



CYCLING FACT SHEET No. 55

Tag-along bikes great for in-between ages

A tag-along is a single-wheeled bicycle for young children that attaches to the seat post of an adult bike, thereby converting it into a type of tandem.

They are ideal for children in the four to seven year age range who are too large for a child carrier seat or trailer, but not yet ready to ride on their own beside the adults.

Tag-alongs can be easily transferred from one bicycle to another, making them a good solution for situations where one person drops a youngster at childcare or school and another person collects them.

Most models can be folded and easily stored in the boot of a car.

All tag-alongs have a maximum weight limit that is usually printed on the frame and it is important that this not be exceeded as it can stress the main bicycle.

Just as with a two-wheeler, the child needs to be able to reach the pedals comfortably so it may be necessary to adjust the seat height.

Having a tag-along attached requires some adjustment to the way you ride. Corners need to be taken wider and slower, with more care required for stopping because the additional weight increases braking distances.

As with trailers, the extra length created by a tag-along means more time must be allowed when crossing a road.

It also takes a little bit of practice to get used to the slight side-to-side rocking action that can occur at low speeds, but after a few tries an adult rider quickly learns to adjust their balance to compensate.

Tag-alongs come with a fixed handlebar that is only supposed to function as a handgrip, so the child should be told not to try and steer because this can make the adult rider unstable.

Because they sit low, tag-alongs may not be readily visible to car drivers. For that reason, a safety flag should be fitted if any riding will be done on roads.

Although they are fine for most seat-posts, it is not recommended to fit tag-alongs to the new high-tech carbon-fibre posts – take your bicycle with you to a bike shop and the staff will be able to advise you if it is suitable.

It is also a good idea to fit a full mudguard to the rear wheel of the adult bicycle so that the young tag-along rider doesn't get splattered with mud when the route is wet.



This fact sheet is one of a series dealing with the use of bicycles for recreation and transport in Western Australia. The series looks at a range of cycling-related topics including ride routes, touring tips, maintenance, safety, road rules, insurance and product reviews. You can find more cycling fact sheets online at www.transport.wa.gov.au/cycling

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