

# Commuting and Shopping by Bicycle

Presented by:

PSFC Shop & Cycle Committee

Five Borough Bicycle Club ([www.5bbc.org](http://www.5bbc.org))

Slides available online at [5bbc.org/courses/](http://5bbc.org/courses/)

# Why commute via bicycle?

- It's flexible – you can go anywhere, anytime
- It's nice to be outside
- It's good exercise
- It's a statement (political, environmental, lifestyle, fashion)
- It might save you money
- It might save you time
- It's fun!

# Bike Commuting – the basics

- a bicycle
- a route to work
- a place to park (and/or lock) your bike
- a way to deal with workplace or school expectations (i.e. cleanup of sweat, changing clothes)

# The Bike

- Any bike will work, but...
- Streets can be bumpy – fatter tires fare better
- Flat or upright handlebars give a better position for watching traffic
- Fancy bikes might not be suitable for outdoor parking
- Commuters usually carry stuff – you'll want a rear rack, bike bag, basket, pannier, etc.

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# The Route

- Get the NYC bike map (free at any bike shop)
- Use the NYC bike map recommended routes
- Google Maps has a bike route planner
- Plan more than one route for variety's sake
- Try the route on a weekend or non-workday so you'll know how long it takes, and won't get lost your first day biking in

# Riding in Traffic – Be Like a Car

- Know and obey the traffic rules – NYS drivers manual: <http://www.dmv.ny.gov/dmanual/>
- Signal your intentions – always be predictable
- Claim your lane – don't ride in the "door zone"
- Get (and use) a rear-view mirror
- NEVER pass a bus or truck on the right
- Beware drivers & peds on cell phones, peds hailing taxis, buses near bus stops
- Don't take honking or harassment personally – laugh it off

# Bike Commuting – the basics

- a bicycle
- a route to work
- **a place to park (and/or lock) your bike**
- a way to deal with office dress code (i.e. cleanup of sweat, changing clothes)

# Bike Parking

- Thanks to NYC law, most garages and parking lots accept bikes, but it's often expensive
- Edison ParkFast – all outdoor lots \$1/day
- NYC law mandates bike access for any building with a freight elevator, upon tenant request
- Ask your building staff / managing agent / facilities manager. Don't take "no" for an answer

# Bike Parking Rates



# Street Parking

- In Manhattan, you need a secure lock
- Case-hardened chain with heavy padlock, or
- U-lock plus cable w/padlock, locked separately
- Don't leave easily-removed accessories on the bike (pump, lights, bags, etc.)
- Secure seat with bike chain loop if needed
- Always lock both wheels
- Check for surveillance cameras

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# Office Decorum

- Some people bike in their work clothes, and go slow enough to not build up a sweat. This works if trip is  $< 5$  miles and no major hills
- Pants clips, skirt seats, chain guards, Dutch bike features protect your clothes from the bike
- You can stash change of clothes at the office
- Sponge down in bathroom, re-apply deodorant
- Gym membership near job
- Jackpot – employer-provided showers!

# Contingencies

- You will get caught in the rain one day – keep a rain shell in your bike bag
- Carry a few Ziploc bags for emergency cell phone protection
- Carry flat fix basics, and a wrench if you have hex nuts on your wheels
- Bikes permitted on the subway 24/7 – be polite and don't squeeze into a crowded car

# Grocery Shopping by Bike

- Lots of ways to carry stuff – front/rear baskets, front/rear panniers, box on rack, trailer, cargo bike, backpack, shoulder bag, dangle bag
- The lower the weight is carried, the better the bike handles
- Avoid backpacks, it's easier if the bike carries the weight
- Make sure cargo is secure, won't fall out over a bump, no dangling straps or bungies

# Rear Basket



# Box on Rear Rack



- Box attached with bungee cord and packing strap
- One pannier

# Box on Rear Rack II



- "Rat-trap" rear rack
- Box attached with spring clip and bungee
- Cyclist also has backpack

# Freestyle

- Shoulder Bag
- Wrist Dangle



# Packing the Bags

- Heavy/sturdy stuff at the bottom of the bag
- Light/fragile stuff on top
- Backpack (or lightweight "string backpack") can hold fragile items like eggs and light but bulky things like paper towels, bread, cereal boxes
- For overflow, hang a tote bag on the handlebars (but watch out for wheel rub)

# Tower of Groceries



- Box secured with bungies
- Milk crate secured with more bungies
- But load is top-heavy

# Touring Bags



- Front and rear panniers
- Top of rear rack can hold even more stuff
- While shopping, panniers can hook onto sides of shopping wagon

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Questions or comments welcome! Send them to: [eravin@panix.com](mailto:eravin@panix.com)