



A Proper Bike Fit Leads to A Better Cycling Experience

It is a common misconception that riding a road bike can be painful. In reality, a properly fit bike should feel like an extension of your body.

Everyone's body type is different, so every cyclist will require a specialized fit. There are three basics to a bike fit. First, with clipless pedals, the cleat should be mounted on the shoe such that the axle of the pedal is directly under the ball of the foot. Second, the seat height should be set so that the knee is bent at a 30 degree angle when at the bottom of the pedal stroke. Third, the handlebars should be in a position where the elbows can stay slightly bent, the wrists remain straight, and the neck remains in an upright position. Most cyclists find this position to be much more upright than expected.

A properly fit bike leads to better cycling efficiency—meaning lower energy expenditure and injury risk. Suffering from knee pain, low back pain, numbness in the feet/hands, or neck and shoulder pain is common from improper fit of your bike to your body. Improper seat height can lead to knee injuries. Reaching too far for the handlebars can create stress on your wrists, shoulders, neck, and low back. Pedal and cleat positioning is also important to allow your natural knee and ankle joint position to be respected. A cyclist should never feel they are forcing their body to fit a bike.

Cycling primarily utilizes the quadricep muscles, so strengthening for the hip muscles is important to reduce muscle imbalance and injury. Perform these exercises by placing a loop of elastic band around your ankles. Walk sideways 15-20 steps, then return (Fig 1). Repeat while staying on your toes (Fig 2). Finally, walk forward keeping a wide stance (Fig 3). Do three sets each, 2-3 times a week.



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3

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