

UNSW
Women in Cycling
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The Benefits of Riding


- As a low-impact form of physical activity, riding appeals to people who cannot participate in high-impact activities
- As a form of active transport and recreation, it enables many people to combine physical activity with transport and recreation
- There is also evidence that the public generally prefer unstructured forms of physical activity and cycling certainly fits into this category
- It appeals to people across the age spectrum, from children to adults
- The promotion of 'lifestyle' physical activity such as walking and cycling is more cost-effective than promotion of structured exercise programs
- As a form of active transport, cycling contributes to the additional benefits associated with reduced car use (improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced noise pollution, improved community liveability and social connectedness).

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Women in Cycling - Overview

- Why ride?
- Who is riding?
- Barriers to riding
- Just what is it about 'cycling'?
- Questions and comments.




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Who is riding?

- In 2006, cycling was the third most popular physical activity in terms of regular participation for Australian adults. Australian's cycled regularly (that is, more than 104 times during the year) more often than they played golf, tennis and netball and more than they went swimming or running.
- In 2006 over 1.68 million adults cycled; an increase of 244,000 from 2001.
- Most Australian households have access to a bike.
- Australian capital cities have also experienced an average 22% increase in bicycle journeys to work, with Melbourne's growth rate soaring 42% between 2001 and 2006.




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The Benefits of Riding

- Physical inactivity is a major contributor to poor health in Australia
- Around half the population is insufficiently active to protect against sedentary lifestyle diseases, such as diabetes.
- The trend of decreasing rates of physical activity cuts across all ages and social groups.
- Modern lifestyles have "engineered" physical activity out of everyday life.
- Cycling offers significant potential to increase physical activity levels in adults.



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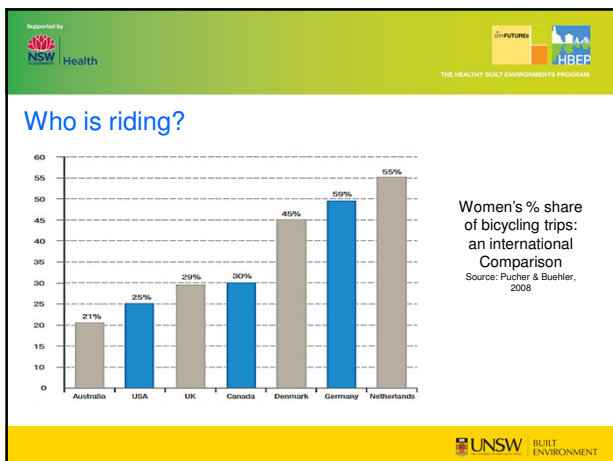
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Who is riding?

- Women represent half the Australian population but only 20% of commuter cyclists.
- In NSW only 16% of commuter cyclists are women.



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Why don't people ride?

2. Safety

"When I moved to Balmain I found there's nowhere to ride where I'd feel safe on the road."

"I am petrified to cycle from Enmore into the city because you'd have to go along King Street, which is always a traffic nightmare."

"I work late and I don't feel safe. In a car you can lock the doors, but on a bike you just have to ride fast."

"My kids would love to be able to just ride off but I'm more protective, there's less trust now..."

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Who is riding?

	Inner Urban		Outer Suburban	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Commute	63%	38%	11%	25%
Recreation	13%	21%	50%	31%

Source: Kivsek et al. (2009)

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Why don't people ride?

3. Inconvenience

"It's your way of life really – it is easier by car driving."

"I'd really enjoy the ride but it's another 45 minutes in the morning and again in the afternoon."

"You've got to buy and maintain a bike, you've got to buy a helmet."

"The weather has a lot to do with it here. It's very cold in winter, or too hot, 40 degrees in summer."

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Why don't people ride?

From Daley et al., 2007

1. Negative image of cyclists

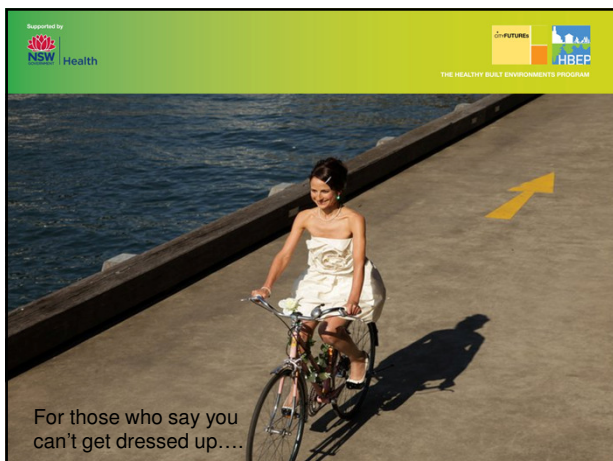
"If you kept your bike when you were old enough to have a licence you were considered a bit weird"

"I don't like cyclists. They're an absolute pain in the arse on the road."

"And I'd have helmet hair – always a problem!"

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**Why don't people ride?
Women Specific Barriers?**

- Purpose of bicycle trips
- Length of trips
- Carrying capacity
- Desired amenities and safety perceptions (risk aversion)
- The degree to which separate facilities are valued
- Cultural perceptions

Source: Krizek et al. 2006; Bonham and Wilson 2012.

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A List of Don'ts for Women on Bicycles Circa 1895

Source: New York World by an author of unknown gender.

- Don't be a fright.
- Don't faint on the road.
- Don't wear a man's cap.
- Don't wear tight garters.
- Don't forget your toolbag.
- Don't boast of your long rides.
- Don't wear loud hued leggings.
- Don't cultivate a "bicycle face."
- Don't refuse assistance up a hill.
- Don't race. Leave that to the scorchers.
- Don't imagine everybody is looking at you.
- Don't go to church in your bicycle costume.
- Don't contest the right of way with cable cars.
- Don't wear white kid gloves. Silk is the thing.
- Don't ask, "What do you think of my bloomers?"
- Don't use bicycle slang. Leave that to the boys.
- Don't try to have every article of your attire "match."
- Don't discuss bloomers with every man you know.
- Don't appear in public until you have learned to ride well.
- Don't ignore the laws of the road because you are a woman.
- Don't appear to be up on "record smashing." That is sporty.



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A final thought....

"I think Ita Buttrose would make a wonderful Lord Mayor, at least she wouldn't ride a bike to work"

SMH Letters to the Editor 16 August, 2011

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"People don't talk about 'cycling' here in Copenhagen. You don't get to work and discuss the morning's commute with your colleagues. You may comment on the rain and whether or not you were caught in it but the whole act of urban cycling is so second-nature that it isn't even mentioned. There's nothing really to talk about. It's a routine - an enjoyable one, sure, but just a part of daily life"....

Mikael Colville-Andersen, CopenhagenCycleChic.com

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Questions?

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All photos are the presenter's unless otherwise indicated.

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