

Equipment Checklist

www.bikeMSnorthwest.org

By purchasing the necessary items well in advance, you'll have time to use them on training rides. A classic mistake is to buy something brand new and wear it or put it on your bike for the Bike MS Ride, never having tested it.

- Helmet – When you ride in the Bike MS Ride it is mandatory to wear a (CPSC, ANSI, ASTM or SNELL) helmet.
- Shorts – Cycling shorts are not a gimmick! They are keys to minimizing chafing and other discomforts when sitting on a saddle for any length of time. Good shorts have a large, smooth, lightly padded liner (“chamois”). If you don’t care for the body hugging look of Lycra, opt for the “baggie” mountain bike style that looks like casual shorts but still has a liner. Being a loose fit, though, means they could bunch uncomfortably during long rides.
- Jersey – A cycling jersey with three rear pockets is handy for carrying snacks, your wallet and other items. Summer jerseys are usually made from a material such as CoolMax® that wicks moisture away from the skin, keeping you drier and more comfortable.
- Gloves – Short-finger cycling gloves absorb perspiration for a safer grip, protect against raw spots, prevent blisters and pad your palms to reduce road shock.
- Shoes and socks – Dedicated cycling shoes, either for road riding or mountain biking, are the best choice. Cycling specific shoes have firm soles that let you press as hard as you want without feeling uncomfortable pedal pressure. You can use mountain bike style shoes with or without toe clips and straps, or with clipless pedal systems. Plenty of casual riders simply wear running shoes, but their softness makes them less suitable for longer distances. Socks are important for comfort and sweat absorption.
- Sunglasses – It’s best to use a sports model with unbreakable lenses that have 100% UV protection. Styles that have interchangeable lenses can accommodate different degrees of sunlight for the best visibility.
- Sunscreen – Your eyes aren’t the only things that need sun protection. On the Bike MS Ride your skin may be exposed to burning rays for 8 or more hours. Apply a sweat resistant sports sunscreen before getting on the bike each morning, and carry a tube in your jersey pocket or seat bag so you can apply more at rest stops. Choose SPF of at least 30 (45 is better). Don’t forget your ears and behind your knees. For lips, use a lip balm that has SPF protection.
- Food and drink – Have two cages on your bike and use tall, 28-ounce bottles. Any experienced cyclist will tell you that a key to successful long rides is staying well fed and hydrated. Bike MS has plenty of snacks and drinks at aid stations, but don’t wait until you stop. Nibble and sip every few miles while riding for maximum sustained energy.
- Repair kit – Your under-seat bag should contain at least one spare tube, a tube repair kit and levers for prying the tire off the rim. You’ll need a pump or compressed air cartridge, unless you’re riding with a friend who carries the right kind for your valve stems. Pack a compact multi-tool for bikes, plus a \$10 bill and some coins for emergencies.