

How to Choose the Right Bike Size

With the increased popularity of buying bikes online comes also the increased interest in finding out the right size of a bike for a bike rider without being able to “try” the bike.

Choosing the right bike frame size is also important for your overall comfort when cycling as well as for reducing the risk of injury and preventing long-term wear and tear on your body.

There are many ways to measure a bike and to complicate matters many manufacturers use their measurements and charts plus mountain, hybrid, and road bikes all have additional specific ways to measure frames

This guide will talk you through the basic measurements and provide links to websites covering more specific and detailed ways to choose the right bike size for your body.

We hope it will help you to confidently buy one of our bikes from our [online shop](#)

1. Basic bike size measurements

Knowing your size and measurements is an integral part of choosing the correct bike frame size.

This chapter will take you through the 3 main measurements you should familiarise yourself with before you buy a bike online.

These 3 measurements are included in all descriptions of all our bikes which you find on our [online shop](#)

Further minor adjustments can be made with stem length and saddle setback.

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1. Seat Tube Height



Although not very accurate bikes are still measured mainly by the bike frame size, which is the length of the seat tube. This is the vertical tube beneath the seat which runs down to the point where the crankshafts and pedals are attached to the bike frame. The length is measured from the top point where the seat is attached, to the bottom bracket where the crank is bolted to the frame.

The *length* of the frame will increase in line with the height of the seat tube which is still the reference for the frame size

Frames for Mountain and Hybrid Bikes are usually measured in inches whereas Road bikes are generally measured in centimeters.

The generic frame size chart below will indicate rider height for these standard frame sizes.

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Rider Height		Suggested Frame Size		
Feet and Inches	Centimeters	Size	Inches	Centimeters
4' 10" - 5' 1"	147 - 155	XS	13 - 14	47 - 49
5' 1" - 5' 5"	155 - 165	S	15 - 16	50 - 52
5' 5" - 5' 9"	165 - 175	M	17 - 18	53 - 54
5' 9" - 6' 0"	175 - 183	L	19 - 20	55 - 57
6' 0" - 6' 3"	183 - 191	XL	21 - 22	58 - 61
6' 3" - 6' 6"	191 - 198	XXL	23 - 25	61 - 63

2. Standover height

Stand-over height is measured from the ground to the top of the top tube and the theoretical perfect height for you is your inseam plus 2-4 centimeters.

This extra gap will give you just enough space to be able to jump off the saddle without hurting yourself on the top tube.



To find the right standover height you'll need to know your height and inseam measurements. Most people will know their height but might be less familiar with their inseam.

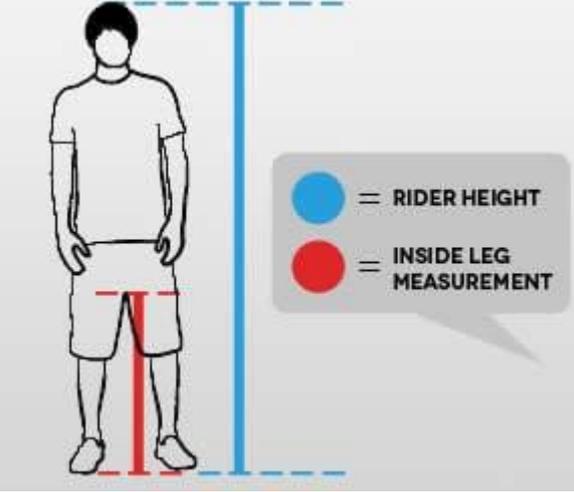
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The inseam measurement is the most important of the two. Don't base this measure on your trouser size; you want to be as precise as you can be.

Here's how to measure your inseam	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand straight with your back against a wall and your feet hip-width apart. • Use a book to mimic your bike seat by placing it between your legs, against the wall. • Measure the distance from the top of the book (where your crotch is) to the floor. 	

This is basically what you're doing when you're trying out a new bike: standing over the bike with just enough space to be standing on the ground with both feet.



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3. Effective Top Tube Length



An important, and often overlooked, measurement is the top tube length. You may have long legs and a short torso (or vice versa), which means that you'll be leaning into the handlebars too much, causing unwanted tension in your neck, shoulders, and lower back.

The next thing to be aware of is that there is a difference between the actual and the effective top tube length. Measuring from the center of the head tube along the top tube to the center of the seat tube gives you the "actual" top tube length. Measuring horizontally from the top center of the head tube to the spot where the seat tube is intersected gives you "effective" top tube length.

For modern bikes, effective top tube measurements have become the more useful measurement as more and more bikes are designed with sloping top tubes. It is more commonly used since they offer a more consistent way of measuring the perceived horizontal length of the top tube on bikes having compact frame geometry.

The below table gives you an indication of a suitable rider's height based on the effective top tube length of a bike.

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Riders Height	Bike size		
	Centimetres	Feet and inches	Effective top tube length
148 to 152	4ft 10in to 5ft 2in	47 to 48cm	XS
152 to 160	5ft 0in to 5ft 3in	49 to 50cm	S
160 to 168	5ft 3in to 5ft 6in	51 to 53cm	M
168 to 175	5ft 3in to 5ft 9in	54 to 55cm	M
175 to 183	5ft 9in to 6ft 0in	56 to 58cm	L
183 to 191	6ft 0in to 6ft 3in	58 to 60cm	XL
191 and up	6ft 3in and up	61cm to 63cm	XXL

2. Other useful websites

Identifying the right bike size can be a challenging exercise.

The above measurements are tools that can help break down the key measurements but when you have the intention to spend many hours daily and weekly on your bike you might want to dig a bit deeper to be confident that you buy the right bike.

The following are sets of websites that can help you with that task

1. [Competitive Cyclist](#) introduced this calculator which tells which size for a road, mountain, or hybrid bike would suit you based on your measurements
2. [Bike Chaser](#) offers an easy-to-understand explanation with additional tips and tables
3. [Cyclist Hub](#) has dedicated an entire website to the issue of “choosing the right bike size” with plenty of relevant information, charts for road, mountain, and hybrid bikes, and a calculator
4. [Bike Hike](#) produced a set of video clips to explain and visualise all the different bike measurements
5. [Bike Chaser](#) also looked into other factors such as saddle, handlebar, and cleat position which can help you enjoy your time on your bike.
6. [Cyclingnews](#) Thorough document with a description of all measurements written for the pros amongst us

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