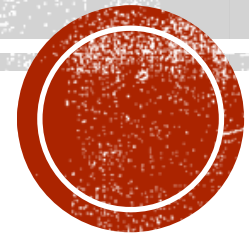


HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR NEW BICYCLE

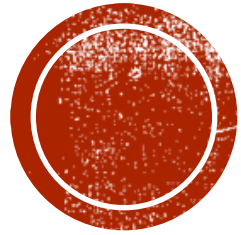


Ubaldo Macchitella, EUCG

AGENDA

1. Why a new bicycle?
2. What makes a bicycle
3. Types of bicycle
4. Useful tips
5. Resources





1. WHY A NEW BICYCLE?

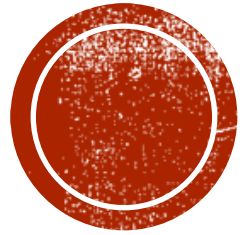


*WHAT WOULD YOU
LIKE TO DO
WITH YOUR BIKE?*



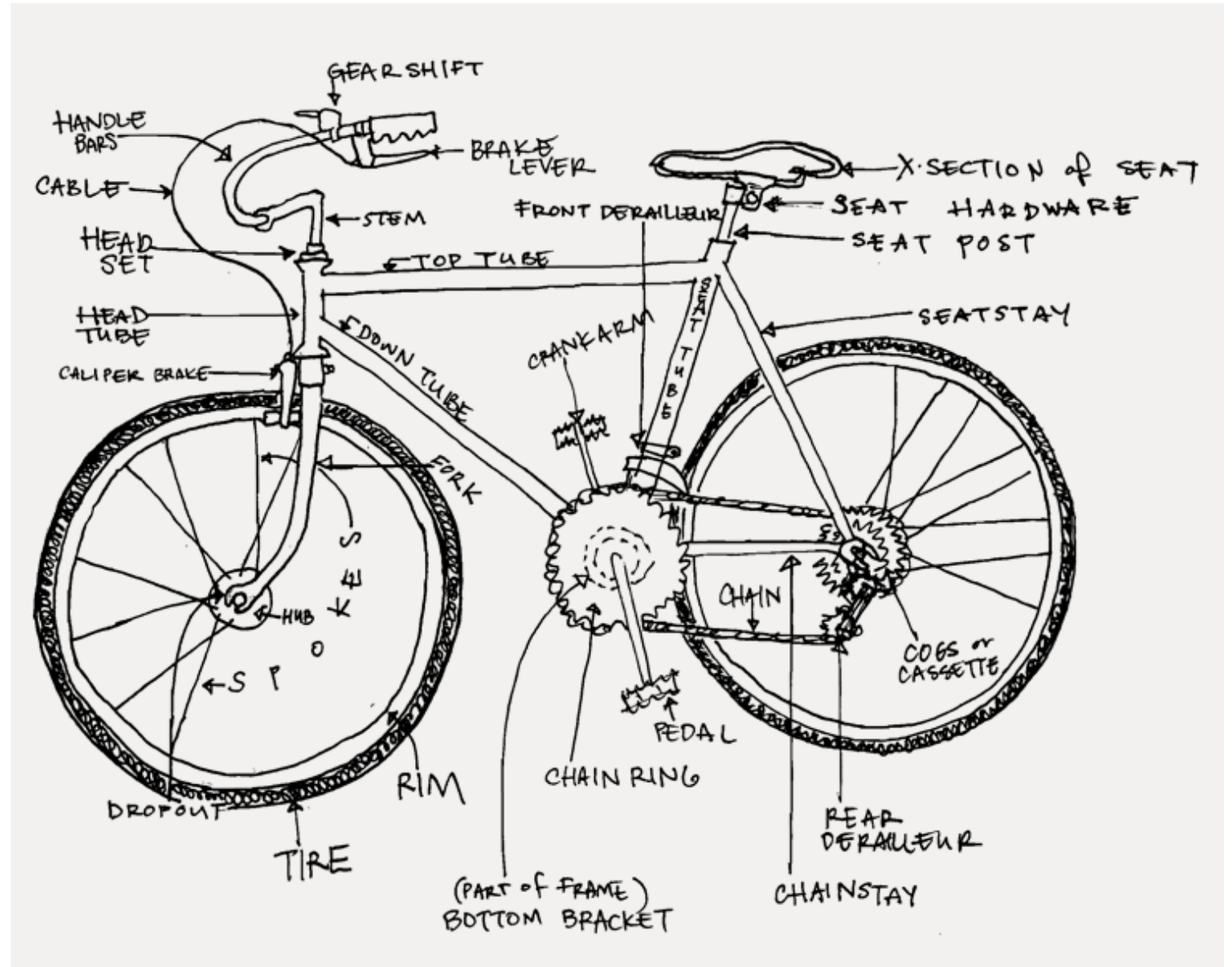
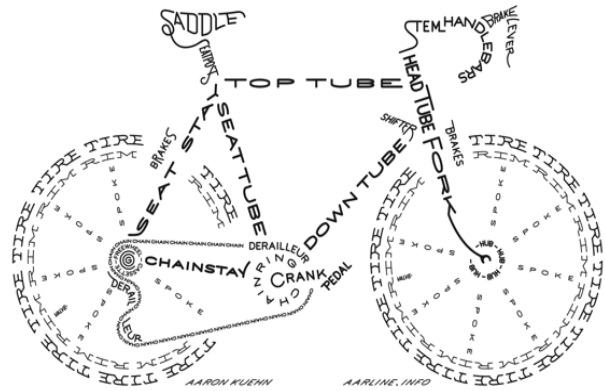
FOCUS OF THIS PRESENTATION



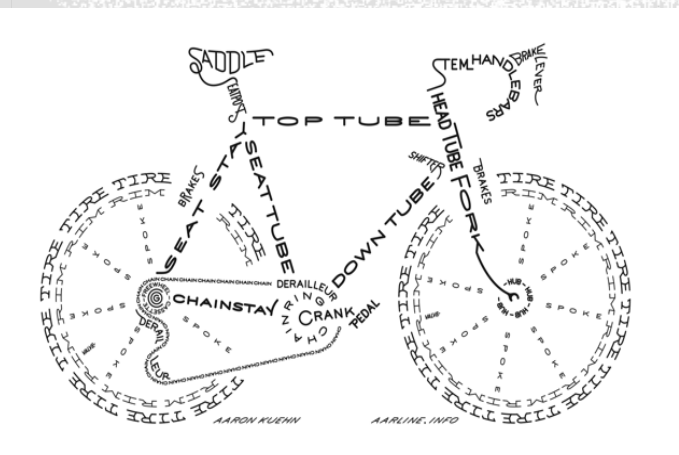


2. WHAT MAKES A BICYCLE

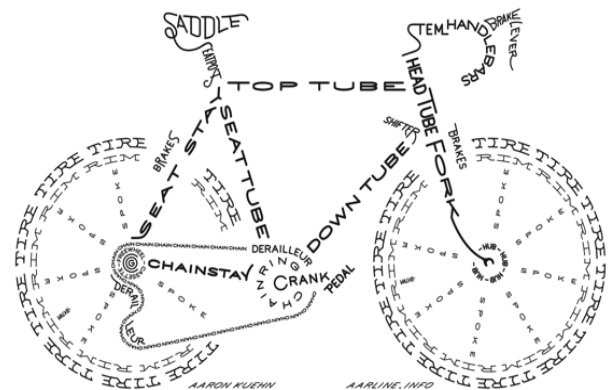
BICYCLE ANATOMY



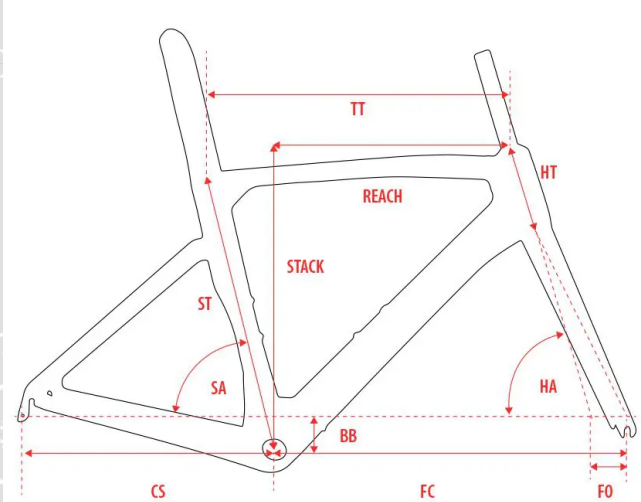
ANATOMIE DU VELO



FIETS ANATOMIE



FRAME AND FORK



****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****

○ FRAME MATERIAL

- **Steel:** robust, “comfortable”, heavier
- **Aluminum:** lighter, versatile, “uncomfortable”
- **Carbon fiber:** lightest, “comfortable”, pricey
- **Other:** Titanium, bamboo, wood...

○ FRAME GEOMETRY

- **Sporty/racing:** forward leaning, faster aero, more fatigue
- **Fully upright:** comfortable, slower
- **Endurance:** a balance of the two
- **Men or women:** easy of manoeuvring around

○ FORK

- **Material:** steel for robustness, carbon for lightness and responsiveness
- **Angle:** wider for performance, stricter for stability
- **Suspension:** rigid for performance/efficiency, suspended for comfort



WHEELS AND TYRES



****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****

○ WHEELS

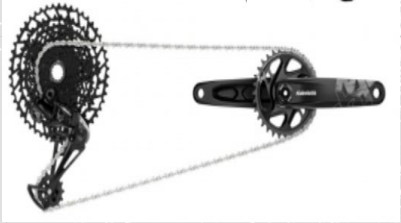
- **Diameter:** Larger wheels for longer range, sustained speed. Smaller wheels for robustness, acceleration, agility (typically for off-road).
- **Material:** steel for robustness, carbon for efficiency and weight saving. Aluminum the golden mean.

○ TYRES

- **Size:** fat tyres for cushioning and unpaved roads, slimmer tires for efficiency/speed
- **Thread:** Slicker tyres for efficiency/speed, “rough” tyres for more grip (off road, rain).



TRANSMISSION AND BRAKES



****Warning: this slide is for geeks/enthusiasts!****

- **TRANSMISSION: MECHANISM**

- **Chain:** traditional, cheaper, more versatile
- **Belt, Cardan:** low maintenance

- **TRANSMISSION: GEAR RATIOS (“SPEEDS”)**

- **Lower vs higher speeds:** low (“light”) speeds make it easy to move the bicycle, but are slower. They are helpful in climbs. High (“heavy”) speeds require more effort but the bicycle moves faster. They are useful on flat or downhill.
- **Number of ratios (speeds):** The number of speeds the bicycle has.
- **Range:** is there a lot of difference between speeds, or they are very similar? Are they toward the “heavy” or “light” end of the spectrum?

- **BRAKES**

- **Disk:** introduced progressively in the last couple of decades, do not lose grip in wet.
- **Traditional:** resisting mainly on racing bicycle and some city bicycles. Easier to remove the wheel.



ACCESSORIES



○ FENDERS/MUDGUARDS



○ RACKS



○ LIGHTS

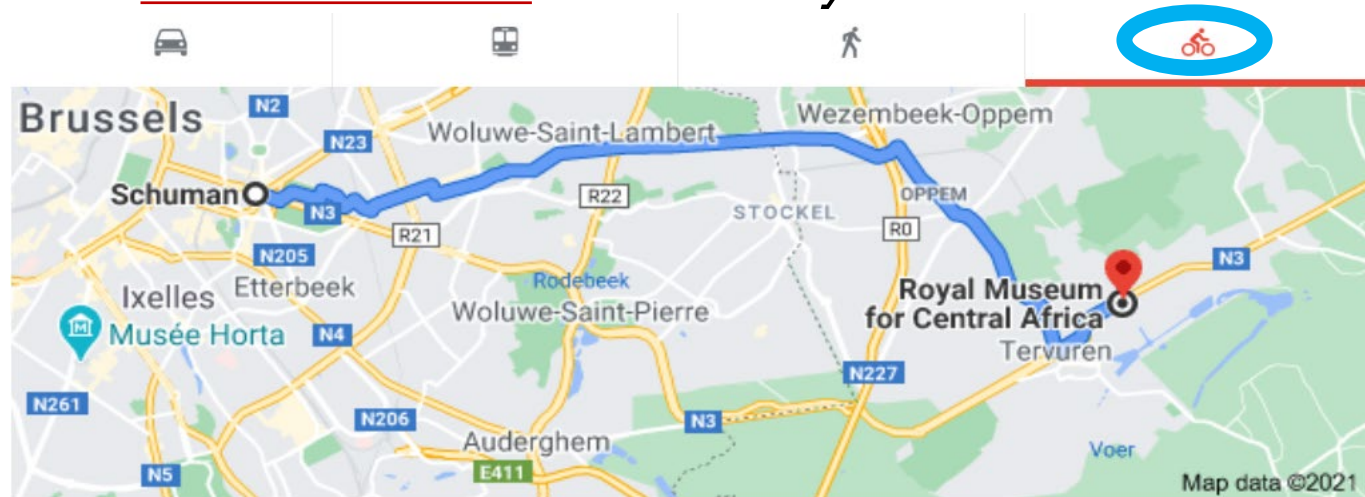


WEIGHT



Bicycle Weight: a myth to **debunk**

The same bicycle model but **1 kg lighter** could easily cost **300/400 € more**: is this really worth?

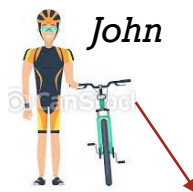


43 min (12,0 km) via N226

John: $(68 + 13) = 81 \text{ kg}$

Jack: $(68 + 12) = 80 \text{ kg}$

Jack is 1,2% lighter overall



Jack (1 kg lighter)

(\cong 148 meters further)



WEIGHT



- Do you have an **elevator**?
- Do you take it **on and off** the train/metro often?
- Do you want to admire the **latest technology**?
- Do you love **minimalism**?
- Would you like to own the “**Ferrari** of the bicycles”?
-
-
- ~~Do you want go faster?~~
- ~~Do you want to make less effort pedalling?~~



ATTRACTIVE?



- Bikes are pieces of **industrial design** or sometimes **craftsmanship**: both aesthetic and functionality.
- Different bicycles can serve the same purpose well. Therefore aesthetics can be the decisive factor
 - *Silhouette*
 - *Paint scheme*
 - *Finish (matte/gloss)*
 - *Style (“hollandaise”, “old school”, “fixie”...)*



All of these serve the purpose of going around town,
with something to carry



PRICE



- Sometimes we think we spend **too much money** for a tool that we do not use often enough.
- How much is “too much”?

Price*	Level
1500 +	Enthusiast
500 - 1500	Good price/performance
250 - 500	Does the job
< 250	<i>At your own risk 😊</i>

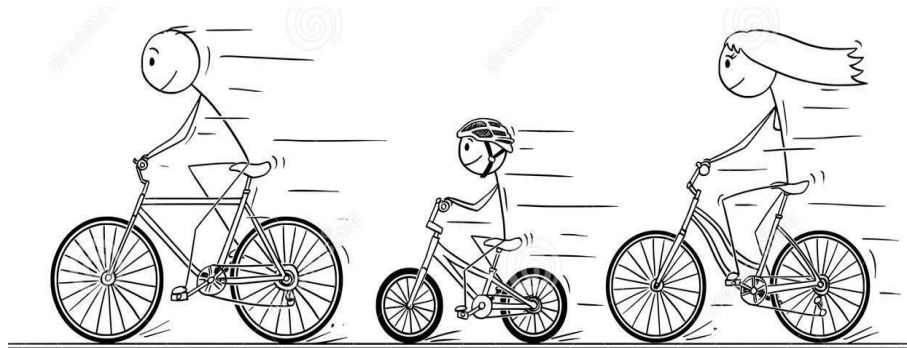
What is the **VALUE** to you?

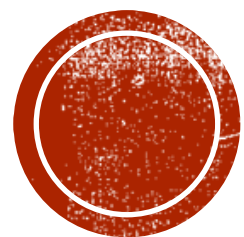
(* orientative price for touring/hybrid/city/mtb
- add approx. 500 € for gravel bicycles)



~~PRICE~~ VALUE

- Investing in a good bicycle can have several **benefits**. Some of them can be measured in terms of **money**, others are more **intangible**, but not less important.





3. TYPES OF BICYCLES

SIX TYPES OF BICYCLES



MTB



VTC



GRAVEL



TOURING



CITY



FOLDING



MOUNTAIN BIKE (MTB/VTT)



Large Tyres

Suspended fork



**Wide gear range
("heavy" and "light" speeds)**



MOUNTAIN BIKE (MTB/VTT)



****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****



Handlebar	Flat
Fork	Suspended
Geometry	Intermediate
Tyres	Very fat, heavy threaded
Gears	Wide range, low ("easy") ratios for climbing
Speed	Medium/Low
Comfort	High (large tyres + suspended fork), medium (geometry)
Terrain	Off-road, bumpy. Very robust.
Weight	Medium/high (14.2 kg - no accessories; 17,1 kg - with accessories)
Range	Short (10-20km)

Typical features: *robust, large tyres, essential*

Typical use: *Relatively short rides, mostly into the woods. On asphalt it is pretty slow (large wheels), but it is very appropriate for long, steep climbs. Bulky to carry, particularly with accessories.*



HYBRID (VTC)



**Tyres like MTB,
but slimmer
(faster)**

Suspended fork



**Wide gear range
("heavy" and "light" speeds")**

(step - through, "women" frame)



HYBRID (VTC)



("women" frame)



("men" frame)

Handlebar	Flat
Fork	Suspended
Geometry	Intermediate
Tyres	Medium large, medium threaded
Gears	Wide range, low ("easy") ratios for climbing + some higher ratios
Speed	Medium
Comfort	High (medium/large tyres + suspended fork), medium (geometry)
Terrain	50/50 Decently fast on road, pretty capable off-road (not too harsh!)
Weight	Medium (13.5 kg - no accessories; 16,3 kg - with accessories)
Range	Medium/long (20-40 km)

****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****

Typical features: the skinnier brother of the MTB. Faster on asphalt, as capable on off road – unless too rough.

Typical use: Good for fitness, light - pack touring on larger distances.



GRAVEL



Slim tyres, but for off-road

**Rigid fork
(efficiency, speed)**



**Medium number of gears, towards
"heavier", (but faster) end**



GRAVEL



****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****



Handlebar	Racing
Fork	Rigid
Geometry	Intermediate/racing
Tyres	Intermediate/slim, medium/light thread
Gears	Medium range, less low (“easy”) gears, more higher (“harder”)
Speed	Fast
Comfort	Relatively low: racing position, thin tyres, rigid forks
Terrain	70% on-road, 30% off-road (light)
Weight	Light (10,5 kg)
Range	Long (60+)

Typical features: *minimalist, rigid (for efficiency/speed), forward-leaning.*

Typical use: *Fitness and “essential” touring on longer distances on asphalt with occasional (civilised) off-road.*

You trade-off some comfort for more speed and efficiency.



TOURING



Robust rack, integrated in the frame for larger packs

Mudguard

Stand



TOURING



****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****



Handlebar	Flat
Fork	Suspended
Geometry	Upright
Tyres	Intermediate, light thread
Gears	Wide range, as a VTC
Speed	Fast
Comfort	High: upright, robust with good manners
Terrain	On road. Occasional, still civilised, off-road
Weight	Medium/high (15,5 kg)
Range	Medium/long (30-50 km)

Typical features: solid rack, fenders stand, pre-disposition for additional racks.

Typical use: Medium/long excursions at leisure pace, with significant load, on paved roads, smoothly rolling.



CITY



**Robust rack, integrated
in the frame**

**Rear-facing
handlebar**

Lights

Mudguards

**Suspended
fork**

Stand

**Belt drive
(not always)**

**Carter covering the
chain/belt (for your
trousers!)**



CITY



(“men”)



(“women”)

Handlebar	Café, Riser... (higher and more or less facing you)
Fork	Rigid, Suspended in middle high-range
Geometry	Upright
Tyres	Intermediate/slim, light thread
Gears	3-9, from medium low to medium high
Speed	Low/Intermediate
Comfort	High: (the most) upright
Terrain	On road. Off- road in emergencies ☺
Weight	High (17,0 kg)
Range	Short (5-10 km)

**** Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****

Typical features: Rack, fenders, stand, limited number of speeds, robust (for potholes, sidewalks), a sort of compact version of a touring bicycle.

Typical use: Fitness and “essential” touring on longer distances on asphalt with occasional (civilised) off-road.

You trade-off some comfort for more speed and efficiency.



FOLDING



(*Arm not included)



FOLDING



Handlebar	Do they even have one? ☺ - Flat, compact
Fork	Rigid
Geometry	Intermediate
Tyres	light thread – small tires
Gears	3-6, intermediate
Speed	Slow but agile
Comfort	Ok for short distances
Terrain	On road.
Weight	Medium (13,0 kg)
Range	< 5 km

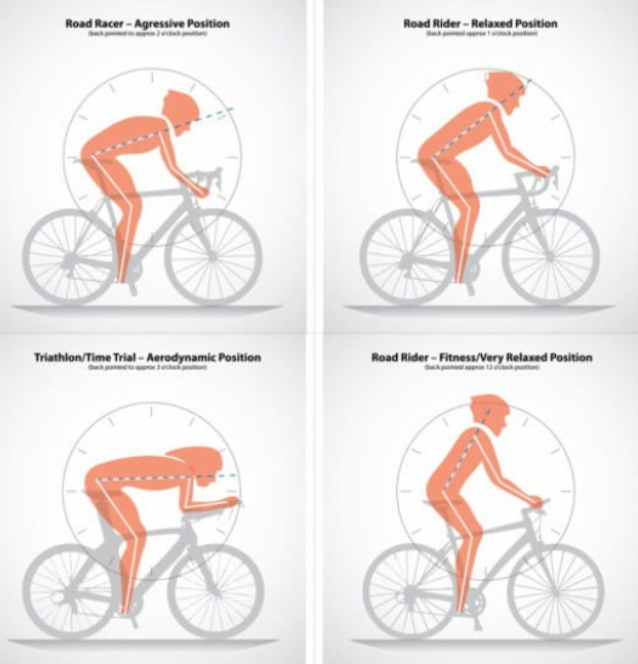
****Warning: this slide is
for geeks/enthusiasts!****

Typical features: Folding (duh!), transportable, limited speed, relatively fast acceleration.

Typical use: Conceived for the last mile in urban environment.



POSTURE AND SPEED



FASTER



SLOWER



GRAVEL

VTC

MTB

TOURING

CITY

FOLDING

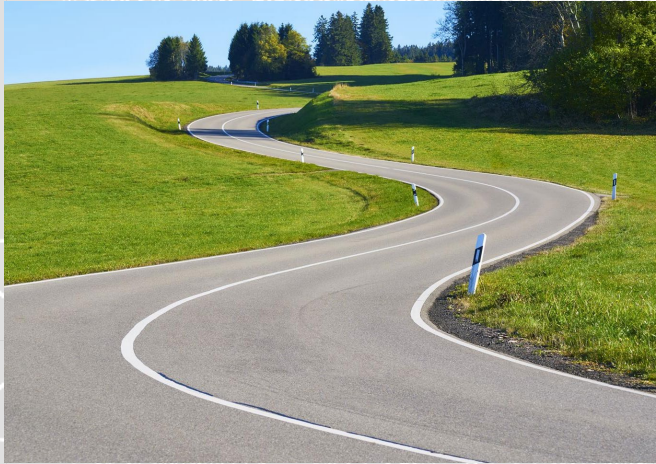
LEANING



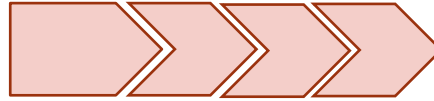
UPRIGHT



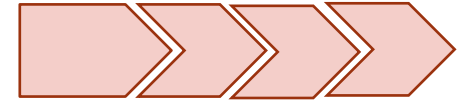
WHERE DO YOU RIDE?



OFF-ROAD



ROAD



CITY



MTB



VTC



GRAVEL



TOURING



CITY



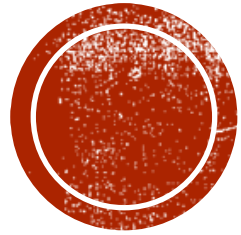
FOLDING

*Boundaries are **blurred**, in particular if you consider the accessories: rack, mudguards, bags, stand.*



MIX AND MATCH





4. USEFUL TIPS

SAFETY AND SECURITY



Safety (*you* are protected)

- Protective gears
- Visibility: see and be seen
- Safe riding
- Safety checks



Security (*your* bike is protected)

- A lock adequate to the VALUE
- Parking in a safe place at home (not enough space?)
- Parking in a safe place at work
- Regular maintenance
- Consider registering it with the police



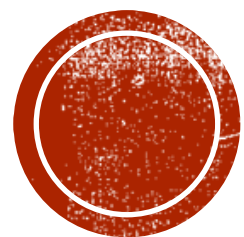
MAKE IT YOUR BICYCLE



Find your partner: checklist

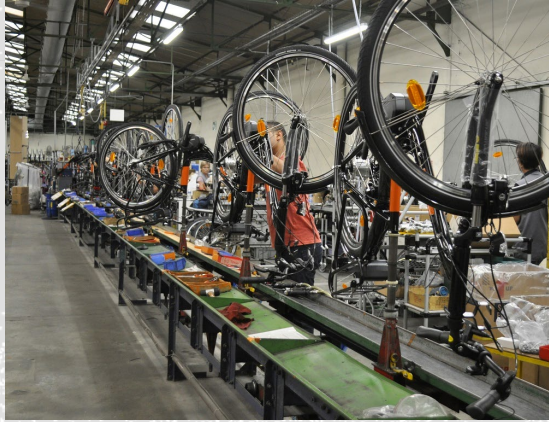
- Do we have a purpose in common? (*what would you LIKE to do together?*)
- Do we fit together? (*is it of the right size, in the right position?*)
- Am I attracted by you? (*is it aesthetically appealing...or at least a nice type?*)
- Will you have siblings? (*is it your only bicycle?*)
- Where is our nest? (*where will you keep it safe and secure?*)
- How long will we be healthy together? (*don't forget maintenance!*)





5. RESOURCES

SOME MAJOR MANUFACTURERS



COMPANY	COMMENTS
Cube (DE)	Very complete range, user-friendly website
Canyon (DE)	On-line only, excellent quality – price ratio
Decathlon (FR)	The Ryanair of bicycles: no frills, solid basics
Nakamura (FR)	Like Decathlon, with integrated assembly line
Focus (DE)	Complete range, special focus on e-bikes
Grandville (BE)	BE philosophy, focus on robustness + e-bicycles
Rose (DE)	Complete range, established manufacturer
Stevens (DE)	Very complete range, focus on robustness
Genesis (UK)	Solid quality, “distinguished” choices, heritage
Giant (USA)	Top-five, good quality/price (economies of scale)
Trek (USA)	Top-five, very complete range
Cannondale (USA)	Wide range, with a focus on speed/performance
Scott (USA)	Very complete range

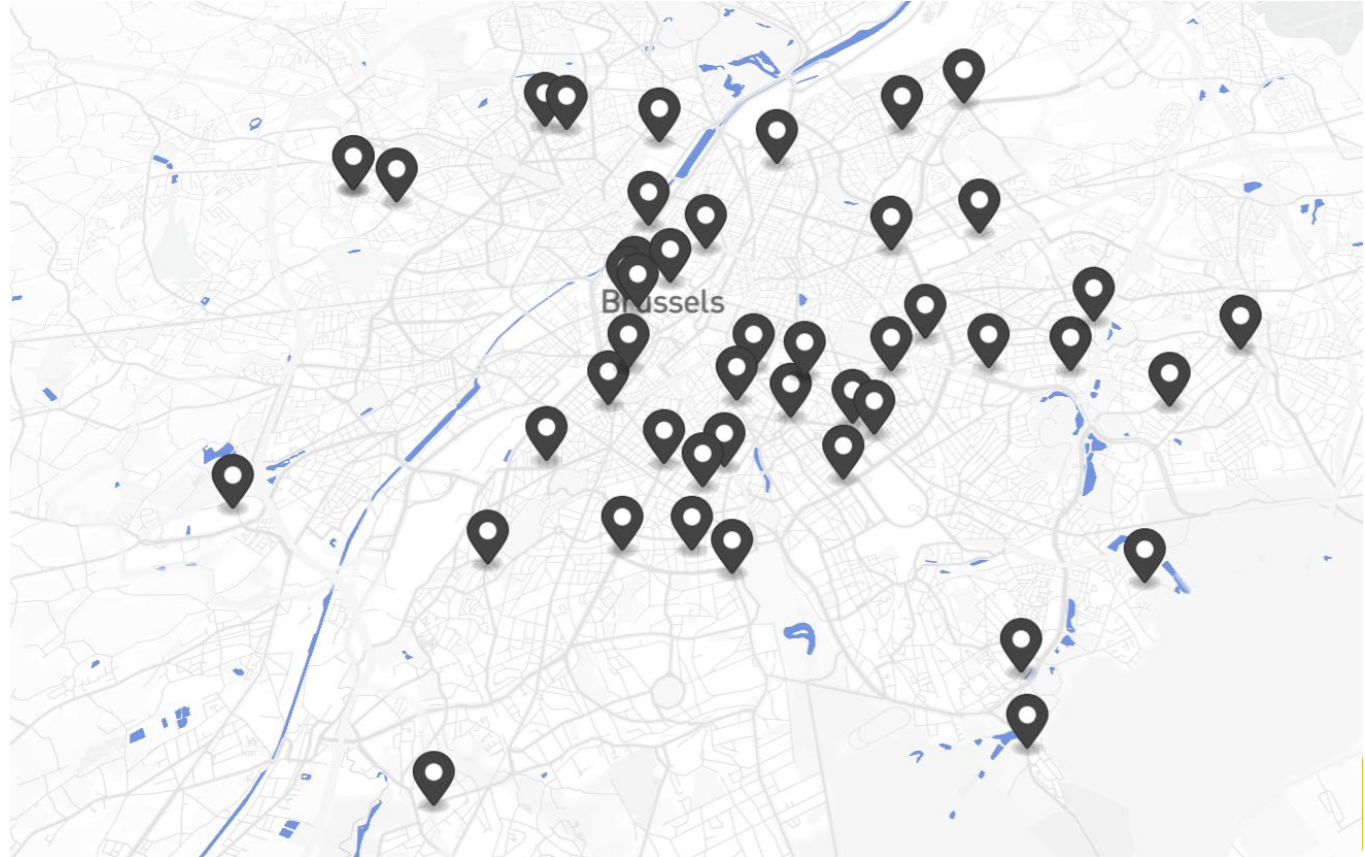
Non exhaustive, at all!



SHOPS - BXL



Where to buy



New and used bicycles [HERE](#)



SHOPS - BXL



Why not renting?

- Long term rental: [Swapfiets](#)
- Short term rental (days):
 - [Blue-Bike](#)
 - [Pro - Vélo](#)
 - [Billy-bikes](#)

Brussels region's portal for cyclists (renting, buying, parking, protecting ecc...):

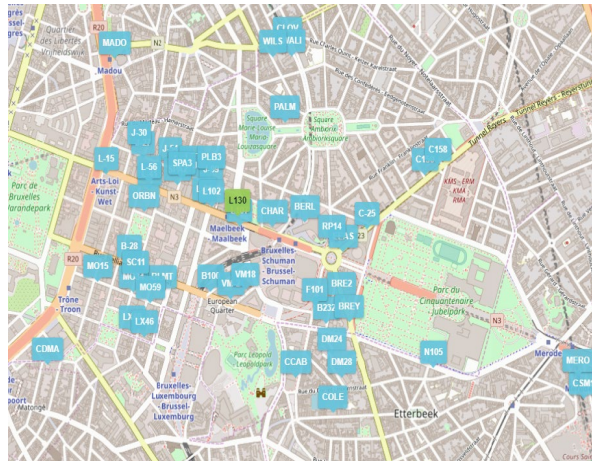
[**Infos sur le vélo - Bike for Brussels**](#)



A stylized illustration of a storefront. It features a white building facade with a red and white vertically striped awning. The awning has a scalloped edge. Below the awning is a blue door with a black frame and a small black handle. To the right of the door is a rectangular window with a black frame, showing a blue sky with a white diagonal line. The entire storefront is set against a black background.

A row of yellow and silver bicycles parked in a rack. The bicycles have black seats and handlebars, and the yellow fenders feature the 'Villaggio' logo. A person is standing in the background on a paved area.

- 360 stations around Bxl
- 35 euro/year or daily ticket
- For short trips (free < 30 min)



- Bicycles in every building
- To be returned by the end of the day
- Free of charge



LINKS



Bicycle culture (general knowledge, bike reviews, maintenance...)

Cycling about: <https://www.cyclingabout.com/>

Bike radar: <https://www.bikeradar.com/>

Road.cc: <https://road.cc/>

Urban mobility: the cyclists' perspective

Not just bicycles: [bicycle – friendly cities](#)

Cycle Chic Republic*: www.copenhagencyclechic.com

Bike advocacy groups (Brussels)

Pro vélo: <https://www.provelo.org/>

Gracq: <https://www.gracq.org/>

Fietsersbond (NL): <https://www.fietsersbond.be/>

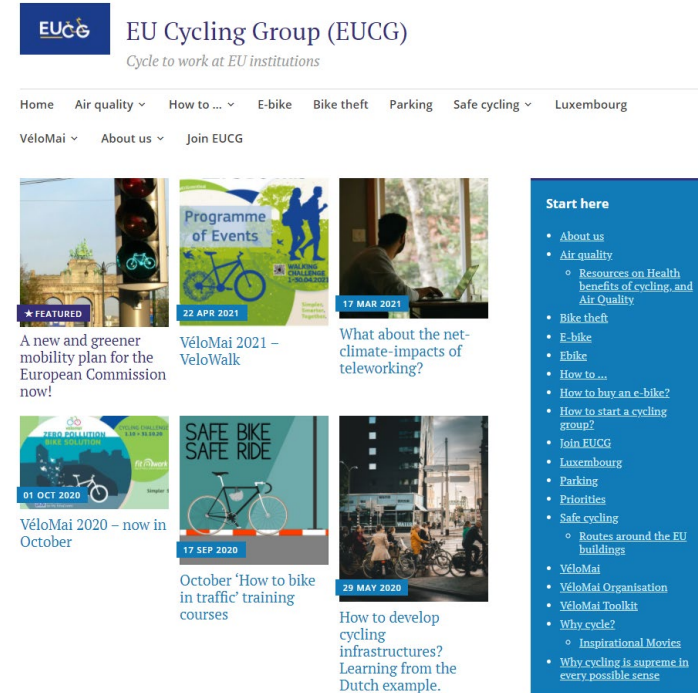
(* Belgium cycle chic moved to [Twitter](#))



@ THE EU
INSTITUTIONS



Support cycling



Becoming a member of the EU Cycling Group (EUCG)!

- **Membership:** free.
- **Get active :** support biking in EU institutions together!
- **Bought a bike:** share your experience

eucg.eu





*Wanna talk bicycles? Drop me an email! **ubaldo.macchitella@ec.europa.eu***

