

The Many Types of Bikes

There are many bicycles, and most of them are appropriate for commuting. Some of them, however, are better than others. It is best to start commuting with whatever bicycle you currently have available (as long as it is correctly sized), but once you feel more comfortable commuting, you might want a new bicycle to improve your commute. Each type of bicycle has its pros and cons, and it is most important to choose a bicycle that works for you.

Have your local bike shop fit the bike to you and opt out of the releases if you know you won't need to make frequent adjustments, as it will make it more difficult to steal.

Mountain Bikes



Mountain Bikes are primarily designed for off-road use. As such, they have heavy, durable frames, wide tires and components that can take a beating. Generally, these bicycles are slow and make for poor commuting due to their weight, but the wide tires and suspension components can be an asset in urban areas with large potholes and uneven streets. (\$-\$\$\$)

Road Bikes



Road Bikes are designed for speed, featuring lightweight frames and components, skinny tires and aggressive geometries. These

bicycles are generally good for commuting because of their speed and gearing that is set up well to tackle hills. Skinny tires, however, can present problems when dealing with rail road tracks and potholes, and many of the less expensive bikes can be rough riding on uneven surfaces. (\$-\$\$\$\$)

Fixed gear (or fixies) are a type of bike with a single gear ratio that you have to constantly peddle in order to ride. They can be based on any type of bicycle frame. Fixies have both their positives and negatives - they are good exercise and easy to maintain, but do not have breaks and can be hard on your knees. We recommend single-speed bikes instead, as they have the same benefits as fixies, but allow for costing and come with breaks.

Hybrid Bikes



Hybrid Bikes are halfway between mountain and road bikes. Hybrids are generally lightweight with medium width tires and an upright seating position. These are excellent for commuting because of their weight, speed, durability and comfortable riding position. (\$-\$\$)

Commuter Bikes



Commuter Bikes are often based on hybrid and/or road bikes and come already with fenders, racks and chain guards. Their

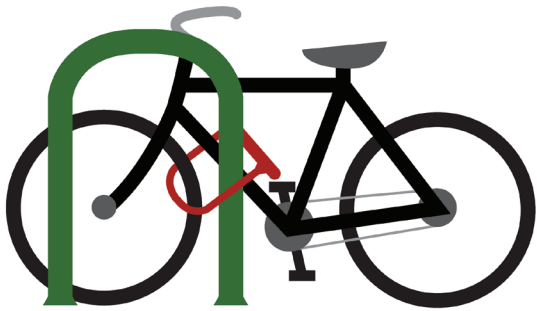
relaxed seating position makes them very comfortable for commuting, but many of the less expensive models feature simple drive trains (gears, breaks, chains) that are best over flat and short rides. These bikes are a good choice for new cyclists with a short, easy commute. (\$-\$\$\$)

Folding Bicycles



Folding Bicycles work well for commuters who need to get on trains or trolleys for most or part of their commute. Folding

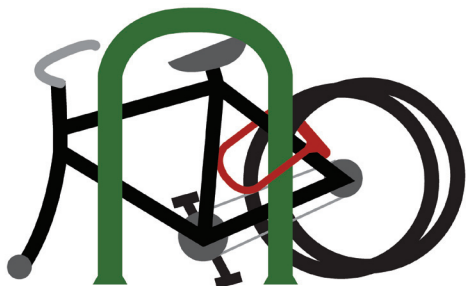
bikes are often steel-framed bikes with smaller tires and simple (but durable) drivetrain components that fold quickly for easy storage and transportation. In Philadelphia, these are the only bicycles that can be brought on all forms of public transportation at all times of the day. These bicycles, however, tend to be relatively heavy and slow, reducing their utility for some commuters. New designs with lighter-weight materials and simpler folding mechanisms are starting to come on the market, offering a new alternative to commuters. (\$-\$\$\$\$)



1

Properly Locking your Bike

Buying a bicycle is always an investment. Protect it by properly locking it up. Be sure to secure the frame and at least one wheel when leaving their bicycle in a public area (1). Securing the front wheel is better when only one is an option, as the rear wheel is more difficult to remove. People leaving their bicycle in a public place for a long time should make sure that they secure both their wheels and frame with the bicycle lock (2). We recommend using u-locks over cable locks due to size, weight and security advantages.



2

Shop Around!

Always be sure to shop around when purchasing a bicycle. There are many dealers, brands and styles to choose from. Once you have an idea of what kind of bike you want, find a dealer and go for a test-ride to see how to compare different bikes and test fit.

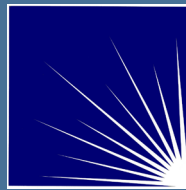
For more information, please visit
Commuter Connections's website at:
commuterconnectionPA.org



CommuterPA



@CommuterPA



Clean Air Council
Suite 300
135 South 19th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 567-4004
cleanair.org

Register your Bike!

Bicycle commuters should register their bicycle with the National Bike Registry in order to increase the chances of recovering their property in the event it does get stolen. To register your bike, go to:

• www.nationalbikeregistry.com/



Commuter Connection Tips and Tricks:

Types of Bikes

