to ride in your town. Attend a community meeting where decisions about bicycle facilities are being made!

c) **Learn to park your bicycle.** Once you get to your destination, you may need to park your bicycle. Learn how to safely lock a bicycle outside, so that no one will steal it! Are there good places to park a bike near your school?



The advertisement features a map on the left showing a blue route between two green location markers labeled 'A' and 'B'. The map includes street names like '2nd Ave', 'E Houston St', and 'Hamilton St'. To the right of the map is a green bicycle icon, the text 'Get Biking Directions' in blue, a blue button with 'Try It Now' in white, and the 'Google maps' logo. At the bottom, there are two links: 'Maps.google.com/biking' and 'Ads by Google'.

Step 4 - Get Rolling

You've learned about how your bike works, how to ride safely, and where to ride: now it's time to actually go for a spin! For this step, you could plan a ride around a park or a ride across town -- whatever you feel comfortable with. At first, ride with an adult or a trusted friend who has more experience on a bike.

CHOICES:

a) **Ride your bike to school.** Plan a safe route and try riding your bike to school one day! Some schools celebrate Walk and Bike to School Day in early May. See if your school is celebrating here:

www.walkbiketoschool.org.

Tip: Plan ahead to make sure there's a place to lock or store your bike at school!

b) **Pedal for fun, with friends or family.** You don't need a special destination to have an adventure on your bike with friends. Try riding to a park with your troop for a picnic lunch, or exploring a nearby neighborhood by bike with your family.

For more FUN: Keep a biking journal, and write about the bike rides you take. What was fun about your ride? What was challenging?

c) **Sign up for a youth bike race, duathlon, or triathlon!** While bicycling doesn't have to be a competition, a race can be a good goal to set for yourself. Who knows -- maybe you will be a professional racer one day!

For more FUN: Learn about a famous female triathlete. How did she get started? What kinds of challenges did she have to overcome?



Step 5 - A World of Biking

Some people bike to run their errands, others bike because it's part of their job. Some bike to get the exercise they need to stay strong and healthy, and others bike because they want to reduce their carbon footprint. Whatever the reason, many people love riding their bike, and want to share this joy with others. Use this step to explore the diverse community of bicyclists!

CHOICES:

a) **Explore a bicycle career.** What kinds of jobs are available for people who love bikes? Interview a bike shop owner, bike mechanic, bicycle courier, professional racer, or bicycle advocate to learn about her job. What does she like about it? How did she choose it?

b) **Learn about bicycle organizations in your area.** What kinds of clubs and organizations exist for bicyclists where you live? In Philadelphia, check out the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia (www.bicyclecoalition.org) or Neighborhood Bike Works (www.neighborhoodbikeworks.org). What are their mission statements? How do they work to fulfill their missions?

For more FUN: Help out one of these organizations by becoming a volunteer!

c) **Research biking in another place.** Use the internet to learn about what it's like to bike in a place that's not where you live. Ideas: look up "Copenhagen's bicycle superhighway," or "Washington D.C.'s Capital Bike Share" system.



<http://godcgo.com/home/get-me-there/tools-to-get-around/blog/tagid/9/capital-bikeshare.aspx>