

Get equipped for your Break the Cycle ride!

Training and fitness

Century (100 miles) Training Plan

If you've never done a century ride (or it's been a while since you have), this is the training plan for you! Over the next 10 weeks, you'll be gradually building your endurance and strength to ride 100 miles – and have a great time doing it! Let's get started!

Unless stated elsewhere in the descriptions, workouts can and should be completed at a comfortable intensity – one step above easy; aerobic; and conversational.

As the weeks progress, feel free to add some hills or higher intensity work during the shorter workouts mid-week. Also, you'll see that each training week starts with a weekend.

Week 1 – This is the week to get reacquainted with your bicycle saddle. The best way to do that is to get in some saddle time! Your goal is three or four rides of an hour each. If you're not ready for that quite yet, it's okay – do what you can, but challenge yourself to get at least one ride of a full 60 minutes.

Training Tip #1 – Quality shorts with a good chamois (pad) make a good deal of difference in how comfortable you are on the bike saddle. With cycling shorts, the general rule is that you get what you pay for. You may also want to have some anti-chafing cream to apply to areas that rub or directly to the chamois of your shorts.

Week 2 – On the first day of this weekend, go for a two-hour ride, followed the next day by a 60-minute ride. Spread out two or three more rides of 45-60 minutes each throughout the coming week. If two hours feels overwhelming, you can ride for an hour, then take a good rest at your turnaround point before heading back home.

Training Tip #2 – Longer rides mean more energy consumed. A bottle or two of water is usually sufficient for an hour-long ride, but as the miles click by, you'll need more in the way of hydration and calories during your rides. Look for easily digestible foods that are easy to carry on the bike.

Week 3 – Building endurance doesn't have to mean increasing the long ride each week. Instead, work on getting two 2-hour rides, plus two to three 60-minute rides this week. Doing the longer rides back-to-back is best, but if you're really wiped out from the first ride, give yourself a shorter ride or a day off between the two longer rides.

Training Tip #3 – Efficiency is key when you're faced with 100 miles of riding. Pedaling cadence (how many revolutions per minute you turn your pedals) is a great place to start becoming more efficient. A good goal is 85-90+ rpms. If you have a cadence sensor on your bike, you'll be able to see where your cadence naturally falls. Remember: better cadence = improved efficiency. Over 100 miles, you'll be thankful for efficiency.

Week 4 – This week's goal is eight to nine hours of ride time. A three-hour ride is a long-ride goal this week, plus a two-hour ride, a couple of 90-minute rides and an easy hour. Three hours on the

bike may feel a little overwhelming just four weeks into training, but remember why you chose to participate in this challenge and use that as motivation during the toughest parts of the training.

Training Tip #4 – It can be tempting to stay home on windy days, rainy days, and days that are colder/hotter than you like. But these are the character building days!

Week 5 – This week's long ride should be three to four hours, plus six more hours of riding spread throughout the week as you make your way to the halfway point of the training!

Training Tip #5 – Use your training time to try out all the things you may want to wear/use/eat when you go for 100. The only thing that should be new on the day you ride 100 miles is the date on the calendar. Practice everything beforehand, so that nothing will be new.

Week 6 – Two long rides this weekend should total 80 miles, divided up however works best for you. Two or three easy rides of 60-90 minutes during the week will help with recovery.

Training Tip #6 – What you eat AFTER your rides is just as important as what you eat BEFORE. Here are three things to remember about post-ride nutrition:

1. Eat something within 15-20 minutes of getting off your bike. Some carbs with a little protein (ideally a 4:1 or 3:1 ratio, but eating something is more important than getting the ratios exactly right). Shoot for a total of 150-250 calories.
2. Eat again within 2-3 hours of the post-ride snack. This can be a bigger snack or even a meal.
3. Replacing water lost through training is hugely important. Be sure to stay hydrated throughout the day.

Week 7 – This week is a chance to recover before the final push. Do one ride of 60 miles, plus three or four (based on how you feel) other rides of 60-75 minutes each.

Training Tip #7 – Got a flat? While flattening during a ride is a bummer, it doesn't need to end your day. To be sure you're prepared on the day of the ride, you'll need an extra tube (or two), a couple of tire levers, and some way to inflate your new tube (for the fastest/lightest set-up, go with CO2 cartridge and an inflator). Even if you flat without knowing how to use all your equipment, you can always ask for help from other riders!

Week 8 – The goal for this weekend's long rides is to spread 100 miles (50/50, 40/60 or 60/40) over two consecutive days. It is especially important to pay close attention to your hydration and recovery nutrition on those two days and one day before and after. Squeeze in one more 2-hour ride mid-week, plus an easy hour on another day.

Training Tip #8 – You're eight weeks into your training. This is when fatigue (physical AND mental) will start to show up. Here are a few ideas you can use to power through:

1. Grab a training partner or two! Having a friendly face next to you even for a few miles can help.
2. Try out a new trail or go exploring!

Week 9 – This weekend should include a ride of 80 miles or 4.5 hours, whichever comes first. This is the last long ride before 100! Complete this ride with as few breaks as possible. Make this a test run for the 100-mile Challenge ride. Eat the same breakfast, wear the same kit, and ride the same pace. Combine this long ride with a shorter 90-minute ride the next day. Two or three 60-minute rides should round out your week.

Training Tip #9 – With a couple of weeks before you ride 100 miles, it is time to make sure that your bike is ready. This is also the time to take stock of anything else that you'll need for the Challenge.

Week 10 – Do a three-hour ride one day this weekend. The rest of the week should be spent doing a few easy rides of around 60 minutes. Spend some time gathering whatever you'll need for the ride, paying close attention to your flat kit, making sure your cleats are tight on your shoes, and ensuring all parts of your bike are in good operating order. Be sure to sleep well this week!

Couch to 200 miles

Lower Body Endurance

1. Ride daily for 60-90 minutes, at least 4x per week. These are higher intensity rides.
2. During your first few weeks outside you should focus on recapturing your base fitness. Ride at zone 2 / zone 3 pace. ([This article explains zones for those newer to cycling](#)).
3. On the weekend, try to mix in a 3 to 4-hour ride.
4. After the first couple of weeks, start riding with higher intensity on your daily rides with short zone 3 and zone 4 intervals, (2-4 mins), short power hills. For the longer weekend rides, mix in some longer zone 3 intervals and hill climbs. Group rides are excellent for this kind of intensity.
5. It's important to build intensity through hill climbs and intervals as we get closer to the ride date. That fitness will make it easier for you to sustain the 18mph pace over 200 miles
6. Ride at least one century ride (100 miles) in May and another in June.
7. The week of the ride, you'll taper by riding easier rides leading up to 'the day of'.
8. Make sure you are stretching both upper and lower body parts. Stretching builds strength. [Here are five great post-ride stretches](#).

Upper Body Fitness

1. Leaning over your bars for long periods of time takes a toll on your upper body. Specifically your triceps, shoulders, and neck. Spending time on your bike definitely helps get your body used to that positioning. However, building strength in your core and upper body will help make the ride more enjoyable.
2. Planks are perfect for building arm, core, and neck endurance. Do 3 sets at 1min three times per week. As we get closer to the ride and you get stronger, move the time to 90 seconds, then 2 mins.
3. Pushups are great for building strength and will set/reps will vary based on your current level of fitness. Try 3 sets of 10 – 20 pushups 3x per week. Increase the reps as you get stronger.
4. [Here's a good video that you can use to strengthen your core](#)

Nutrition and Hydration

1. We provide nutrition and hydration on the ride but you need to get your body used to certain foods on longer rides. We'll provide items such as Erin Bakers Breakfast Cookies, Gu Gels, Bonk Breakers, Cliff Bars, Salted Nut Rolls, Gatorade, Red Bull, and more. Because the ride is not "intense" in nature, you're less likely to have problems with varying foods. But if you have a sensitive stomach, make sure you're dialed in on what works for you.

2. Try different foods on your longer weekend rides. Eating real food on these rides is more important than eating bars the whole day. Lunch will provide you with the ability to add some of this to your caloric intake.

Bike Fit

1. This is very important. If you have not been fit on your bike by a local bike shops, invest the money and get it done. It can change your whole experience on your bike and eliminate potential problems while riding 200 miles.
2. If you have any discomfort on your bike, 200 miles will expose and exacerbate that discomfort. Best to get it taken care of now and enjoy the ride.

Taper Week: Ride Week

Leading up to the week of the ride you should begin tapering your training and going easy all week. Concentrate on getting your bike completely dialed in. The week of your event, here's what training should look like:

Day 1: Ride fairly easy. It's ok to mix in a couple of hard efforts for 3 to 5 mins. Cut your overall time on the bike back to 60-90 mins.

Day 2: Repeat day 1.

Day 3: Perhaps mix in a couple of hard 30-sec or 1-min efforts during your ride to shake out the legs.

Day 4: Take the day off the bike or spin in your neighborhood for 30-45 mins. Go super EASY.

Event Day: You're ready to ride.

Mechanical Tip – Are there any noises your bike is making that you need checked? Get it done now. Do a general check over of your bike. Make sure everything is tight. Clean your chain and cassette and re-lube.

Fundraising

It is so important to remember WHY we are riding. We do tough things for people in tough places, and our fundraising before and after the ride will help set free victims of human trafficking.

Setting up your fundraising page

You will receive information about setting up your fundraising page in your email once you have signed up for a specific event. If you are have questions, please reach out to rocky.vest@hopeforjustice.org

Once you have clicked on the link in your email that asks you to claim your fundraising page, you can click the Manage button at the top right, then click on Story

Scroll down and make edits to your awesome story! Tell everyone your "why" and then get sharing with everyone you know! We will share with you some simple posts you can copy-and-paste to your social media if you need some inspiration!

Tips to help you reach your fundraising goals

Tip #1: Make sure your fundraising page is so compelling that your supporters feel like they can't leave without donating. Get personal with your story, explain why you're fundraising, what will their money do for the cause of ending human trafficking, etc. Add lots of pics and videos. The more well-rounded your page, the better your fundraiser will perform.

Tip #2: Make the first donation. After your fundraising page is all set up, make the first donation. Make sure it's an amount that you think your supporters will respond to. It sets the tone for your fundraiser and people like seeing that you're supporting your cause as well.

Tip #3: Set a fundraising goal. Supporters like to help you work towards something and, it gives you something to message about during the course of your campaign. Sending out an email when you're at 50% of your goal is super motivating and allows everyone to see how their donations are impacting your cause.

Tip #4: When you get a donation, you'll get a donation alert. Make sure to use our Thank You tool to immediately thank your supporters. If they feel like their donation is appreciated, they will be more likely to give again. And again.

Tip #5: Reach out more than once. Email and use social networks to ask supporters to give again and again. Keep them posted on your goals, where their money is going, how it's helping, and what it means to you personally. Be relentless. It's for a good cause.

The day of the ride

200 Ride Philosophy: Rules of the road

Never be in the TT position when you're in the bunch: You don't have access to the brakes when you're on the aerobars. Always be on the hoods where you have much more control. Only when you get to the very front should you ever get into the aero-tuck position. Aero-bars are dangerous in a group, so we would like it if you just left them at home.

Do not cross the center line: Please do not at any time cross the center line. Repeat offenders will be asked to abandon the ride and provide support to the rest of the riders the remainder of the day. It is our discretion if people are putting themselves and others into harm's way, and they will be asked to abandon.

Leading: Riding on the front of the pack is a position of responsibility. Not only are you the eyes of the group, but more importantly you are the one responsible for making decisions that affect everyone else on the ride. What may be safe for you may not be safe for the other riders behind you. Running red lights, splitting cars, squeezing through traffic, etc., forces everyone behind you to do the same thing. Set a pace that is appropriate and keep the pace steady and smooth. We have averaged 18 mph during our past rides. A sustained wattage will be monitored by those of us using power meters. Should the group wattage exceed 220 to 250 watts, you will hear a bell ring which indicates the need to pull back a little bit. This ride is NOT a race. You are not to "attack" off the front or try to show everyone how strong you are. That's what races are for.

Holding a line: To avoid overlapping wheels, ride as if you are on rails. Use verbal and hand signals to avoid obstacles in the road. Ride smoothly and predictably, do not accelerate or brake too quickly, and announce when you are stopping or slowing. Do not at any time sprint ahead and disrupt the flow. Even if there is a corner coming up, stay side by side and go through the corner like a well-oiled machine. Riding with your bars ahead of the rider beside you is called “half-wheeling” and is a major faux pas. It’s up to you to keep up with the speed of the slower rider next to you.

Following: There should be NO gaps in the group. As soon as you see a gap, fill it by riding into the space in a steady and controlled manner.

Peeling off: When you are tired of riding at the front and feel it is time to go to the back, make sure the rider beside you knows this. Once you have both established that you are going back, check briefly that there isn’t someone overlapping your back wheel, then both riders slowly and gradually move to the outside and let the group come through the middle. Do not suddenly veer off to the side, peel off in a steady and controlled manner.

Too tired to go to the front: If you do not want to go to the front, sit at the back and let the riders coming back from the front of the group slot in ahead of you. It is not acceptable to work your way up to the front of the group and slow down because you don’t feel strong enough to be at the front. If for whatever reason you do find yourself at the front, pedal through and take what is known as a “token pull”. You go to the front for a couple seconds, agree with the rider beside you that you are both peeling off, and properly fall to the back.

Moving in a group: If you need to go to the back of the group, or need to move out away from the side of road because the road is damaged (for example), just steadily move in whatever direction you want to go in. The key to all group riding is to do things gradually and steadily. Even if there is a rider right next to you as you pull out to the side of the road, if you do it gradually, the other rider will naturally have time to move over with you. If you do anything sudden you will likely cause a crash. This is also very important when “peeling off” and “filling a gap”.

Obstacles and hand signals: All obstacles should be warned of by a simple hand signal. When you see an obstacle in the road ahead of you, put your hand down and give a signal that lets the riders behind you know in which direction they should go to avoid it. Traditionally a quick wave of the hand will suffice. It is NOT acceptable to yell, then weave around it at the last minute. If you only see the obstacle at the last minute, ride through it! Better to get a flat than to take down the whole group. An obstacle worth pointing out is one that will damage a bike or person behind you. Don’t point out manhole covers unless they are deeply set in the road, or leaves or small cracks in the road.

Slowing and adjusting speed: You should ride ever so slightly to the side of the rider in front of you; so when they slow down, you either stop pedaling and start to slightly overlap your front wheel with their rear wheel, or you touch the brakes gradually, once again using the “wheel overlap” as a buffer zone so as not to slow down too suddenly for the riders behind you. This is probably the biggest crash causer on group rides.

What to Bring for the Ride – a Checklist

The obvious stuff:

- Bicycle
- Helmet

- Cycling shoes
- Sunglasses
- Cycling gloves
- Water bottles (at least 2)
- Tail light (replace your batteries this week)
- Bike computer
- Swimsuit – if you want to swim after the ride
- Overnight bag – change of clothes, toothbrush, ibuprofen etc

The other important stuff:

- Sunscreen – purchase the “sport edition” and reapply multiple times during the day
- Chamois butter – for the nether regions, which will definitely experience some friction. Even if you’re an experienced rider and don’t use it on regular rides, I would recommend it specifically for this ride. Bring enough to reapply several times during the ride. As we get further into the mileage, you’ll experience some discomfort. This will help to limit or eliminate it altogether.
- Extra socks / bib short / arm warmers – in case we experience bad weather or if you just want a fresh change halfway through, some riders will change at lunch and put a fresh pair of bib shorts and socks on.
- Phone charger
- Bike computer charger – if your bike computer takes a charge, you may want to recharge it when we take a lunch break.
- Personal hydration or nutrition – if you have specific hydration or nutrition items that you want to bring along, make sure you bring them. We provide quite a bit of nutrition and hydration for the ride, but some riders have finicky stomachs and know what works with their bodies. Bring what works, make sure it is marked with your name.

How fast is the 200 Peloton?

0 to 250 Watts of power output for 200 miles with an average of 180W (180W on flat ground with zero wind = 18mph)

Post-ride Activities

Each Break the Cycle event has a celebration after doing your tough thing for people in tough places. Check out the event details page for your event to find out everything you need to know.

It never hurts to bring a little cash for food, and for most events, the first round is on us. That can be tea, Sprite, beer, whatever you’d like.