



## ADVANCED CYCLING TIPS

# CLIMBING AND DESCENDING

### Climbing Technique

- Maintain a high cadence to avoid stress on your knees
- Start in a lower gear; upshifts are easier than downshifts
- Keep upper body relaxed; elbows in, back straight, loose grip on the bars

### Climbing Attitude

- Confidence will help you ride the entire hill without stopping
- Be mentally tough and push yourself; the mind tires before the body
- Concentrate on form and breathing; the hill will soon disappear behind you

### Climbing Efficiency

- Eat before you are hungry, drink before you are thirsty; every 20 minutes
- Rests should only last a minute or two; don't let the body think it's over
- Practice breathing and climbing techniques to be more efficient on the bike

### Gearing for Climbs

- A comfortable gear will be a factor of your fitness level
- Choose a gear that will allow you to spin comfortably; avoid excessive knee stress
- Use a lower gear to avoid exhaustion during the climb

### Endless climbs

- Combine sitting and standing to stretch and work different muscle groups
- Concentrate on your breathing; try to keep it at a constant level throughout the climb
- Remember to eat and drink every 20 minutes to maintain energy output

### Speed control

- If you do not know the road or traffic volume, ride with extra caution
- Hazards are harder to avoid at high speed, especially while turning
- Do not overtake motorists unless the road allows it

### Ride predictably

- Remain in the same portion of the roadway down a curvy descent
- Take the lane if you are traveling the same speed as motorists
- Take the lane if the road is narrow and curvy regardless of speed

### Brakes

- Make sure that your brake pads have at least 1/8" of wear left on them
- Brake pads should hit only the rim; pads rubbing the tire can cause a blowout
- There should be 1" or more between the lever and bars with brakes depressed

### Braking technique

- Long descents require uniform pressure on front and rear brakes
- Constant braking can overheat the rims resulting in loss of braking response
- Brake before a curve

### Safety

- Riding upright will increase wind resistance and help slow you down
- Always keep both hands on the bars; slow down if the bike shakes at high speed
- Slow down for wet rides; ask ride leaders about general road conditions

For more  
cycling tips, visit  
[bikeleague.org](http://bikeleague.org)

