

8 Ways to survive cycling in winter



1. Winter is coming, so make sure you're still bike ready!

If you're cycling after dark be sure to use lit front and rear lights and have a red rear reflector – it's the law!

2. Winter in Scotland can be cold. And wet.

Gloves and a decent (water and wind-proof) jacket are essentials, while base and mid-layers can help you to stay warm. But beware of overheating; it's easy to get hot while burning those calories, even on the chilliest of days.

3. Unless you're planning a career in professional mud wrestling, invest in a good set of mudguards.

Invest in a bucket and a good chain lube. A bucket of hot soapy water and a sponge gets your bike clean. Invest in a good chain lube, ideal over the winter months as they work well in adverse conditions.

4. When it's slippery, get grippy.

Cycling without sensible tyres is a recipe for disaster. Winter weather can make cycle paths mucky and slippery, so cycling on a thin tyre is not the best idea as your grip on the ground will be diminished. If possible you should opt for a tyre with wider and deeper tread patterns, ideally one that you can use all year-round which can save you the hassle of changing them every winter.

5. 'Speed 3' isn't auditioning anytime soon; give yourself some extra time to get to your destination.

Be prepared to take it slowly. Traffic jams, heavy rain and ice can reduce your speed right down, and unless you have some particularly creative excuses for being late, give yourself some leeway.

6. Motivation

Getting motivated to get out on your bike by yourself throughout winter can be tricky, even after that third box of 'Miniature Heroes'. Have a look online or speak to a local cycling group and find yourself some cycling buddies. Cycling can bring numerous benefits. It saves you money, it's pleasant and can improve your mood, and it's a great way to reduce stress and clear your mind. Not to mention the health benefits!

7. Be prepared for the unexpected

Winter weather can bring unexpected issues such as punctures. Make sure you always have a spare tube and a pump in your bag. Getting puncture resistant tyres can be a good idea! Also, make sure you plan a sensible route and follow the weather forecast before riding out.

8. Food and drink

It's usually good to have a snack or some energy bars with you, especially if you are cycling over a long distance. Keep drinking regularly, too, as fluid loss happens at any temperature, so it's a good idea to stay hydrated.

Before you go out, make sure to always [check your bike is safe and ready to go](#).

Happy cycling in winter!