

## Hill Climbing - Training Tips For Cycling Newbies

For those who are new to the world of cycling, you will indeed reach a time where you must climb a hill, if not once, more than one occasion. In order to effectively perform this task there are some tips that you should consider so that all of your energy is not lost or displaced while hill climbing. Many cyclists who first start out end up falling into bad habits that hinder their abilities to climb hills and once you have developed a method, it is far harder to break out of it. So be sure to start off on the right foot when it comes to hill climbing. The last thing you want to do is avoid roads with names like Granite Hill, Old Mtn. Road and Rolling Hills Drive.

You will use not only your legs to propel yourself up the hill, but your arms as well. If you are climbing a hill properly you will notice that your arms will be as fatigued as your legs are from pulling consistently on your bars. Try not to confuse 'tugging' from pulling on your bars. Cyclists who have a tendency to tug on their bars end up losing momentum and his body will work unevenly therefore making him more fatigued than it should.

Making your bike lighter for hill climbing is an option that many cyclists choose. They will remove their rear brake since more of the power and control comes from the front brake anyhow, but if you are competing you will have to check the regulations to ensure that you are able to do this and still be eligible to compete. You can use smaller tires, although this move does take some comfort away from your ride, you will not notice as much since hill climbing has reduced speeds of travel. Some riders under 65 kilos will use an old bike seat and remove all the padding to ride the bare plastic mold only. This will be a judgment call on your part if you are able to ride without the padding, by all means, try it. Water bottles and holding cages for bottles are virtually unnecessary for riding trips of 1 hour or less. A cyclist ready for competition should already be hydrated and will hydrate again immediately afterwards, there is no need to take along a bulky water bottle.

Breathing is one of the most important aspects of hill climbing. In order for your muscles to get the oxygen they need to perform, your breathing techniques need to be correct. Be sure to keep your chest open, breathing deeply through the diaphragm (lower abdomen) instead of the upper chest and shoulders. Shallow breathing through the chest can promote hyperventilation since you will have to breathe twice as many times to get the same amount of oxygen as if you had proper techniques in place. Often times more experienced cyclist actually recover on the hills. They do so by breathing deep and expanding the lungs.

The RPMs or revolutions per minute can vary from cyclist to cyclist, but on average are approximately 80 rpm when hill climbing. This can vary due to cyclist body composition, not due to individual power. The important thing is to crank the peddles in an efficient manner. Don't wait until the current gear becomes too hard to churn. That's a bit too late. Generally as the cranks start getting harder try going 10 - 15 more cranks where possible and switch gears. Also focus on pulling the pedals up just as much as you would push them down. One good way to think of it is by pointing your heels down and drive your heels thru the ground on the down stroke. On the opposite end of the stroke focus on throwing your knees into the handle bars. This will force the hamstrings and glutes to work as hard as the thighs do. Otherwise your simply burning your thighs out and fast.

The mental aspect of hill climbing is one of the most important parts. It has been proven that knowing you can perform a task is 95% of the battle, and the rest is physical. So why do people give up so often? Their minds are trained for the event even if their bodies are. You will want to be in the right mind set in order to climb that hill, see yourself advancing, higher and reaching the top with energy to spare and carry you onwards.

### About the Author

Hill Climbing for cycling newbies written by John Finney. John is an avid cyclist and the webmaster of CyclingCheaper.com. [Bike Accessories and Parts](#). John started riding at the age of 39 by joining Spin Classes at the local YMCA. After losing nearly 30 lbs. he decided to give road cycling a try. Joh

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