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## 10 Ways Riding a Bike Can Save the World

Strap on your helmet, pull up your pants legs, and get ready to save the world—one pedal at a time.

OPINIONS

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Staff Writer

155 articles, 0 comments



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# 10 Ways Riding a Bike Can Save the World

(and make your life better)



Turns out, biking is not just good for your body and joints, but it's also the best choice for the environment. Here are 10 ways using a bike to get around your city can help save the world—and improve your life in the process.

## 1 Reduces household emissions

Riding your bike to work rather than driving can cut down on your household emissions by at least 6%.



## 2 Reduces traffic, too

Cars produce .97 pounds of pollution per mile annually; bikes produce none. Bikes are also up to 50% faster than cars during rush hour.

## 3 Cuts down on healthcare costs

Biking makes you healthier, which in turns saves everyone on healthcare costs. 30 minutes of biking a day can save you \$544/year this way.

## 4 Takes less to make a bike

Bikes take far fewer natural resources to make than cars, the production of which generates 1.2 billion cubic yards of pollution each year.

## 5 Makes you more productive

When you spend less time in traffic, you have more time to get things done. Plus, biking gives you energy and even makes you happier.



## Saves entire forests



## EMBED INFOGRAPHIC

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<a href="https://www.movoto.com/blog/opinions/10-ways-riding-a-bike-can-save-the-world/"></a>
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Over the past month or so I have been toying around with the idea of buying a bicycle—it would be my first bike in almost 20 years.



Biking

<http://sprawl.org>

So what has spurred my renewed interest in biking, after all of this time without? Mostly it has been my move to [San Francisco](#) and time spent with the eco-friendly [Movoto Real Estate](#) bloggers. See, I come from a land called Texas—where everything is spread out and everyone needs a car. San Francisco, on the other hand, is an ideal city for biking— in fact, along with

cities like [Minneapolis](#), [Madison](#), [Portland](#), [Boulder](#), and [Seattle](#), it is [rated](#) among the best for pedal pushers.

But it's not just all about convenience. Turns out, riding a bike can have a far greater impact (or lack thereof!) on the environment than I ever knew. So if you live or plan on living in a bike-friendly city, check out there 10 reasons that biking it to work isn't just a way to save some time or burn some calories; it is a way to save the planet as well.

And who doesn't want to be a superhero?

## 1. Biking Can Reduce Your Household Emissions

Fun Fact! According to the U.S. Census, about half of all Americans live within five miles of their workplace. If you decide to bike those few minutes rather than sit in your car (and probably in traffic), you could reduce your total household emissions by at least 6 percent. That's because these short, engine "warm-up" trips to the office are actually the worst for the environment.

## 2. Biking Saves Trees

Okay, we've already gone over how biking reduces your carbon footprint, which is beneficial for the environment overall. But more specifically, bicycles reduce the need for clearing land for parking lots. For every one car parking space, 20 bikes can fit easily. So more bikes = less cars = less clearing the beautiful land for asphalt parking lots.

## 3. Biking Reduces Traffic

If you think short drives with engine warm-up are bad for the environment, that's nothing compared to drives spent predominantly in traffic. Not only are bikes 50 percent faster than cars during rush hour, according to an MIT study in Lyon France; but every year, cars sitting in traffic produce 12,140 pounds of pollutants—that's .97 pounds per mile! You know how much pollution bikes produce? None.

In fact, according to experts at UCF, if only 1 percent of those who drive regularly biked instead, automobile emissions would fall by 2 to 4 percent.

## 4. Biking Supports Local Businesses

When you use your car to get around, you're more likely to do silly things like hop on the highway and drive greater distances for your errands. This not only craps all over the environment with CO2 emissions, but with a bicycle, you're more likely to keep things local and support the businesses near you. Studies show that local businesses help to sustain vibrant, compact, and walkable town centers, which in turn, reduce sprawl, habitat loss, and water and air pollution. It's a beautiful cycle.

## 5. Biking Can Make You More Productive



Not only can you zoom past cars sitting in traffic on your bike, and get to work earlier than the rest of those sad saps sitting at the stop light; but you will feel more energized and ready to get to it when you get there. Studies show that biking is just one physical activity that can boost your mental health—not to mention your endorphins, making you happier. And what can you do with all of that renewed energy and spunk? Save the planet.

## 6. Biking Can Reduce Healthcare Costs

Hear me out. Bikers tend to be in good physical shape and are less likely to be obese than motorists. Not only does this mean that bikers will look better in their spandex, but it also means that they tend to cost us—yes, all of us—less when it comes to health care expenditures. According to Good.is, adding 30 minutes of biking daily can save each of us \$544 on healthcare per year.

## 7. Biking Has a Smaller Impact from Production

Because bikes are made out of rainbows and fairy dust. Okay, not exactly—but the production of bicycles has a much smaller environmental impact than the production of cars, which are essentially just mini pollution factories. In manufacturing cars, several tons of waste and 1.2 billion cubic yards of polluted air are generated each year. That's not even including the 40 million pounds of air releases and 24 million pounds of hazardous waste from cars' painting and coating.

## 8. Biking Saves Whole Forests

On an even larger scale, biking can help prevent deforestation, since bikes use much less rubber and fuel/lubricants than other forms of transportation like cars and buses. Each year the huge amount of rubber and fuel/lubricants used in cars clears thousands and thousands of acres of forests for rubber plantations.

## 9. Biking is an Animal's Best Friend

It isn't just air pollution that bikes cut down on; it's also noise pollution. And you know who hates noise pollution? Animals. Humans are really the only animals that will stick around an area so loud with the noise of car horns and engines. Others will flee to quieter areas, and unfortunately, they are becoming fewer and farther between.

Bikes are also good for animals because one happy side effect of biking is a decrease in road kill. In fact, I'd imagine if you hit a deer with your bike, you'd be the one worse for wear.

## 10. Biking Can Fight Crime

Next time you hop on your bike, mentally put on your cape and save-the-world boots, because you're not only helping to save the environment, you're also helping to save lives!

According to the FBI, almost twice as many people die in vehicle crashes per year than by any other form of homicide—about 33,000 last year alone. Do you know how many bicycle crashes kill people each year? 667—almost 100 percent of which also involved, you guessed it, a car.

To put that into perspective for you, mull this over: You have a 1 in 84 chance of dying in a car accident. Your chances of dying in a biking accident, though, are 1 in 4,919.

So I'm not saying that biking makes you superior—it's just that it helps save the animal population, improves peoples' lives, their lifespans, and the health of the planet overall. Plus, it's just fun.

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5 COMMENTS



Donald

October 20, 2013

Mostly nonsense, I'm afraid, especially point #10 which, notwithstanding its daft headline, would seem to imply that there are more bikes than cars on the road.

Reply

Rider

Like Donald I agree, most of those 10 ways are non sense. It is not good for health (need to wear an anti-particule mask to ride among the car traffic) and cost more than cars (3€ of diesel with my car, but more than 10€ for the 1000 kcal I need for the equivalent energy to ride to the office). The best idea would be to tax or increase the cost of carburant.

November 8, 2013

Reply

ciudadano00

Hello. I would like to use part of the inphography as an image in commercial blog. If I link you and also credit the designer, can I do it?

December 11, 2013

Reply

Chris Kolmar

in response to ciudadano00

Sure

December 11, 2013

Reply

Barbara Filet

Actually, people driving inside cars should wear gas masks. They are subject to more tailpipe emissions than bicyclists at the edge of roads.

June 18, 2014

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