



# BEGINNING CYCLING EFFICIENCY ON THE BIKE

## Use lower gears

- Most beginning cyclists push too big a gear; down shift and spin a smaller gear
- Low cadence will cause you to fatigue faster and might cause knee pain
- Try to spin about 90 rpms; you'll have more energy and get a better workout

## Starting

- When stopped, don't push off the ground to get started
- Leave one pedal in the two o'clock position; push down when you are ready to go
- You will have enough momentum to balance and put your other foot on the pedal

## Relax

- You should be comfortable while you ride
- Relax while you ride; it takes energy to grip the handlebar in fear
- Change hand positions often, slightly bend your elbows, stretch your neck while riding

## Don't rock the boat

- Make sure that your saddle height is adjusted properly
- Too high and your hips rock; too low causes knee pain
- You should have a slight bend in your knee at the bottom of the pedal stroke

## Skip the soft shoes

- Soft-soled shoes absorb pedaling energy and slow you down
- Stiff-soled cycling shoes help you transfer more energy to forward motion
- Toe clips and clipless pedals attach your foot to the pedal which increases efficiency

## Red light, green light

- Restarting from a stop uses more energy than a slowing and not stopping
- Time it so that you hit the intersection on green so you don't have to stop
- Make sure that you are aware of how your actions affect other vehicles around you

## Avoid the wall

- Listen to your body while you ride to avoid hitting the wall of exhaustion
- Eat before you are hungry and drink before you are thirsty to avoid fatigue
- If you experience a lightheaded feeling, get off the bike and get some fluids

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

