

Why: RIDE YOUR BIKE TO WORK

GREEN STAR AIR QUALITY

Bike For the Environment

- A short four-mile round trip by bicycle keeps about four pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂) out of the air we breathe. (U.S. EPA)
- Almost 70% of all carbon monoxide (CO) in Anchorage is from motor vehicles. (Department of Health and Human Services, Municipality of Anchorage)
- Half of all trips in the U.S. are less than three miles, a 20-minute bike ride. (Active Transportation for America, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy)
- Increasing bicycle and pedestrian trips that are less than three miles from the current 4% to 10% would result in 21 billion fewer miles driven and about 20 billion fewer pounds of CO₂ released into the air. (Active Transportation for America, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy)



Bike For Your Health

- The average person loses 13 pounds during the first year of commuting by bike. (League of American Bicyclists)
- Just three hours of biking per week can reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke by 50%. (League of American Bicyclists)
- A 130-pound cyclist burns 402 calories while pedaling 14 mph, while a 180-pound cyclist burns 540 calories while pedaling 14 mph. (League of American Bicyclists)

Bike For Your Wallet

- The average Anchorage commute is 12.8 miles, costing up to \$1,597 per year in an automobile. If you bike to work only four months of the year, you could save more than \$500 per year. (Green Star)
- The Bicycle Commuter Tax Initiative can qualify you for a \$20 per month reimbursement for bicycle-related expenses. (League of American Bicyclists)



vs.



Cost:

52¢ per mile

Releases:

~1 lb. of CO₂ pollutants per mile

Cost:

0.2¢ per mile

Releases:

~25 calories per mile

How? Be Ready for the Elements

Overcoming the Excuses

I'm out of shape. Ride at an easy pace; in a few months you will be in great shape. Ride your route on a weekend to find the easiest way to work.

It takes too long. The average commuter travels at 10 mph; the more you ride, the faster you will get. Trips of less than three miles will be quicker by bike.



It's too far. Try riding to work and taking mass transit home, then alternating the next day, or ride to a coworker's house and carpool to work.

My bike is beat up. Have your bike professionally tuned. If you can't maintain your bike yourself, identify bike shops near your route. Make sure that your bike is reliable and in good working order before you start riding.

There are no showers at work. Most commuters don't shower at work; ride at an easy pace to stay cool and dry. Ride home at a fast pace if you want a workout; shower when you get there. Health clubs offer showers; get a discounted membership for showers only.

I have to dress up for work. Keep multiple sets of clothing at work; rotate them on days you drive. Have work clothes cleaned at nearby laundromats or dry cleaners. Pack clothes with you and change at work; try rolling clothes instead of folding.

I have to run errands. Bolt a rack to the back of your bike to add carrying capacity. Make sure that you have a lock to secure your bike while you are in a building. Allow yourself extra time to get to scheduled appointments.

Tackling Winter

Snow bikes offer wider tires to give you better flotation over the snow, which not only makes it easier for you to ride, but also has less impact on the trail. However, a mountain bike, hybrid bike or single-speed bike also work well for winter commuting. Whatever bike you choose, be sure to decrease the amount of air pressure in tires for riding on snow.

Also be sure to keep the bike dry. If you ride in fresh snow and get snow built up on the frame, clean it off with a cloth when you get to your destination, making sure to dry off the chain too and keep it lubed.

Lights are a must. At a minimum, have a white blinking light facing forward and red blinking light facing backward. This ensures you can be seen from ahead and behind by drivers. Blinking lights do not help you see the road so you will need another light for this purpose. Mount your lights at a height where drivers can see you from a far distance.

Studded tires are highly recommended for safe cycling in winter conditions. And always wear a helmet. Some winter commuters like using ski helmets, as they provide extra warmth.

Overdressing is as much of a problem as under dressing. If you are nice and toasty warm when you first start, you are going to be too hot ten minutes later. Dress in layers to keep your core warm. The layers against your body should wick sweat to the outside layers. Then add a mid-layer of light fleece and an outer windproof layer.

For your hands, lobster gloves are great. Windproof over-mittens can be worn over lobster gloves for really cold weather. Or try Pogies, which are the big mittens built into the handle bars.



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