

Cycling in Victoria's parks

fact file

Cycling is a relaxing sport that can be enjoyed for a lifetime; it is a great way to enjoy being in the great outdoors whilst developing an appreciation for nature and the natural environment. Cycling also improves fitness and helps maintain a healthy weight.

Regardless of the type of cycling you enjoy, whether you are with the family or wanting an adrenalin rush, Victoria's parks and reserves provide some amazing cycle trails.

When cycling in parks, it is important to remember that they protect some of the most complete natural ecosystems in Australia. Many trails are also used by people for walking with their families, alone or with their dogs so it is important to be considerate of other trail users as well as the environment when on a bike.

Cycling tips

For your own safety always wear a helmet when riding. Gloves, a drink bottle, bike lock and a puncture repair kit are also handy items to carry when riding a bike. Show good track etiquette by giving way to faster or more experienced riders. Slow down when overtaking other trail users and let them know you're there before you pass. Ride at a pace that allows you to stop within the distance you can see.



Minimal Impact Cycling

When cycling in parks or in the bush, it is important for you to play your part in looking after the environment by following minimal impact guidelines.

These include:

- Only riding on approved trails and try to stick to the middle of the track.

- Cutting corners, riding on the edge of a trail or riding beside steps can widen the trail and harm trackside vegetation.

- Trying to avoid skidding or sliding, particularly on steep hills, as this can damage the trail itself.

- Keeping your speed suitable to the conditions and avoiding riding in wet or muddy conditions.

The Junior Ranger Way

Know before you go, respect parks and wildlife and leave no trace along your way, that's the Junior Ranger Way!

www.rangeroo.com.au

Riding in single file where the track is narrow or when passing other users.

Some tracks have been set aside for riding only, some are shared with pedestrians and some do not allow riding. Make sure you check the track rules before you go to avoid conflict and possible collisions.

In cases of emergency, the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) has created emergency markers to help pinpoint exact locations. Many parks around Victoria have the markers. In an emergency, phone 000 and quote the nearest ESTA marker code and or your exact location.

Some good places to go

There are many great cycling trails and roads throughout Victoria's parks providing excellent opportunities for riding for people of all ages and abilities.

In Melbourne:

The Main Yarra Trail passes through Westerfolds Park where there is a choice of riding through the park's own trail, or carrying on to the city, passing ancient gums, billabongs and into Yarra Bend Park.

The Maribyrnong River Trail runs from Southbank through to Brimbank Park in Keilor where a circuit takes in stately River Red Gums, open grasslands and restored wetlands.

The Dandenong Creek Trail connects a network of parklands including Jells Park, Bushy Park and Shepherds Bush. Enjoy the challenge of the 32 kilometre loop, or simply stay in the parks and enjoy the wetlands and billabongs, the variety of native bird life, picnic areas and playgrounds.

The Bay Trail begins at Cheetham Wetlands and spans north to the City through Williamstown's rich local military and maritime history, Point

Gellibre and the Coastal Heritage Park on the waterfront.

For the more adventurous, Lysterfield Park has a network of recreational trails ranging from easy to difficult, or test your skills on the challenging mountain biking competition course constructed for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. Test your skills or ride slowly and enjoy the native woodland and grassland habitats in the park

The You Yangs are a great spot for mountain bikers with a designated downhill course with natural rock ramps and fast runs. There are also many kilometers of single cross-country tracks providing spectacular views and a wide range of difficulty and speed.

Designated cycling tracks and roads within the Dandenong Ranges National Park also provide a great wealth of tracks amongst the tall mountain ash forests.

Want to Know More?

www.parkweb.vic.gov.au,

For more information about cycling trails visit Bicycle Victoria www.bv.com.au or www.visitvictoria.com

For online interactive bicycle maps, visit www.vicroads.vic.gov.au.