

## What makes a good commuting bike?

Any bike can be a commuter bike, but this model (Trek 7.5 FX, \$909) illustrates options that make the ride, especially a longer one, more comfortable. Wider tires are more impervious to flats and adapt to any terrain, a flat bar encourages an upright riding position for better visibility in traffic, and the ability to attach a rack or fenders gives the bike versatility.

**Helmet light (\$170)** increases visibility to other road users and allows the rider to see in any direction the head turns.

**Mirror (\$14-\$20)** allows a rear view of traffic. It can mount on eyeglasses, helmet or handlebars.

**Sunglasses (\$40-\$150)** cut glare and protect from wind. In the dark, use clear lenses.

**Commuter computer (\$35-\$70)** calculates an estimated arrival time based on speed and provides stats on carbon footprint.

**Bell (\$7-\$10)** alerts others of rider's presence, especially on multi-use paths.

**Gloves (\$20-\$50)** have padding to ease strain on palms and forearms.

**Headlights and taillights (\$100-170)** are necessary before sunrise and after sunset to make the rider more visible to motorists and illuminate the path for the rider.

**Knickers (\$40-\$160)** are designed to support muscles and dry quickly. Most have padding to add comfort.

**Jersey (\$45-\$130)** minimizes perspiration and dries quickly, protects against wind.

# Biking a la mode

Considering bicycling to work?  
Welcome to Bike Commuting 101

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As the sun rises earlier and the weather grows mild, venturing outdoors for the morning commute gets a bit easier. But with the city's recent contributions to bicycle infrastructure, the decision to ride instead of drive can also make that commute greener.

According to the Alliance for Biking & Walking 2010 Benchmarking report, which is funded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Indianapolis was home to about 680 bicycle commuters in 2007. That puts Indianapolis behind 40 of the 51 cities surveyed. That's miles behind Chicago's 13,736 peddlers and even trails Detroit's 812. Apparently, though, Mayor Greg Ballard thinks we can do better.

By the end of 2011, the Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council, a group of local bicycle advocates charged with improving the city's bike infrastructure, anticipates completing 63.15 of the more than 200 miles of bike lanes outlined in a 10-year plan. With that news and the City Market's bike commuter hub due open this summer, you might have thought about getting in the saddle.

But where to start?

In this package, we'll show you what you'll need, follow a veteran commuter, and fill you in on a few how-tos. •

**Seat bag (\$25-\$40)** holds spare tube, tire levers and patch kit.

**Fender (\$16-\$25)** prevents rain, dirt and debris from spraying the rider.

**Rear rack (\$40-\$50)** supports panniers or rack packs.

*Kelly Crimmins, a clothing buyer at Bicycle Garage Indy, models the kind of gear used by many serious commuters.*

**U-lock (\$18-\$35)** is best for security, since it won't scar the frame and is tough to saw through.

**Panniers (\$40-\$150)** can carry larger items like clothing or groceries. Look for waterproof materials like these made of recycled inner tubes.