

6. Starting, stopping and controlling your cycle

National Standard reference: 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2

Instructing points

Starting and stopping

- Set your pedal to the start position by hooking your toe under the pedal.
- Look all around (and at the last moment behind) to check it's clear to set off.
- Release your brakes and push down on the pedal to set off.
- Choose a suitable place to stop and look behind before stopping.
- Slow down before you stop by gliding and using both brakes.
- Stop your cycle using both brakes and then put your foot down.

Peddalling, making the cycle go where you want it to

- Pedal when you want to accelerate or if necessary to maintain speed.
- Glide to help you slow down and when going around tighter corners.
- Cover both brakes with your fingers while riding and squeeze them when necessary to slow down.
- Decide when you should be covering your brakes.
- Ride straight and change direction.
- Carry out wider and tighter turns as well as U-turns.
- Look behind before changing position or direction in order to check it's clear.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars while turning.
- Vary your speed using your brakes.

Additional resources

 **Video: Set off, slow down, pedal and stop**

 **Video: Pedal(general)**

Activity ideas

Demonstrate getting onto your cycle and setting the pedal. Then ask riders to practise this. Coach them to do this with one foot, practising all together. Then task them with setting the pedal without looking down.

Ask the riders if they can spot any hazards in the training area. Then demonstrate starting, riding along, changing direction and stopping. Ask riders to observe where your hands are, where you are looking and where your feet are.

Set out this activity as a point-to-point exercise, with as many riders as you can meaningfully assess starting at once so you can carry out an initial assessment of their cycling. This enables you to quickly move into snaking-based activities, or activities that involve riding around a rectangle.

Activity ideas (continued)

Next teach riders responsibilities for riding in a group:

- Remain behind the rider in front. If they slow down or stop, you need to slow down and stop too.
- Keep a cycle length between you and the person in front.
- All riders have responsibilities to make their own decisions when cycling in the group. Do not just follow the person in front!
- Support each other.
- Look towards the shoulders/head of the person in front (not at their rear wheel) to judge distance.

Ask the riders to cycle around a circuit where they take turns leading the snake. Your instructing position should normally be on the outside of the space so you can clearly observe the riders.

Consider calling individual riders out of the group and asking them to cycle up the centre of the circuit (a central 'path' of cones down the middle of the rectangle can work well for this). They then have to stop for riders on the outside of the circuit who have priority.

Snake around the traffic-free area to practise changing speed and direction, and U-turns. Ask the riders to do this as a group with riders taking turns leading the snake. Prompt riders to check behind whenever they start, stop or change position, to practise observations.

Sample questions to check understanding

- Q. What do you look out for before setting off?
- Q. When should you cover the brakes?
- Q. Why do we look behind before starting or stopping?
- Q. Why do we look behind before changing position?

Differentiation

Inclusion

Riders may have a preferred starting foot. There is no need to insist that they start with their right foot.

If always cycling in the same direction around a circuit of cones, inexperienced riders may get 'locked in' to turning a certain direction. Make sure the riders have a go at regularly changing direction to improve their balance and co-ordination.

Do not insist that riders check their right shoulder before starting a journey (in many cases, such as when riding in a park, a left shoulder check is more appropriate). Instead, coach riders to look over the shoulder where they can best see what is behind.

Differentiation (continued)

Extension

Simplify

Some riders may need help to set their pedal; they can set it before getting on their cycle with their hands or foot.

On a pedal cycle, set this to the position the rider feels most confident starting in.

Challenge

- Set the pedal with one foot and without looking down.
- Stop with pedal set ready to start again.
- Be able to start with left and right foot.
- Carry out tighter turns/U-turns.
- Riders remember to look behind before starting, stopping or changing their position without instructor prompting.

Risk benefit assessment

Risk

- Riders may find it difficult at first to ride in a group.
- Riders may struggle to carry out tighter turns.

Mitigation

- Consider starting with a linear activity until they are more confident. Ask the rider to first build up their skills on the side of the training area, or ask them to be positioned at the rear of the snake for group riding exercises.
- Start with wider turns first and coach riders to slow down before turning, and to turn their head in the direction they wish to move to help their balance. Use a circuit that allows for differentiated activities including wider or tighter turns.

Benefits

Riders are supported to develop their skills and technique so they can ride effectively in a group and join in with various activities.