

Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Once a child is ready to try pedalling, these games will support them to make the transition from scooting to pedalling – with no stabilisers in sight!

When pedalling without help, the activities will help children to improve their skills and become confident and happy riders who want to spend time on their bike.

At the end of this set of games, there's a series of challenges to complete. Let's go!



Skills 2 Ride – Pedals

The Skills 2 Ride – Pedals games and their focus are:

- **Pedal and glide** – I can pedal and glide.
- **Zig zags** – I can ride in a zig zag.
- **Corner explorer** – I can cycle around right and left corners.
- **Limbo** – I can ride and duck down.
- **Foot down** – I can pedal continuously.
- **Ups and downs** – I can ride standing up out of my saddle.
- **Wave and go** – I can take one hand off the handle bars while cycling.
- **Figure it out** – I can cycle in a figure of 8.

There are short videos showing each of these games in action on readysetrider.co.uk



These materials have been developed jointly by British Cycling and the Youth Sport Trust. The activities can be delivered by any responsible adult who feels confident to use them, but they are not designed for the running of formal coaching sessions unless the person overseeing those sessions holds a relevant qualification.

Creating a safe space in which to carry out any activity is important and if at any time you feel that an activity is not within your capability and safety may be compromised then you should stop the activity immediately. Please contact the British Cycling education team if you have any concerns.

The rider

Do you want to learn to ride a bike?

Have a go at all these games and try to get your family to do it with you!

We will help you to pedal a bike all on your own and then get really good so you can explore on your bike and go on really fun bike rides.

Parents and families

We want you to be the one to help your child learn to ride a bike.

There is no rush to do any of this; your child will learn at their own speed. Don't compare them to others.

Whether you are a mad keen cyclist, haven't ridden for years or haven't had the chance to learn yourself, these games and guides will help to break everything down into easy-to-follow steps.

Playing with more than one rider?

All of the games can be played with a group of children, where it's easy to scale up for a group of friends, whole class, or perhaps a Brownie or Cubs pack.

Remember, you can organise a large group into small groups, playing different games and rotating around. Learning together is often even more fun!

Families can easily make up a group; it isn't always about children of the same age together, and we bet that there are games in here that any adult would find a challenge!



Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Knowing when a child is ready to try a pedal bike



Ask these questions...

- ✓ Are they taking great big long strides while scooting on a balance bike, putting their feet up and gliding easily?
- ✓ Are they turning and cornering easily, at speed and with confidence on their balance bike?
- ✓ Can you access a pedal bike small enough to let them have a go?
- ✓ Remember, no stabilisers – they will undo all the great balance work.
- ✓ Do they want to try?

Don't rush the pedal stage. It can take time to learn to pedal, become stable and be confident. Even once they are pedalling it is still great fun to go back to the balance bike again.

If they are not quite ready, have a go at some of the games and challenges from [Skills 2 Ride – Balance](#).





Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Let's get pedalling!



Make sure they are sitting comfortably and ready to have a try at pedalling.



It is really important you don't hold the saddle or the handlebars when you support a child to start pedalling. If you do this you won't let them find their own balance and it will stop them progressing.



If they need your support, hold gently at the top of the back, cradling the bottom of the neck with one hand. Or if you find this too hard then cradle them gently under the armpits. Don't tickle, though!

Put the pedals level, get feet on and then for most children an initial push on a flat area or gentle downhill slope will get them gliding as they did on the balance bike.



If this isn't enough then you can walk or run beside them, holding as gently as possible to let them gain confidence.



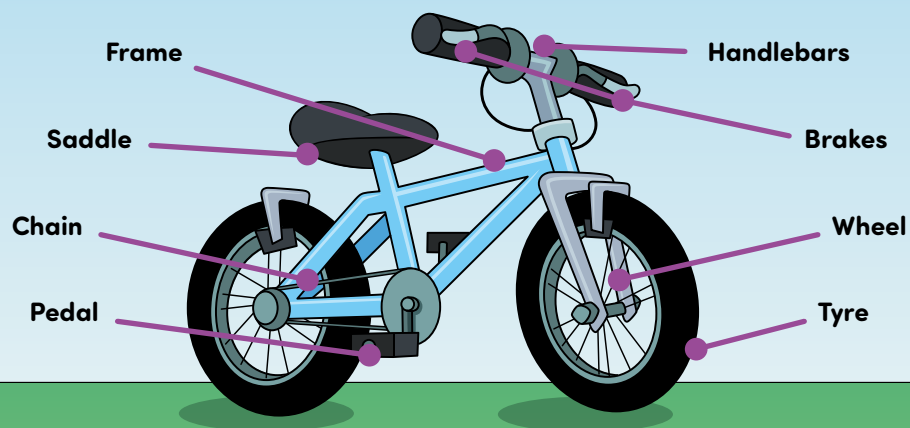
Describing what pedalling feels like can be hard but the motion of pushing and turning should come naturally.

Most children will get themselves started by scooting with their feet to get up to speed then popping their feet on the pedals.



The progression once they are confident enough and strong enough is to learn the 'pedal ready' position with the pedal at 2 o'clock. Then tell them to 'push down hard' and get the pedals turning.

Getting set up and ready to go...



Setting up your bike

Setting the seat and handlebar height is important to get your child in the best position for riding. On most bikes you can adjust the height of the seat and the handlebars. You may need some tools for this – either an allen key or spanner.

The handlebars should be set at a height that allows your child to be in full control; just above belly button height when sitting on the saddle is a good guide. If the handlebars are too high or too close to the body then it makes turning and balancing much harder to master.

When your child is learning to pedal, they may need the seat a little higher. They should only be able to place the balls of their feet on the ground, not the whole foot. If the seat is too low there won't be enough room for your child's legs to spin round and it is then really difficult to push hard on the pedals.

Pedal bike check

Things to check before you ride:

- ✓ The tyres are firm and full of air.
- ✓ The front and back brakes work and stop the bike from moving.
- ✓ The handlebars don't wobble.
- ✓ The pedals and the bits they screw into, called the cranks, are not wobbly.
- ✓ The bike seat is not moving at all and is done up tightly.
- ✓ Turn the chain round backwards by turning a pedal to make sure it runs smoothly.

If your bike needs a bit of fixing, a family member may be able to help. If not, there are friendly mechanics working in bike shops.



Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Getting set up and ready to go...

Helmet and clothing check

Wearing a helmet is a personal choice for your family. While we recommend that you and your children use one while on a bike, do make sure it fits properly. If not, a helmet can be uncomfortable to wear and your children may push it out of place, high on their forehead.



Check there is no more than two fingers' width between the eyebrows and the front of the helmet.

Check that the chin strap is tight; two fingers should fit comfortably between the strap and the chin.



Check that the strap forms a V around the ear on both sides. Shake the head – the helmet shouldn't wobble.



When it is cold, consider some well-fitting warm gloves with grippy palms. Hands get cold very quickly on a bike, and that is no fun. Wrap up warm! A well tucked-in scarf is a good idea to keep out draughts. Longer thick socks are great for toasty toes and can double up for tucking trousers into, keeping them out of the way of chains and spokes!

Getting on and off a bike



On

- Hold the bike handlebars from the side, squeezing the brakes.
- Lean the bike slightly towards your body and lift your leg nearest the bike.
- Bend your standing leg slightly while your other leg is lifted and swing it over the back of the bike seat to reach the other side.



Off

- Hold the handlebars and squeeze the brakes.
- Place both feet flat on the floor and stand up.
- Bend one leg slightly and lean the bike slightly towards the bent leg.
- Lift your other leg, swinging it over the back of the bike and bike seat to reach the other side.
- Practise this several times to build confidence.

You can make it into a fun game by playing musical bikes together, getting on and off the bike as the music stops. Try getting on and off on both sides!

1 Skills 2 Ride - Pedals Pedal and glide

Centre of foot
on the pedals



✓ Now I can...
Pedal and glide

Things you may need

- Chalk, jumper, water bottle as glide line marker.

Safety

- Keep head up and fingers covering your brakes.

Easier

- Choose when to glide, by not using the glide line.
- Put feet down whenever needed.
- Use a slight downward slope to help with movement.

Harder

- Use a slalom route.
- Travel faster to the glide line.

Let's go!

- Mark a 'glide start' point.
- Ride towards the 'glide start' point.
- On reaching it, lift feet from the pedals and glide as far as possible.
- Repeat, aiming to increase distance each time.



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Wibble wobble and Scoot, stride and glide games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.

Pedal and glide

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

What can you do next time to help you glide for longer?



Social Me

Why is asking others for help a good idea when learning a new skill?



Healthy Me

What happens to your breathing when you play this game, and why?



Physical Me

What can you do with your body to help yourself balance when gliding?



Creative Me

What games could you create which include gliding?

What else are riders learning from the pedal and glide game?

- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Planning

- ✓ Judgement
- ✓ Self-challenge

If playing with a group

Play side by side with other riders.

Create a challenge:

Whose glide distance improves the most each time?



Cycling connection

BMX riders pedal as fast as possible at the start of a race and freewheel (glide) through most of the course.

Out and about

Go out in the rain and glide through puddles without getting your feet wet.

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Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Zig zags

Smooth movements

Look ahead

✓ Now I can...
Ride in a zig zag

Let's go!

- Create a slalom course.
- Weave in and out of the markers.
- At the last marker, turn and repeat the course, returning back to the start.

Things you may need

- Jumpers, beanbags, piles of leaves or similar to use as markers.

Safety

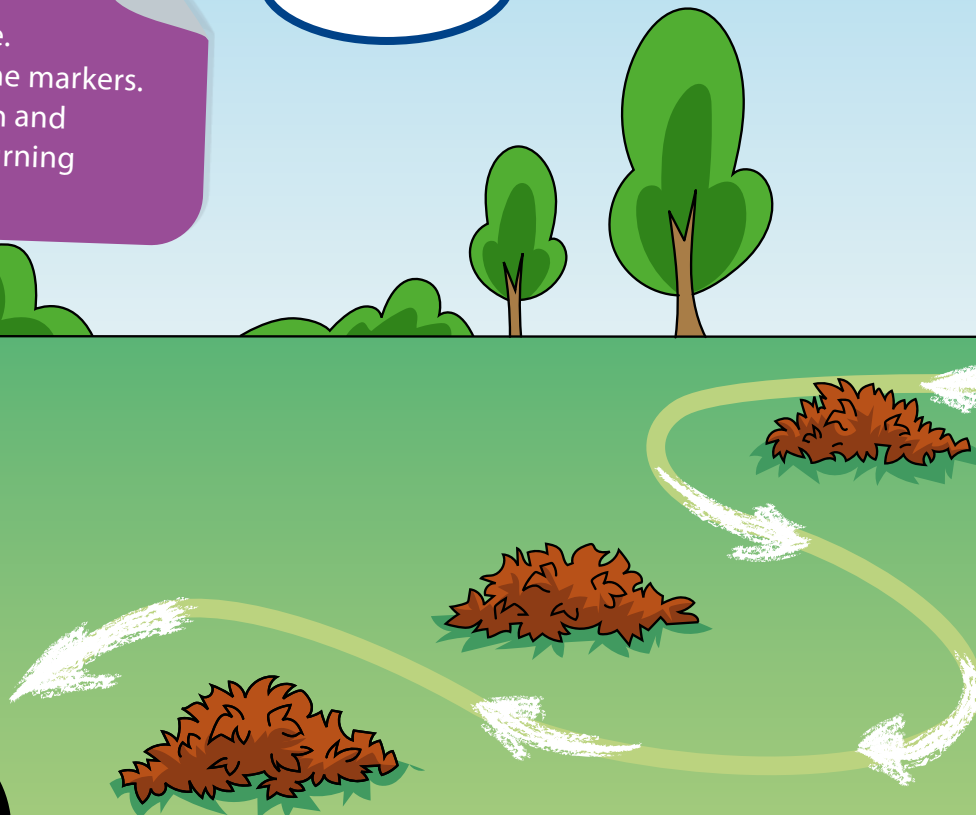
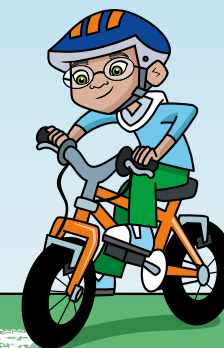
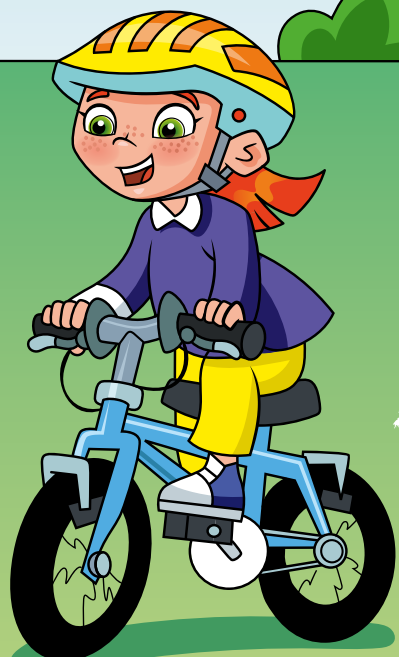
- Keep heads up and do not look at wheels.

Easier

- Increase the distance between markers.
- Increase width of slalom.
- Put their feet down when needed.

Harder

- Reduce distance between markers in the slalom.
- Pedal at the start and then freewheel through as much as possible.
- Create a slalom course on a small incline or decline.



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Criss cross and Box the lot games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.

Zig zags

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

When might you need to be able to change direction quickly when cycling?



Social Me

Why is celebrating your (and others') success important?



Healthy Me

Why does your heart rate go up when playing this game?



Physical Me

Why is it important to keep your eyes looking forwards in the direction of travel?



Creative Me

How can you create a challenge for yourself?

What else are riders learning from the zig zags game?

- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Resilience

- ✓ Self-challenge
- ✓ Direction

If playing with a group

Set up a number of slalom routes.

Stagger the start so more riders can ride behind each other down the same route.

Create a challenge:

Who can slalom the most accurately?

Cycling connection

Mountain bike riders have to be able to shift their weight to ride through tight turns in both directions.



Out and about

What can you find to ride around?
Can you cycle around trees and bushes?

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Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Corner explorer

✓ Now I can...
Cycle around right and left corners

Let's go!

- Create an S shaped route.
- Pedal along the flat part and free wheel/glide around the corners.



Slow before the corner

Keep pedal on inside of corner up as turning

Things you may need

- Jumpers, cardboard boxes, water bottles as markers to show the corners.

Safety

- Enter the corner at a steady speed.

Easier

- Use wider corners.
- Cycle more slowly.

Harder

- Use tighter corners.
- Increase the number of corners.



READY SET RIDE



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Criss cross and Dot to dot games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.



Corner explorer

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

How can different sized corners change the speed you need to cycle?



Social Me

Why might you need to leave space between you and other riders if you are not riding alone?



Healthy Me

Why is it important to slow down before a corner?



Physical Me

What is happening inside your body when you are being active?



Creative Me

What could you use to create a route with lots of corners?

What else are riders learning from the corner explorer game?

- ✓ Judgement
- ✓ Timing

- ✓ Shape
- ✓ Direction

If playing with a group

Create longer routes and stagger the start times of riders.
Play in pairs with time gaps between each.

Create a challenge:

Which rider shows the best technique each time they turn a corner?



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Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Limbo



✓ **Now I can...**
Ride and duck down

Things you may need

- Twig or branch, metre ruler, cane, umbrella.

Safety

- Make sure the barrier is not fixed in place.

Easier

- Try the action without a barrier.
- Travel slowly in a straight line to the barrier.
- Raise the barrier higher.

Harder

- Travel faster towards the barrier.
- Approach from an angle.
- Lower the barrier.

Let's go!

- Create a barrier for riders to duck under. Stick out an arm and hold a long twig/branch.
- Ride towards the 'limbo barrier', and glide as you get nearer.
- Move the body into a position low enough to glide under the barrier.



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Scoot and limbo and Wibble wobble games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.

Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Limbo

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!

Thinking Me

What can you do to improve your limbo next time?

Social Me

How does playing this game make you feel, and why?

Healthy Me

How does this game get the blood pumping around your body?

Physical Me

How do you keep your lower body still during this game?

Creative Me

Where might be a good place to play this?

What else are riders learning from the limbo game?

- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Communication

- ✓ Judgement
- ✓ Review

If playing with a group

Set up more barriers (if enough helpers).
Take turns.

Create a challenge:

Who can travel under the lowest barrier?



Cycling connection

Mountain bikers need to be able to move their body weight to control the bike over the lumpy ground.

Out and about

Can you ride under a willow tree with low branches? Use your imagination – what could you pretend to ride under?

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Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Foot down

✓ Now I can...
Pedal continuously



Look where you need to go

Relax your grip



Things you may need

- Water bottles or similar to mark area.

Safety

- Ensure area is clear of obstacles.

Easier

- Make the area bigger.
- Allow feet to be placed down an agreed number of times.

Harder

- Introduce instructions such as "stand up on pedals" or "ride one handed".
- Make the area smaller.
- Ride more slowly.

Let's go!

- Mark out a small area, for example half the size of a tennis court, 3 x 3 metres.
- Ride continuously without going out of the area or putting feet down for as long as possible.



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Speed it up, slow it down and Dot to dot games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.

Foot down

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

When might you need to raise a hand or arm when riding?



Social Me

Which hand signals in cycling help others to know what you are doing?



Healthy Me

How does this game make you feel and why?



Physical Me

What can you do with your body to keep your balance when riding with one hand?



Creative Me

Why might awarding points each time you lift a hand help you to succeed in this activity?

What else are riders learning from the foot down game?

- ✓ Spatial awareness
- ✓ Decision making
- ✓ Resilience

If playing with a group

Increase the area, play in a small group, avoiding other riders or going out of the area and not putting feet down where possible.

Create a challenge:

Who is the last person to put their foot down?



Out and about

This is a great game to play in busy areas like public parks (avoiding all the people).

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Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Ups and downs

Even pressure
on both pedals

Stand tall,
look forward



Let's go!

- In a space, ride while sitting in the saddle.
- Follow the instructions:
 - "Let's climb" – Pedal faster or stand up and pedal.
 - "Downhill" – Freewheel while standing up on the pedals.
 - "Back in the saddle" – Return to pedalling while seated.

✓ Now I can...
Ride standing up
out of my saddle

Things you may need

- Nothing.

Safety

- Allow riders to progress at their own pace.
- If using a decline, riders need to use both brakes to control speed.

Easier

- Cycle in a straight line on flat ground.
- Return to seat when unable to stand on pedals.
- Use slight downhill route to help with momentum.

Harder

- Use small slopes to provide a hill-like environment.
- Speed up the instruction giving.



READY SET RIDE



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Speed it up, slow it down and Scoot and limbo games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.



Ups and downs

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

How does pedalling out of the saddle help you ride uphill?



Social Me

Why is it important to listen carefully when playing this game?



Healthy Me

Which muscles do you use most when cycling out of your seat?



Physical Me

What leg action will help you to stand up on your pedals?



Creative Me

How can you make this game more challenging?

What else are riders learning from the ups and downs game?

- ✓ Listening skills
- ✓ Decision making
- ✓ Perseverance

If playing with a group

Play in groups following each other.
Play in pairs as 'follow the leader'.

Create a challenge:

Who can follow the instructions well?
Play "Simon says".

Cycling connection

Tour de France riders ride out of the saddle when climbing hills.

Out and about

This is a great game to play in a park with a windy twisty path.



7 Skills 2 Ride - Pedals Wave and go

Don't look at your hand



Sit tall

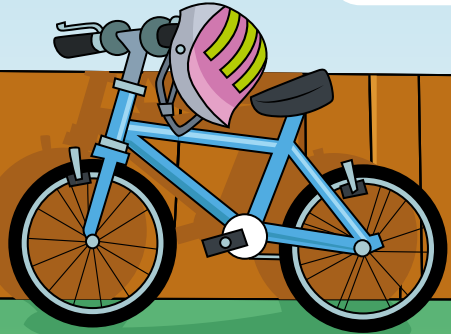
✓ Now I can...
Take one hand off the handlebars while cycling

Things you may need

- Nothing.

Let's go!

- Cycle and, when ready, lift one hand from the handle bars and replace it.
- Progress to lifting a hand and waving.



Safety

- Riders progress at their own pace.

Easier

- Start by riding with fingertips only on one hand before lifting it.
- Freewheel instead of pedalling when raising the hand.

Harder

- Lift hand for longer.
- Try with each hand.
- Try high fives.

Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Wave and go

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

When might you need to raise a hand or arm when riding?



Social Me

Which hand signals in cycling help others to know what you are doing?



Healthy Me

How does this game make you feel and why?



Physical Me

What can you do with your body to keep your balance when riding with one hand?



Creative Me

Why might awarding points each time you lift a hand help you to succeed in this activity?

What else are riders learning from the wave and go game?

- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Spatial awareness

- ✓ Risk taking
- ✓ Resilience

If playing with a group

Play in a line with riders following each other to raise a hand as they go past the helper. Play in a space, with riders waving to each other as they pass.

Create a challenge:

Who is showing the most courage to lift their arm each time?



Cycling connection

All bike riders have to be able to ride one handed to signal to other road users or to perform tasks like reaching for a water bottle when riding.

Out and about

Ride past a hedge and brush the leaves with your fingers.
Can you scratch your nose with one hand?
Stopping on your bike at a pedestrian crossing, can you reach up and press the button?

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Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Figure it out

✓ Now I can...
Cycle in a figure of 8

Let's go!

- Create a figure of 8 shape line on the ground, or use objects to be cycled around.
- Cycle in a figure of 8 shape.

Slow before you turn



Things you may need

- Chalk for drawing arrows. Use two safe objects for riders to ride in a figure of 8.

Safety

- Look out for other riders when others are cycling.
- Be prepared to stop for others riders.

Easier

- Make the figure of 8 bigger or wider.
- Place feet on the ground for support when needed.

Harder

- Reduce the size of the figure of 8.
- Complete more than one figure of 8 at a time.



Watch the video!

You can see this activity in action at readysetrider.co.uk/pedals.



If you need more help with this game

Try the Criss cross and Dot to dot games from the Skills 2 Ride - Balance activities.

Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Figure it out

The following questions can help riders develop their knowledge, understanding and cycling skills. Great for use in the home or at school!



Thinking Me

Why might starting at different points on the figure of 8 make the game easier or harder?



Social Me

How can following someone help you to achieve a figure of 8 shape?



Healthy Me

How do you feel when you improve at this game?



Physical Me

What can you do with your body to keep your balance when riding around a figure of 8?



Creative Me

What other shapes could you cycle round?

What else are riders learning from the figure it out game?

- ✓ Numbers
- ✓ Shapes

- ✓ Direction
- ✓ Judgement

If playing with a group

Create a larger figure of 8 and include more riders.

Create more figures of 8 for individual use.

Play in pairs as a 'follow the leader'.

Create a challenge:

Who shows the most determination when it doesn't go as planned?



Cycling connection

BMX and mountain bike riders need to be able to ride around tight corners.

Out and about

What can you find that you can use to create a figure of 8?

Skills 2 Ride - Pedals

Challenges

The following challenges must be achieved before you can download your final certificate.

Have a go and remember that you can use the games in this pack again to help you develop the skills needed.

Now I can...

Pedal and glide



I can pedal then glide for 10 metres.

Have a go at the Pedal and glide game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Ride in a zig zag



I can complete a slalom by cycling around markers over a distance of 20 metres.

Have a go at the Zig zags game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Cycle around right and left corners



I can corner to the left and to the right.

Have a go at the Corner explorer game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Ride and duck down



I can move my full body left, right, forwards and backwards on the bike.

Have a go at the Limbo game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Pedal continuously



I can pedal for 20 seconds without putting my foot down.

Have a go at the Foot down game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Ride standing up out of my saddle



I can pedal on the bike whilst out of the saddle for 10 metres.

Have a go at the Ups and downs game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Take one hand off the handlebars while cycling



I can cycle for five seconds lifting each hand from the handlebars.

Have a go at the Wave and go game to help you to achieve this.

Now I can...

Cycle in a figure of 8



I can cycle round a figure of 8 consecutively three times.

Have a go at the Figure it out game to help you to achieve this.

Once you have completed the challenges, your certificate awaits! Log on and register on readysetrider.co.uk. You will then be ready to enjoy cycling for a long time to come.

For more information on cycling opportunities visit: britishcycling.org.uk