



Bike Bosnia Cycle Challenge

10 – 15 June 2022

Training guide

To help you plan & prepare for your adventure...

TRAINING GUIDE

By signing up to the MAG Bike Bosnia Cycle Challenge, you are committing to take part in an inspiring, endurance event. This may be the first event of this type that you have been involved in, and so in preparation you may be looking to increase your strength, stamina, speed, and general fitness to complete the challenge.

Working around your day-to-day life, we recommend setting yourself training goals, based around a framework of both the gradual build-up of your distances, and increasing your overall level of fitness. This can be achieved over a structured period with commitment from you!

This guide outlines offers some of the general advice about training for an endurance event, and a suggested plan to get in shape. Many participants will have their own plans based on their own experience – the key to any successful training schedule is to start well in advance of the event, don't kick off too aggressively, avoid injury, and enjoy the cycling!

Consult your GP before starting any new exercise schedule.

BIKES

We will be using hybrid and mountain bikes on Bike Bosnia 2022. Some of the roads are unmade roads or tracks. Mountain bikes, hybrids or road bikes can be used for your training - but you should try and incorporate some training on a mountain bike to get used to the slightly different riding position.

Visit your local forest trail centre to get a feel for off-road cycling; the blue routes will be more than adequate for the type of terrain you will experience, and it's great fun! If you have not got a trail centre close by, try riding along local canal towpaths.

Your target is 6 – 7hrs in the saddle on consecutive days.

FITNESS AND EXERCISE

You can plan and fit exercise into your current lifestyle (we recommend a rounded approach with a mixture of different types of exercise) and set out a weekly plan which is achievable and manageable – something you can stick to! The aim of these sessions is to improve your cardiovascular system, core strength and stamina, so that you have a solid basis from which you can gradually increase your overall general fitness level.

- **Cross-training** – involves performing at least two different forms of exercise in one session, such as running, walking, cycling, etc. They all use muscles that are similar to your challenge.

- **Interval Training** - Interval training can be best described as bouts of exercise interspersed with short rest intervals. It is based on the concept that more work can be completed at a higher relative intensity compared to continuous-type training. The intensity and duration of the work intervals and the length of the rest periods dictates the training response. Alternate between brisk cycling for up to a minute, and then return to original pace for a few minutes.
- **Strength Training** - Basic strength programmes adapt the body for more strenuous resistance training. It targets the major muscle groups, tendons, ligaments and joints to help prevent injury. Exercises include squats, bench press, overhead press, leg press and calf press, leg extensions, leg curls. For Example - Start with a light weight and increase slowly, completing 10-15 Reps of each exercise in 3 sets, resting for 3-4 minutes between each set.

You can progress by slowly increasing the weight and the number of reps and sets but keep the rest periods similar. Don't worry if you miss the odd session. There will be times where the training feels like a chore, and it all seems like too much. But persevere and remember your motivation for signing up to take part.

Tips for Beginners

If you've not been on a bike for a few years, or never, start training four months ahead of the trip. The mileage should be built up gradually to avoid over-exercise and injury.

- Try to cycle at least three times per week, building up the distance you cycle each week. Cycle on varied terrains including hills at the weekend.
- Do longer rides at the weekend.
- Start out with a distance or time you're comfortable with. This might range from 30mins for someone who hasn't exercised for a while, to an hour or more for someone who has cycled before.
- Variety can be added by including a gym/spin class, riding to work and changing your route. You can train at home if you have access to a home cycle trainer.
- Record the distance that you cover in your rides. From there you can design a programme where you increase your distance a bit each week to get to your goal (e.g. a long ride with no stops). Move on to the next level of training as soon as you are ready.
- Include family and friends rides and make it fun!

Example Beginner Schedule

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Mon	No training	No training	No training	No training
Tues	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	1 hour on the flat, 10 to 12 miles	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles
Wed	1 hour of gym or spin class	1 hour of gym or spin class	1 hour of gym or spin class	1 hour of gym or spin class
Thurs	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	45mins/1hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles
Fri	No training	No training	No training	No training
Sat	1 hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	1 hr on the flat, 8 to 12 miles	1 hr on the flat, 10 to 12 miles	No training
Sun	1.5 hours on hills	1.5 hours on hills	1.5 hrs on hills aiming for 10 - 15 miles	Target: 3-hour ride on flat and hills

Tips for experienced riders

If you have been on a challenge trip before and cycle often (20 miles+ regularly) you may have a degree of basic fitness and confidence so three months of training should prepare you for your challenge.

You still need to be able to spend around six-hours a day in the saddle every day so training will make the trip a lot more enjoyable.

Example Experienced Schedule

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Mon	No training	No training	No training	No training
Tues	1hr, 10 -15 miles with a 10-minute hard cycle included	1hr, 10 -15 miles with a 10 mins hard cycle included	1hr with 20 mins hard cycling 10 – 15 miles	1hr with 20 mins hard cycling 10 – 15 miles
Wed	1hr gym or spin class	1hr gym or spin class	1hr gym or spin class	1hr gym or spin class
Thurs	45mins / 1hr on the flat, 8 - 12 miles	45mins / 1hr on the flat, 8 - 12 miles	45mins / 1hr on the flat, 8 - 12 miles	45mins / 1hr on the flat, 8 - 12 miles
Fri	No training	No training	No training	No training
Sat	1½hrs, with 20 mins hard cycle 15-22 miles	1½hrs, with 20 mins hard cycle 15-22 miles	1½hrs, with 20 mins hard cycle 15-22 miles	No training
Sun	2hrs on hilly ground, with 30mins hard, 20 - 30 miles	2½hrs on hilly ground, with 20mins hard cycling, 25-37 miles	3hrs on hilly ground, 30 – 45 miles	Goal 1: Full day of cycling, 6 hours per day Goal 2: Two consecutive days of cycling, 6 hours a day

MILESTONES

Towards the end of your training and about a month before we go, here is an idea of what you should be aiming for:

- Try and cycle at least one ride which is 6 hrs in one go.
- You should be covering the distance at 15km per hour.
- Be learning about your equipment – how your shorts fit, where you get blisters any other tips and tricks to stay comfortable.
- You should have all the kit required for the challenge.
- Your cycling tops should arrive from MAG around 10 days before we set off and you should check you are comfortable riding in them.

Five days before:

- Ease off the training - give your legs a rest
- Aim to keep hydrated - drinking lots of water
- Have a quiet week - no late nights!
- Have all your kit packed and ready
- Enjoy a week of lots of pasta & carbs!

DIET AND HYDRATION

It is vital to keep eating and drinking to maintain high energy levels when cycling both in training and during your challenge. We recommend consuming ample amounts of carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and mineral nutrients before cycling. During physical exertion it is crucial to replenish fluids for optimal hydration and energy, essentially for the brain and muscles to continue their work.

The importance of drinking water and energy drinks before, during and after training cannot be over emphasised. Being thirsty and having a dry mouth are signs of dehydration. Other signs are dizziness, headache, mental irritation or depression, fatigue, water retention, lower back pain, recurring or chronic pain, decreased urine output and colour, heartburn, stomach-ache, sunken eyes.

TOP 5 TRAINING TIPS

Don't over commit to training or overstretch yourself, you want to start the challenge in peak physical fitness but without being burnt out - these are the team's top 5 tips:

1. **Wear your gear in!** – wear your cycling shorts and footwear to make sure you are happy with it and avoid blisters!
2. **Be confident cycling!** – Slowly build your fitness and do at least one big cycle. There are many fantastic cycle paths in the UK – use the National Cycle Network www.sustrans.org.uk to find one nearby! Most importantly, get to a point where you feel comfortable on a bike over different terrains for longer periods of time. You could also talk to team members living nearby to see if they would like a trial ride.
3. **Fit exercise into your daily routine** - Whether it is a case of getting off the bus a stop early, taking the stairs instead of the lift or even walking up escalators, you will be surprised at how much difference a few little changes can make to your day-to-day wellbeing and overall fitness.
4. **Keep hydrated** - Sports drinks containing electrolytes and vitamins are significantly better absorbed and help to replace energy. Electrolytes, vitamins and other nutrients are essential for performance.
5. **Don't panic** - If you miss a session, it's not the end of the world. Don't push yourself to try and make it up - one session won't make too much difference in the end.

GOOD LUCK!

