

STEP  
BY  
STEP

# KIDS LEARN TO RIDE



*Ready for Fun!*





Tick when you complete a challenge.

# CERTIFICATE TO RIDE

- Sit on a balance bike and walk forward with it
- Use feet to slow down a balance bike
- Glide with both feet off the ground on a balance bike
- Ride around obstacles and change speed on a balance bike
- Ride a pedal bike with assistance
- Stop a pedal bike using the hand and/or pedal brakes
- Start from stationary
- Ride on your own
- Ride around obstacles at different speeds

Great work!



Welcome to the club!

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22 GREAT RIDING  
IN AUCKLAND

Always wear your helmet: it helps protect your head.

Get a new helmet if the inside of your helmet is cracked or broken.

Wear your helmet next to your head: no hats or beanies inbetween.

Anything goes for clothes but keep loose bits well tucked in.

Closed in shoes will keep your feet safe.



**1** The helmet should be no more than two fingers above your eyebrow.



**2** Adjust the straps so the sliding clips sit right underneath the ear lobe so the straps form a 'Y' shape.



**3** The chin strap should not be able to be pulled up and over your chin.

As well as being the law in New Zealand, it's a great idea for everyone to wear an undamaged, well fitting helmet. The helmet must be a certified bike helmet and not one designed for other things like horse riding or cricket.

Check the helmet is in good condition. It doesn't matter if the plastic shell of the helmet is scratched, but it's important to check the polystyrene.

Hold the helmet so the inside faces up. Work your way around the edges, gently trying to pull it apart to see if any cracks appear. If the helmet is dropped, check it before wearing it again. If it is cracked, it will need to be replaced.

### FITTING A HELMET:

- 1.** Place the helmet so that it sits flat with a two finger width gap between the eyebrows and the helmet rim. If the helmet has an adjustable cage at the back, tighten it so that the helmet is snug.
- 2.** Adjust the side straps, checking that there is no fraying or twists. On each side there is a buckle which should sit right beneath the earlobe, forming a 'Y' shape on each side.
- 3.** Tighten up the chin strap.



Get onto the bike to make sure it is the right size. If it's too big or too small it's going to be hard to ride.



Handlebars are easy to reach and turn

Heels are just off the ground when sitting

Stand comfortably over the bike frame



To check a bike for size, make sure your child can comfortably reach the handlebars. They should also be able to stand over the frame with their feet flat on the ground without touching the top of the bike frame, and safely operate the brakes. Some kids bikes have child sized brake levers and you can adjust the reach on them, making them easier to pull in.

On a balance bike, make sure your child's feet can touch and push off the ground while they are sitting comfortably with just a slight bend in their knees.

Take into consideration the weight of the bike, make sure it is not too heavy for your child to control. Added features like gears and suspension add to the overall weight and may not be necessary if your child is starting out.

Kids bikes don't differ in design for boys and girls. It's just a case of what they like the look of and feel excited to ride.

Try a few bikes out for size.



There are lots of styles of bikes to choose from. Check out the range at your local bike shop. It's important to choose a bike your child likes, feels comfortable and confident on and wants to ride!



Use the chart, to check the bike size, or use our AT height chart as a guide



## BALANCE BIKE



SIZE	HEIGHT	AGE (APPROX)
Balance bike	85-110cm	2-5 YEARS
12 inch wheel	85-100cm	2-4 YEARS
16 inch wheel	100-120cm	5-7 YEARS
20 inch wheel	115-135cm	7-9 YEARS
24 inch wheel	130-145cm	9-11 YEARS
26/27.5 inch wheel	145cm+	11 YEARS+

## BALANCE BIKES

Once your child is walking confidently and tall enough, they can try a balance bike. They are fun and allow them to practice their balance, steering skills, and coordination. The child should be able to place their feet on the ground when seated. Find a safe area to have a try and off they go.

## KIDS BIKES

Kids bikes now come in a variety of styles and there are lots to choose from. Most bikes under 20" have no gears. They come with a pedal brake and some also have a hand brake.

Pedal brakes are good for young children while they build up their strength to use hand brakes.

Gears and suspension on kids bikes are optional features and not necessary when learning to ride.

Once they are riding confidently, these features can be considered, depending on the type of riding they are doing.

12"

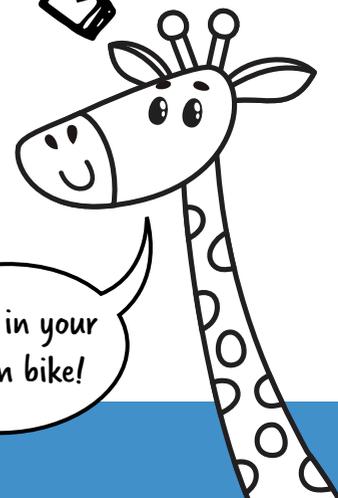
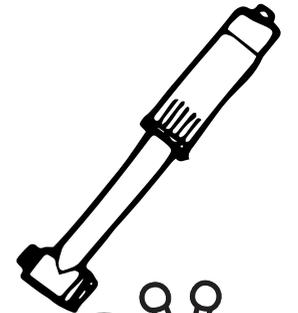
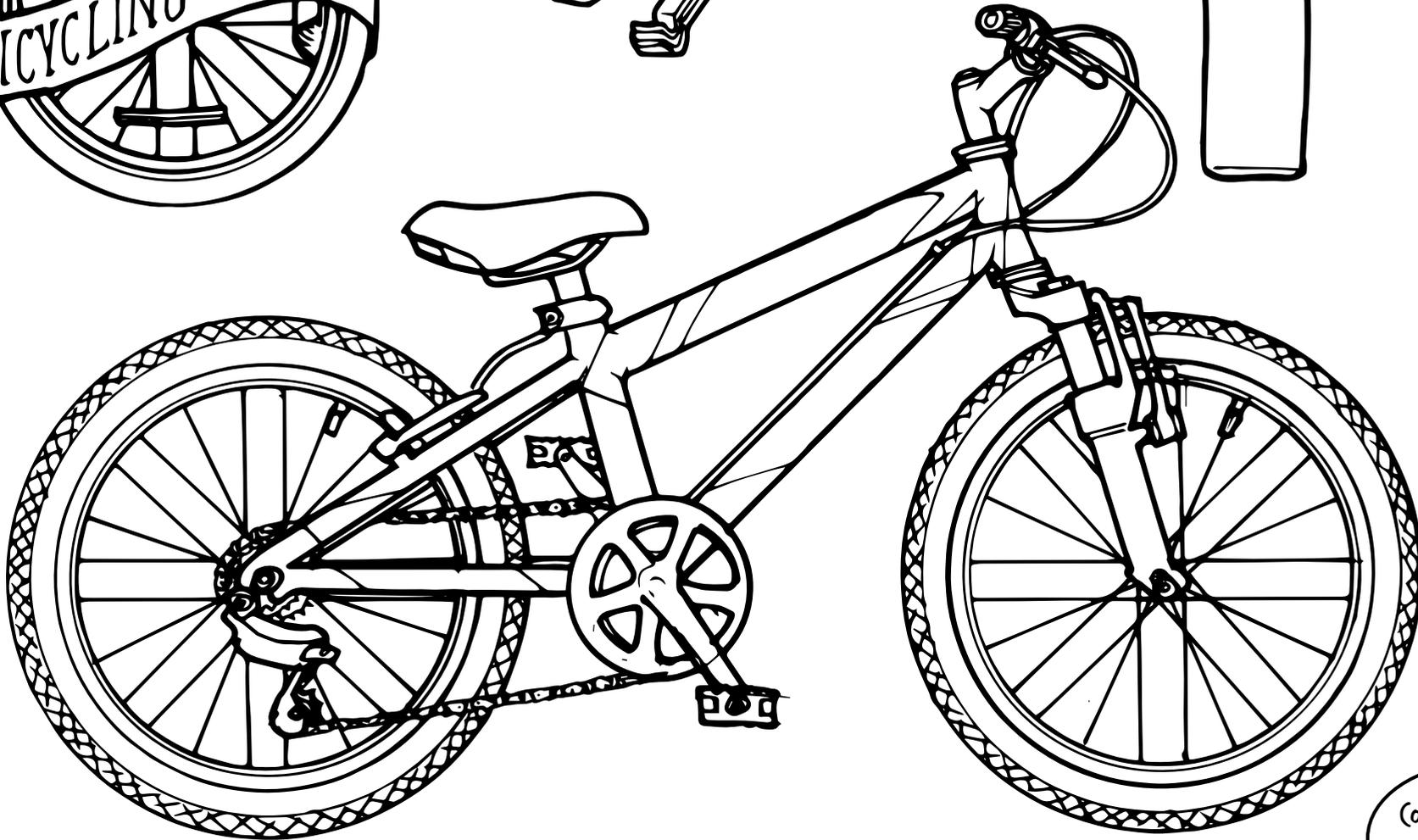
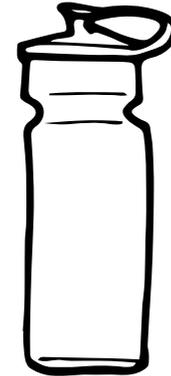
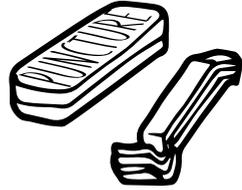


16"



20"





Colour in your dream bike!

## BIKE TRAILERS



▲ Good brakes are essential to control the bike and trailer coming down a hill. Many trailers convert into strollers so you can get more use out of them.

## CHILD SEATS



▶ Make sure to check all hands and other loose items are inside the seat or tucked away and buckled up tight.

## BIKE TRAILERS

Bike trailers are great for transporting kids from nine months to six years. The kids are out of the elements, you can carry extra things and most are fitted with seat belts. If you want to tackle a hilly path, you'll need a bike with gears to make it to the top.

## CHILD SEATS

Kids from nine months to four years (maximum weight up to 18-20kg) get a great view from either a front or rear child seat. The position of the seat affects how the bike handles and how you get your child in and out, so try before you buy.

## TRAILER BIKE



▶ Trailer bikes are able to go almost anywhere and they get your child used to pedalling.

## CARGO BIKE



◀ You can buy a bike to suit your load and many have electric assist options.

## TRAILER BIKE

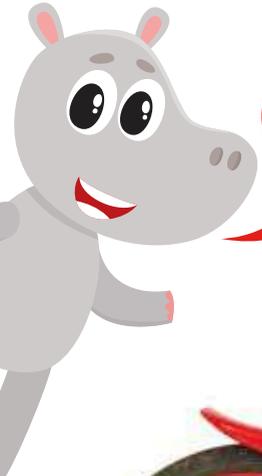
Make the fun last longer for kids that can ride but get tired easily, with a trailer bike. A trailer bike is great for four to nine year olds. The bike has a towing arm instead of a front wheel.

## CARGO BIKE

A cargo bike will get you, the kids and your stuff around town. Many cargo bikes have a large compartment at the front of the bike which often has seat belts and offers your small passengers a great view.



Check your bike before you ride!



Ask an adult to help you with safety checks.



### Brakes



Test brakes individually to make sure they are able to stop each wheel.

### Tyres



Keep the tyres pumped so they feel firm when you squeeze them.

### Chain



Lube bike chains regularly with bike chain lube to keep them running smoothly.

### TYRES

Keep the tyres pumped to the pressure printed on the side wall of the tyre which should make them feel firm when you squeeze them. This protects the rim and makes the bike easy to control. Replace tyres that have no tread or if patches have appeared.

### BRAKES

Test each brake individually to make sure they are able to stop each wheel. For any rim brake systems, when the brake is engaged, the whole brake pad should be aligned onto the wheel rim. Check the pads are not too worn and that the brake lever is adjusted correctly and does not pull all the way into the handle bar.

### WHEELS

On most kids bikes the wheels are secured by wheel nuts. These can come loose over time, and if they are left, they can become so loose that the wheel may fall off. If it has a quick release lever, tighten it up and fold the lever over so it reads 'closed'. It doesn't need to be so tight that it needs a lot of force to undo it. Tighten up any wheel nuts using a spanner.

### CHAIN

Lube bike chains regularly with specific bike chain lubes to keep them running smoothly. If the chain becomes rusty, or warped in any way, you should replace it.



Get riding a balance bike.

1

Focus on a point in front of you.



If you fall, brush it off and get right back up for another go!



2

Use your feet to walk or roll the bike forward and keep looking ahead.



3

When you feel good, start going faster and lift up your feet so you glide.



4

Keep your head up and stay on the seat.



Kids as young as 18 months can get started on a balance bike. How they progress to a pedal bike will depend on their confidence and coordination. The most important part of learning to ride is that it's fun and a chance for freedom and independence. Falling off is part of the process!

Balance bikes are a great way for kids to learn to ride. Because the child doesn't need to pedal they can focus on balancing and steering the bike which help to build confidence. Balance bikes offer independence, and most of the time kids can ride further and for longer than they could on a pedal bike at this age.

If you don't have a balance bike, you can use a regular bike with the pedals taken off. You can start to raise the seat as the child becomes more comfortable. Start on a flat surface and avoid long grass. Encourage the child to start off at a walk and then as they get faster and more confident they can run and glide.

You won't need to steady them with your hands as they can use their feet to take off and stop. You'll know they are confident and ready to progress to a pedal bike when they can glide. Gliding is when they coast along with their feet off the ground.



Once you've got the hang of your balance bike, GET GOING ON YOUR PEDAL BIKE!

Find a nice slope that gets flat at the end



1

Use your feet to walk or glide the bike, just like you did with no pedals.



2

Get gliding and lift your feet up onto the pedals – don't look down!



3

Push your feet down onto the pedals and keep going...



4

Squeeze brakes gently to stop and put one foot down



Find an open, flat and safe space without too many obstacles. Raise the seat for pedalling so they can still touch the ground comfortably. Once they are confident move the seat up to a more efficient pedalling position. Your child will be on the balls of their feet when seated with only a slight bend in their knees.

The hardest thing is to start pedalling from a stop so help them for a while to get started.

Encourage them to 'pedal faster' or 'keep pedalling'. This will help them balance and keep momentum.

Lots of children struggle to understand that they need to keep moving the pedals forward to keep their balance. Often they back pedal which applies the brakes and they fall off. Sometimes, installing training wheels for a short time, helps with this as they put the focus back on learning to pedal to move forward.

Training wheels can be fitted to most 12" and 16" bikes. For some kids, especially if they have coordination challenges, they are a good part of the learning to ride process.

However training wheels often slow down learning the skill of balance. If you do use training wheels, they should be set off the ground and ensure the rear wheel brake works properly.



The next step is to get going from a stand still.

1

Put one foot on the pedal and one foot on the ground



2

Make sure the pedal is in this position



3

Push down hard with your lead foot and off your go!



If the child needs a bit of help, support them lightly on the back of the bike seat.

If the child needs a bit of help, support them lightly on the back or the bike seat. Don't grab the handlebars as this will interfere with their balance. Encourage your child to push down really hard with their pedal foot as this will give them momentum to get the bike moving.

### CYCLING GAMES

**Braking game** – Pick a crack or line in the concrete and the aim is to stop exactly on the line.

**Slow Race** – Mark out a section and ride through it as slow as possible. Keep your feet on the pedals and the bike going straight. Last one to the end is the winner.

**Zig Zag Course** – Set up obstacles like cones in a straight line spread about a metre apart. The challenge is to weave through the course without hitting any of the cones. The obstacles can be bought closer together to make it harder as the game progresses.

**Create an obstacle course** – Use chalk and cones to create a path, ride under a pool noodle arch, ride through a lawn sprinkler or hose.

**Pop the Bubble** – Set out a large area and blow bubbles into it. Riders try and pop as many as they can using their arms, feet and bike.



on shared paths:

- use a low speed
- look out for others
- follow instructions
- stay left



Once your child has learnt to ride by themselves, they still need support. Local schools and playgrounds offer safe environments for your child to continue practising and improving their bike handling skills. It is good to get them practising how to ride at difference speeds, coasting, stopping on a given target such as a line on the ground and slowing down without having to put their foot down.

### RIDING ON SHARED PATHS

Once they have mastered these skills, you can move to riding on shared paths. When riding on a shared path, stay left and ride at a controlled speed.

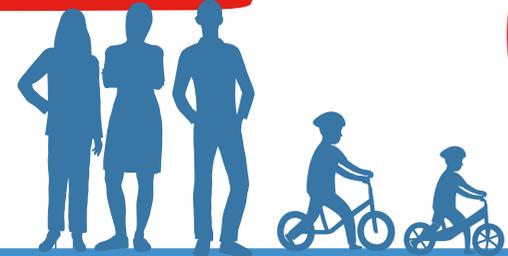
On shared paths you will come across other users such as walkers, strollers and dogs. It's important to give way to others, which is why they are low speed environments.

Before you take your child out into a shared path or footpath, ensure that they are comfortable on the bike and no longer wobble as they ride. They need to listen and be able to control their speed.

They also need to stop when required and be aware of their surrounding, including looking down driveways. Another useful skill is to look back, which allows the rider to glance behind them whilst maintaining a nice straight line.



### STAND & WATCH



Avondale Central Reserve  
 Greville Reserve,  
 Forrest Hill  
 Sir Barry Curtis Park,  
 Flat Bush  
 Onepoto Reserve

### RIDING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

When riding as one adult with children, our suggestion would be for the child to ride at the front of the group. This allows the adult behind them to continually talk to the child about what is coming up, what they should be looking out for and where they should stop. Riding with the child in front does require trust of their skills and listening ability but it does allow the adult to be able to continually watch them.

### RIDE AS A FAMILY



Waterview Shared Path  
 Twin Streams, Henderson  
 Keith Hay Park  
 Westhaven Boardwalk  
 Pakuranga Rotary Path  
 Mangere Bridge to  
 Ambury Farm  
 Orewa Cycleway

Riding with the child behind the adult means the child may easily unintentionally get left behind or they could become distracted without the adult realising. This requires the adult to be continually look behind them but it does prevent the child from taking off down the path. If riding with multiple adults, then having one at the front and back of the group is ideal.

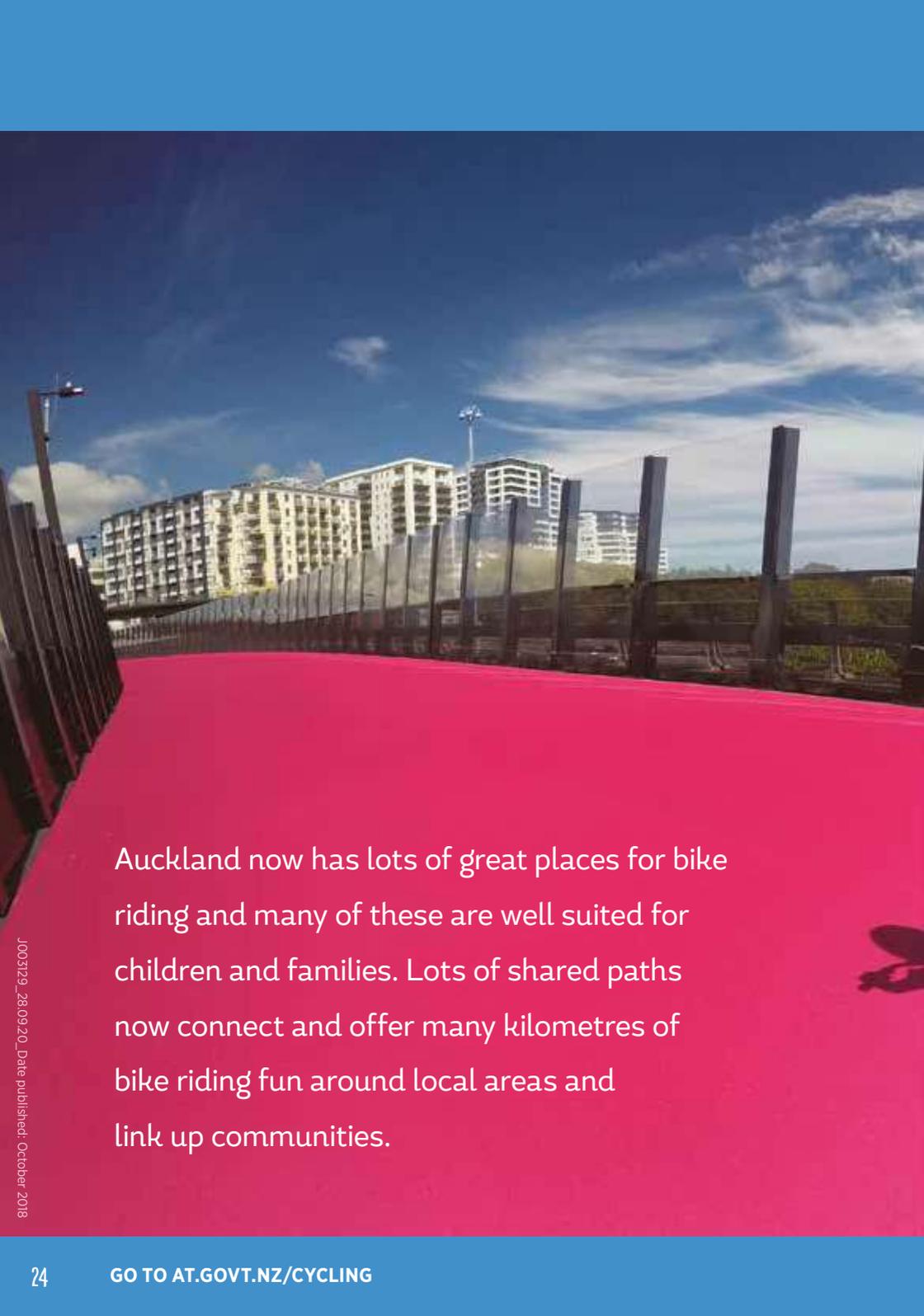
### SKILLS PRACTICE



Grey Lynn Pump Track  
 Birkenhead Pump Track  
 Sanders Reserve,  
 Paremoremo  
 Totara Park Mountain  
 Bike Track, Manukau

Local and school playgrounds are a good place to practice skills.





Auckland now has lots of great places for bike riding and many of these are well suited for children and families. Lots of shared paths now connect and offer many kilometres of bike riding fun around local areas and link up communities.

Bike riding is great for kids. It's fun, builds confidence and coordination and is great exercise. Bike riding is an awesome family pastime and something kids can do with friends for fun, or for travel to school and around the neighbourhood.

This booklet is a step by step guide for getting kids riding. Once they have learnt to ride, there are many places around Auckland for fun family rides where the kids can build confidence and burn off some energy.

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