



You don't have to be an Olympic athlete to **bike to work** – even if you live far from the workplace. Three to five-mile trips made in a city can often be faster by bicycle. If you start within the city limits, the ride to downtown Baltimore is less than 5 miles. So try our 10-step plan for bypassing traffic jams by bicycling to work.

**Gear Up.** If your bike has been in the garage for more than one year, have it checked out by a pro from your local bike shop. For \$35 or so, most shops offer a tune-up to make sure the bike is in working order.

**Check Your Fitness Level.** If you have been on the couch for more than one year, you may wish to consult a physician to make sure you're fit enough to ride.

**Be Safe.** Purchase a Snell/ANSI-approved helmet; a pro from your local bike shop can make sure the helmet fits, and provide guidance on all the gear you need to be safe. For night-rides use a headlight and reflectors, and wear bright and/or reflective clothes.

**Select a Route.** Design a route by looking at a street map. Then research the route on foot, via bus or car; look for extra wide travel lanes, good pavement conditions and low traffic volumes. Be sure to note on-street parking along the route, and on-street parking restrictions too.

**Contact a Bike Mentor.** For advice you can consult a bike commuter you know, or find a Bike Mentor you can talk to by visiting [www.bike2workcentralMD.com](http://www.bike2workcentralMD.com). Our team of seasoned volunteer mentors can help you with route planning, clothing selection and more. You still need to pedal though!

**Consider Multi-modal Connections.** If you live more than 10 miles from work, public transportation can shorten the bike ride. Some MTA stations feature bike racks and secure bike lockers; Frank Bowles at MTA, 410-767-3440, can provide more information on bike locker reservations. Bikes are permitted on Metro and Light Rail, and approximately ¼ of MTA busses are equipped with bike racks. In addition, MARC trains allow passengers to carry-on folding bikes. For more details on bikes on public transportation, download this MTA brochure: [http://mtamaryland.com/resources/bikesonmta/MTA\\_Bike\\_Brochure.pdf](http://mtamaryland.com/resources/bikesonmta/MTA_Bike_Brochure.pdf).

**Take a Test Ride.** Ride the route on your bike on a weekend prior to riding the route on weekday. Remember, if you plan to ride City streets with peak parking restrictions, you will ride with the cars on a work day.

**Follow the Law.** In most cases, the law in Maryland provides bicycle riders the same rights, and requires the same responsibilities as auto drivers. You must ride as far to the right as possible, and in a single-file line if riding with others. You must indicate turns, stop at stop signs / red lights and follow the rules of the road. And no speeding!

**Talk to the Boss.** If you are unsure, ask your employee human resources manager if your workplace offers benefits for bike commuters, such as lockers, showers, etc.

**Bike to Work on May 19, 2006.** Hundreds of bike commuters will converge on four rallies in the region on the morning of May 6. You can ride solo or in a bike convoy on preferred bike commuter routes led by experienced bicycle commuters. Register at [www.bike2workcentralMD.com](http://www.bike2workcentralMD.com) or contact Jamie Bridges: [biketowork@baltometro.org](mailto:biketowork@baltometro.org) for more information.