

Balance Bike Skills

Green-Schools Travel - Cycling



Children between 1.5 and 4 will typically only learn one motor skill at a time so balance and then steering are the obvious first skills and that's why balance bikes are such a good option for this age group. Balance bikes allow them to become masters of their own domain before moving on to new skills.

Safety First: Check Bike Setup, Clothing and Helmet

For a perfect bicycle fit, follow these guidelines:

- Sit on the saddle and rest the balls of both feet on the ground. Feet flat on ground for beginners.
- Straddle the top bar with a comfortable clearance and with both feet flat on the ground.
- Reach the handlebars with a slight bend in the arms when sitting on the seat. If there are handbrakes, your child should be able to grasp them and apply enough pressure to stop the bike.
- A skirt is not great as it can get stuck around the saddle.
- Baggy pants or wide legged trousers might also hinder. Check shoes are on securely and aren't going to slip off quickly. Check shoe laces are fastened.
- Do not go on roads – footpaths when accompanied by adult.
- Always wear a properly fitted helmet and bike is in working order e.g. no flat tyres or loose parts.

Children aged 1.5 to 4 years can only learn one motor skill at a time. With balance bikes the two main skills are "**Balancing**" and "**Steering**". It takes a lot of coordination to complete these skills and braking will also be introduced. These are the most difficult skills to master when cycling.

1. Walk along with the bicycle
2. Get on and off the bicycle – sit on the bicycle
3. Sit and walk
4. Stop/Brake
5. "Giant" steps/strides – Fee Fi Fo Fum
6. Run
7. "Kangaroo Bouncing" or "Gliding"
8. Steering