



# Brunetti Women's Coffee Ride Training Program



By Lynn Gunning and the Cycling Promotion Fund



Everything you want to know about cycling  
[www.rideabike.com.au](http://www.rideabike.com.au)

So you've heard all the hype about riding, but aren't quite sure how to get started? While the serious cyclists are gearing up for *Around the Bay in a Day*, how about setting your sights on a women's only 20km ride around the streets of Melbourne. With a limit entry of 200 riders, the ride will be a great opportunity to improve your road riding skills, brush up on the road rules and improve your ability to negotiate traffic - all in the company of like-minded women.

Cycling is a fantastic, low impact way to improve your aerobic fitness and also helps build muscular strength and endurance. What's more it can be a very social outing, great stress relief and lots of fun. No matter what your age, ability or level of fitness is; cycling is an easy and accessible way to increase your overall health and wellbeing.

## Getting Going

If you haven't been on a bike for a while, it's important that you start out gradually and build up your mileage. If it's been a few months or years since you last exercised, it may be a good idea to see your doctor and get a quick check up and all clear from them.

Your bike may also need a check-up if it's been gathering dust in the back of the shed. Take it to a bike shop and get it serviced to ensure you'll have a smooth ride.

To assist you in selecting a bike shop which meets your needs the Cycling Promotion Fund has developed a publication with some tips.

[<Click here to download CPF publication>](#)

It's also essential that you check your positioning on the bike (for example, your seat height and how far forward you are leaning). A bike shop can help you with this, or visit [www.womenscycling.com.au](http://www.womenscycling.com.au) for some good information on bike fitting.

Never leave home without a pump, puncture repair kit and spare tube so you don't get stuck. Have a water bottle holder fitted to your bike and always carry water.

## Warming Up

At the beginning of each ride, it's a good idea to spend the first five to ten minutes riding in a low gear at a steady pace to help increase the blood flow and hence 'warm up' your working muscles (predominantly your leg muscles). Small gears refer to gears that are easier to ride in (usually you would be on a small ring at the front and a large ring at the back). Big gears are the reverse

(big at front and small at the rear) and are the ones that you have to work your legs very hard to get moving.

Riding a few blocks down to the designated corner to meet up with your friends or down to your local bike path will be a good warm up. It is useful to include a few stretches if you are standing around waiting for a friend - try swinging your arms or doing some light torso rotations.

## Riding

When riding on shared paths be prepared to slow down or stop if necessary and use your bell to alert other path users and pass on the right.

When riding in traffic remember to ride at least a metre from the kerb or parked cars, you are more visible and are able to avoid debris and broken glass.

If you are not familiar with the road learn to use your gears. Smooth gear changes decrease the chance of you losing speed. Be aware of when you are starting to slow down or speed up and need to change gears accordingly. Avoid 'grinding' away in low gears - this often generates much more muscular fatigue in your legs and can cause you to lose efficiency.

Try to ride with someone, it will keep you motivated.

## Cooling down

A warm down will help bring your heart rate back down and some static stretching - concentrating on your lower back and legs - can help reduce muscle tightness. It is also a good time to top up your fluid levels and replenish your fuel stores with nutrient-rich carbohydrates. .

## Potential routes

**5km on bike path** - South Melbourne Life Saving Club to St Kilda Pier return

**5km on road (mostly bike lanes)** - around Aughtie Drive and Lakeside Drive (road circuit around Albert Park Lake)

**10km on bike path** - South Melbourne Life Saving Club to Elwood Life Saving Club return

**10km on road (mostly bike lanes)** - two laps of Aughtie Drive and Lakeside Drive

**12km on road** - one lap of Kew Boulevard (Walmar St to top of hill over Eastern fwy)

**15km on bike path** - St Kilda Pier to Middle Brighton Baths return

**15km on bike path** - Capital City Trail

**20km on bike path** - Port Melbourne Life Saving Club to Middle Brighton Baths return

Many local bicycle user groups have regularly rides you could join. This is a great opportunity for you to get used to cycling in a group.

[<Click here to find a BUG or Club near you>](#)

## Six-week beginners program for 20km ride

Week	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total Km
1		5		5		8		18
2		5		10		10		25
3		5		10		5		20
4		5		10		12		27
5		5		10		15		30
6		10		5		20.6*		35.6
						* Race		

**Note:** If you are only able to train once Mon-Fri and twice on weekends, do the Tuesday session on Sunday and try to do the Thursday session on Wednesday.

### Exercise Intensity

- **LOW** - an easy session focussing on keeping your legs spinning fast (around 80 revolutions per minute). Able to chat easily.
- **MODERATE** - an even pace holding a higher heart rate. Puffing

quite a bit. Can still chat, but not as comfortably.

- **MODERATELY HARD** - solid session where it is hard to talk and you should feel quite tired at the end. These workouts are really good for improving your fitness.