

A Place to Learn

Look for a smooth concrete or wooden floor area clear of obstructions. It must be smooth and level, any pebble or dip will knock you off when you are beginning.



Ideally the area should have a solid rail or bar at about elbow height to hang on to, but a tennis court fence will do. If riding inside, make sure that the unicycle has plastic pedals and a non-marking tyre.

Getting On

The wide part of the seat is the back. The pedal marked "L" should be on the left, "R" on the right.

Use the quick release to adjust the seat height. When seated, with the heel of one foot on a pedal in its lowest position, your leg should be almost straight.

With your feet flat on the ground, pull the seat up between your legs. Spin the wheel so that the pedal is in the 4:00 position.

Put both hands on the handrail or fence and pull yourself upright, stepping lightly on the closest pedal. The wheel should rotate slightly underneath you. Place your other foot on the top pedal.

Pedal ¼ turn again to get your feet horizontal (pedals are both the same height above the ground).



Moving Along

Use the "step by step" method: with horizontal cranks (feet both at same height off the ground) make sure your weight is on the seat, back is relaxed but straight, head is up, eyes looking forward.

Take one "step" by quickly pedalling half a revolution. Check for correct posture and balance, then take another step. Pause between steps to check again for posture. As confidence grows, do two steps, then three steps.

Gradually rely less and less on the handrail: simply running a hand along it, or only briefly touching it for balance when needed.

Mental Checklist
- Eyes forward
- Weight on seat
- Sit up straight

Common Problems



Problem: Falling off Forwards.

Solution: Pedal Faster, Sit Up Straight

Bring your centre of gravity back over the axle by pedalling a bit faster. If you keep leaning too far forward you will have to pedal faster and faster until your legs can't keep up.

Problem: Falling off Backwards.
Solution: Pedal Slower, Sit Up Straight
Bring your centre of gravity back over the axle by pedalling a bit slower or leaning slightly forward.



Problem: Falling off Sideways.

Solution: Look and turn in direction of fall
Keep pedalling! Turn by pointing your knees / hips into the fall. Try to stay on for as long as you can. Wave your arms around for balance if needed. Style comes later!

Next Steps

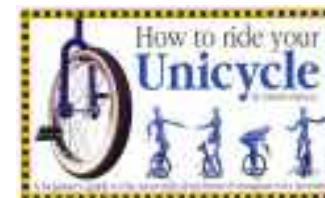
When you can move away from the rail, set yourself some challenges. Here are some ideas:

- Stay on for as long as possible (count the pedal revolutions).
- Ride in a three metre diameter circle. Often school tennis or basketball courts have convenient paint markings, or you could draw one with chalk.
- Ride in a figure eight in the same space.
- Ride in a straight line for the length of the court.
- Learn to free mount (get on unassisted by a wall or fence).

Just get out and ride. Time in the saddle is important. Ride with others; play the sports or games listed in the FAQ on our web site: www.unicycle.co.nz; try working your way through the Ten Unicycling Skill Levels at www.unicycling.org/iuf/levels; join the NZ Unicycle Federation: www.unicycle.org.nz.

Need More Help?

These books are available on our web site:



Full of useful tips and tricks for learning, illustrated with very humorous (and cool) 3D marionette style figures. Explains riding backwards, one-footed, wheel walking and many other unicycle skills. An essential for beginners and full of challenges for more seasoned riders.



Designed for school teachers, packed with tips on getting children up and active on unicycles. Safety, assessment, skill building, individual and group activities, maintenance, project suggestions and much more.

Unicycle.com
0800-UNICYCLE

Congratulations!

You are about to take your first steps into the One Wheeled World. Unicycling is fun. It's great exercise. It's good for balance, coordination, agility. It's a challenge for the mind too: overcoming the fear barrier to ride a steep bank, jump a large gap, land a difficult trick. The unicycling community is positive, encouraging, supportive, and very passionate about the sport. Thank you for joining us!

This guide will give you the basics of getting on and riding around. Most people will achieve basic riding ability within a very short time. What to expect:

1 hour: Able to sit on the unicycle and move along while holding a wall or rail.

2–5 hours: Able to leave the rail and ride around on a smooth surface. Must return to the rail to mount.

10–15 hours: Can perform controlled turns, beginning to attempt basic tricks like free mounting.

Note: these times may vary significantly depending on age and individual ability.

Safety Equipment

Wear comfortable clothing suited to moderate outdoor exercise. Trousers will protect your legs from grazes. Sneakers or soft shoes will protect your feet. Tuck the laces in so they don't get tangled in the pedals. Jandals or sandals may get caught and cause a nasty fall. A standards approved cycle helmet is highly recommended. Some people wear wrist guards or gloves.



Safety is more than having the right gear. It's an attitude too. Don't try this at home, folks!

Inspiration

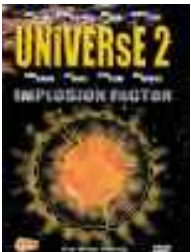
A selection of products available on our web site.



One Tired Guy: Kris Holm and Nathan Hoover ride Mexico: from a wild descent down the south face of it's highest volcano, to the rooftops of Mexico City. An extraordinary collection of action and adventure films! (DVD)



Into the Thunder Dragon: Kris Holm and Nathan Hoover tackle thousand year old trading roads in a trek across the remote Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan. Parts of Bhutan had never seen wheeled traffic before these two visited. (DVD)



UNiVERsE 2 Implosion Factor: the follow-up to the breakout extreme unicycling video UNiVERsE, hits the scene with the most progressive, technical, and extreme riding to date. Eight of the world's best riders showcase the emerging sports of street, mountain, trials, and flatland unicycling.

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Learn to Ride Guide



A Guide to taking your First Steps into the One Wheeled World