



Challenge Details

- In Japan, 15% of commuters bicycle to work. In the Netherlands, 50% of commuters bicycle to work. Less than 2% of U.S. commuters bicycle to work.
- The average person loses 13 pounds of body weight during their first year of commuting by bike.
- The average car owner spends about \$10,000 each year on car-related expenses. A bike's upkeep is almost nothing.

Do you really need encouragement to ride a bike? Isn't that something any child knows is one of life's simple joys? Well, as obvious as that may be, that's what we're doing in this Challenge. We're asking you to park your car and ride a bike to work or school. So, go on. Tell the world that you're doing it to reduce your carbon footprint. Tell your friends that you're doing it to get healthy. We won't tell anyone you're doing it for fun.

This challenge was originally inspired by a suggestion from [Alexiz](#). Several other rallyers have posted similar ideas that have been very popular in the [workshop](#). Check-out the high scoring ideas from: [soxrox 101](#), [XCrunner](#), [Alim](#), and [H2O Marc](#).

The Carbon Connection

Each gallon of gasoline burned in an average car's engine blows 19.4 pounds of CO₂ out the exhaust and directly into Earth's atmosphere. The less we drive, the less gasoline we burn. When you ride a bicycle or walk someplace instead of driving your car, you are keeping unnecessary greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere.

Driving also costs money. At current national average gasoline prices (\$2.45 per gallon of regular), choosing your bike over your car saves you about \$3 per day, not including tolls, parking, and so on.

With gas prices going up again, your savings will undoubtedly increase.

Getting It Done

You don't need to overthink this one; just decide to give it a try. Start by making sure your bike is in good working condition. Check your bike helmet for a good fit. Plan a route that avoids heavy traffic, bad roads, and killer hills without adding too much distance to the trip. And allow yourself time to make the ride at your own pace.

Here are a few other things to think about when considering this Challenge:

- Bike riding is a great way to get low-impact, aerobic exercise. For example, a 150-pound bike rider will burn around 430 calories for every 10 miles he rides.
- Bike safe! You don't have to wear spandex pants with a padded butt, but you do need to wear a properly-fitted bike helmet. Be smart about the hazards of the road, such as opening car doors, potholes, wet roads, and so on.
- If you find you're ready to ditch your car entirely, you might want to follow the suggestions from our friends at The Daily Green and look into electric bikes.
- You may be able to get a \$20 per month benefit from your employer for using your bicycle to commute to and from work. Read more about the Bicycle Commuter Act at Treehugger and talk to your employer about having your company participate.

Do you already bike to work or school? How far do you go? Have you found a way to persevere in cold and rainy weather? Please share your thoughts, stories, and suggestions on biking with fellow Rallyers in the forum section below.

Rules of the Challenge

This Challenge asks you to leave your car at home and ride your bike to school or work for one day. By taking one car off the road for one day's average commute, you will be saving an estimated 26 lbs of CO₂. This Challenge is repeatable and can be accepted once per 48 hours.

Learn More

[Commute By Bike: Beginner Tips](#)

[Paul Dorn's Bike Commuting Tips: Planning a Route](#)

[Savings Calculator: Commuting by Bicycle vs. Car](#)

See the Math

Let's start with the known or estimated numbers:

- This Challenge gives you credit for the carbon savings realized by keeping your car off the road for one day of average commuting to work or school. According to a 2005 ABC News poll, the average daily commute is 16 miles each way to school or work. That's 32 roundtrip commuting miles driven each day. [source](#)
- The average American car used in commuting to work or school gets 23.9 miles per gallon of gasoline. [source](#)
- Each gallon of gasoline burned by an automobile engine leads to the release of 19.4 pounds of CO₂ into the atmosphere. [source](#)

Now put all that together to get the following equation:

$$\frac{32 \text{ miles commuted}}{1 \text{ day}} \times \frac{1 \text{ gallon gas}}{23.9 \text{ miles}} \times \frac{19.4 \text{ lbs CO}_2 \text{ released}}{1 \text{ gallon gas burned}} = \frac{26 \text{ pounds CO}_2}{1 \text{ day}}$$

Riding your bike shows your commitment to preventing climate change. The more of us there are, the easier it will be for our communities to support new bike path projects or for businesses to support biking as a commuting choice for customers and employees. So, grab your bike helmet and hit the road, Rallyers.

Discussion 22 comments so far

You must [login](#) or [register](#) to post.

[happysunshine](#) 3 days ago

I bike to school every day even though I live in Seattle, which is all hills, and I can't change gears (they're broken – the bike is ten years old and used to be my mom's). It's really fun because while everyone else at school is half asleep, my biking partner (who lives in my neighborhood) and I are wide awake and ready for whatever the day may hold.

[bostoncycle77](#) 9 days ago

I've reached the max for this challenge already, which I did not know there was a max, lol. Still riding, and enjoying life.

[this_is_me](#) 14 days ago

i live in the country so its hard for me to ride to school or town but i can ride to my horse barn which is probably a mile 1 way.I love riding my bike or rollerblading.

[jolly](#) 14 days ago

My 6 year old prefers to oride his bike to school and soccer practice. He tells me, "MOM, Let's bike so we don't pollute!" AH the wisdom of Babes.

[bostoncycle77](#) about 1 month ago

Rode today, great ride almost 30 miles roundtrip for me, enough for me to sweat, lol. I hate driving my car, but sometimes I have to. Happy riding to all :)

[j1ffyp0p](#) about 1 month ago

i own a car, but i pretend i don't, no excuses, i ride my bike everyday to work

[goinggreen54](#) about 1 month ago

i'm going to take it everyday! i just got my bike tuned up and only using a car as a last option.