

BICYCLING IN AMERICA IN 2003



Nearly 30,000 people participate in Bike New York, held in May each year. Photo by Scott Mullen/Ride Magazine.

AMERICA BIKES

There's no question that Americans love to bike. More than 40 million adults – and easily that many children – get on their bikes and ride each month, and studies show that at least one-third of the adult population gets on a bike at least once a year. In 1990, it was estimated that 1.7 billion bicycle trips are made each year and that number has likely grown; the number of bicycle commuters recorded by the US Census rose by 9 percent over that same period.

AMERICANS BUY BIKES

More than 20 million new bikes were sold in 2000, a record high. Throughout the 1990s, sales averaged more than 16 million bikes per year, including more than 11 million “adult” bicycles. The bicycle industry generated sales totaling \$5.89 billion in 2000. More than 5,400 specialty bicycle dealers and 1,000 companies are involved in the manufacture, distribution, and sales of bicycles in the United States.

AMERICANS WANT TO BIKE MORE

Survey after survey shows that people want to ride their bikes more often. Even such critical decisions as buying a home and choosing a community in which to live are increasingly influenced by the proximity of bicycle and walking trails, safe streets, and a livable community. The Monon Trail in Indianapolis is just one of countless examples of new trails exceeding all expectations: the 15-mile trail attracts more than a million users annually and has

**increased property values by
between 5 and 15 percent
along the corridor.**

The most often cited reasons for not riding are fear of traffic, no access to a bike or a place to ride, lack of secure parking, the weather, and distance. Programs to help overcome these obstacles have proven successful. In



Broward County, FL, for example, more than 30,000 cyclists each month take advantage of special bicycle racks mounted on the front of every transit bus and local officials credit the program with halving the number of bicycle fatalities in the county.

Bike sales in the United States

Year	Adult Bicycles Sold (Millions)	Total Bicycles Sold (Millions)
2001	11.3	16.7
2000	11.9	20.9
1999	11.6	17.5
1998	11.1	15.8
1997	11.0	15.2
1996	10.9	15.4
1995	12.0	16.1
1994	12.5	16.7
1993	13.0	16.8
1992	11.6	15.3

Source: National Bicycle Dealers Association

AMERICANS BENEFIT FROM BICYCLING

Bicycling is a quick, efficient, clean, reliable, and economical means of travel. However, the two most common reasons given for riding are that it's fun and it's healthy. While it's hard to put a price tag on happiness, the health benefits of riding are very tangible. People who exercise regularly save more than \$500 annually in health costs, and add years to their life expectancy. As America grapples with a national obesity epidemic, bicycling is one of the simplest and most readily accessible means of helping people get the routine physical activity they need.

More than 700 bicyclists were killed in traffic crashes in 2001. Better facilities, coupled with adequate training and education of motorists and bicyclists, could dramatically reduce this number. But even these figures are dwarfed by the estimated 300,000 premature deaths each year due to a lack of physical activity and the 120 million people who live in communities with poor air quality due in large part to motor vehicle traffic.

AMERICA'S BEST BIKING CITIES

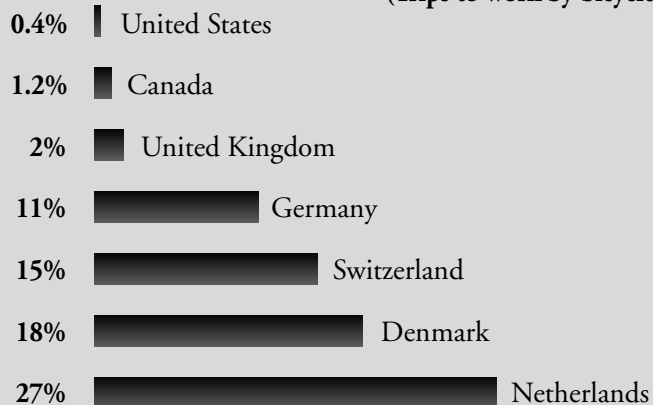
The city of Davis, CA boasts the highest level of bike use in the country with more than 20 percent of trips made by bike. Numerous cities, such as Boulder, CO; Eugene and Corvallis, OR; Chico, Berkeley, Santa Cruz, and Palo Alto, CA; College Station, TX; and Gainesville, FL have between five and ten percent of journeys to work by bicycle, and larger cities such as Sacramento, CA; Portland, OR; Minneapolis, MN; Madison, WI; Tucson, and Tempe, AZ; and St Petersburg, FL have more than two percent of trips by bike.

By contrast, the percentage of trips to work by bicycle is three times higher in Canada than in the US, and significantly higher still in countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and the Netherlands.



Photo courtesy of Bikes Belong.

International bicycling use (Trips to work by bicycle)



Best cities for bicycling

In November, 2001, *Bicycling Magazine* rated the best cities for bicycling in North America.

Best Overall City: Portland, Oregon

Cities with a population between 200,000 and 500,000:

1. Denver
2. Madison
3. Tucson

Cities with a population between 500,000 and 1 million:

1. Seattle
2. Austin
3. San Francisco

Cities with a population of 1 million or more:

1. Montreal
2. Chicago
3. San Diego

Honorable mentions:

Philadelphia, Vancouver, Toronto, Minneapolis