



# PARENT TIP SHEET

## FREEDOM FROM TRAINING WHEELS

Welcome to Freedom From Training Wheels, a program of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition. This workshop will help you teach your child to ride a bike. Our volunteer instructors are on hand to help your family succeed. For a complete schedule of workshops and more information visit [sfbike.org/freedom](http://sfbike.org/freedom).



To get started, let's make a few basic adjustments to your child's bike. How your child's bike fits is a key component to success. Here's what you need to adjust to make your child feel confident and comfortable while learning to balance.

### **Remove training wheels:**

Without training wheels, your child can find her/his center of balance.

### **Lower seat height:**

Your child should be able to sit on the bike seat with feet flat on the ground.

### **Remove pedals:**

By removing the pedals, your child will be free to roll the bike without any pedal interference.

Now you're ready to teach your child how to ride using the "Balance First" method. "Balance First" allows your child to find his/her natural sense of balance on a bike without training wheels or pedals. Once your child is confident gliding and balancing, you'll reattach the pedals so s/he can begin pedaling.

We've broken down learning to ride a bike into three simple steps, on the back of this page!

**Step One:** Finding Balance

**Step Two:** Pedaling

**Step Three:** Starting from a Stop

## LET'S GET STARTED!



# PARENT TIP SHEET

## FREEDOM FROM TRAINING WHEELS

### Step One: Balance First

Explain the concept of “Balance First” this way:

1. Focus on a point ahead and aim for it.
2. Use your feet to walk or roll the bike while looking straight ahead.
3. Go faster when it feels comfortable. When you have speed, lift up your feet and glide.
4. Always keep your head looking up.

Once your child has mastered rolling and gliding, reattach the pedals for the next step. *Avoid reattaching the pedals before your child is ready!*

### Step Two: Pedaling

Explain pedaling this way:

1. Use your feet to walk or glide the bike just like you did without the pedals attached.
2. When you lift to glide, use your feet to find the pedals without looking down.
3. Once your feet find the pedals, keep gliding, then push down on the pedals.

### Step Three: Starting From a Stop

Use these simple steps:

1. Place one foot on the pedal – let your child determine which foot s/he prefers. Have your child keep the other foot on the ground for balance.
2. Just like the past few steps, have your child practice pushing off – but keeping one foot on the pedal this time.
3. When ready, place the pedal at a 2 o’clock position to start and introduce the concept of pedaling while pushing off.



Find information on Safe Routes to School, Bike and Roll to School Week, and more tips on Family Biking at [sfbike.org/family](https://sfbike.org/family).

The San Francisco Bicycle Coalition is a nonprofit advocacy organization promoting the bicycle for everyday transportation. Learn more at [sfbike.org](https://sfbike.org).

