

# BALANCE BIKES FACTS & GUIDE

**1.** A **Balance Bike** is a simplified bicycle with no pedals and is used to practice the **#1 skill** needed to ride a bike, **balance!**

**2.** In my opinion, I wouldn't use a bike with **stabilisers**. It is very possible for children as young as **three** to learn on a balance bike and then move straight to pedaling!



**3.** A **regular** bicycle can be used as a balance bike by simply **removing the pedals**:

- \* A 15mm spanner is needed
- \* The drive side (right side with cogs) unscrews as usual
- \* The non-drive side (left side with no cogs) unscrews the opposite way (clockwise to loosen – anti-clockwise to tighten)

**4.** There are many minor **variations** out there. These are the **TOP 3** things Sustrans' school officers look for in a balance bike:

- \* **Inflatable rubber tyres**
- \* **Rear brake**
- \* **Light as possible**

Some also come with foot rests to encourage keeping feet off the ground (gliding)

**5.** There are 3 important skills to learn before moving onto a bike with pedals:

**Giant steps:** Demonstrate how a giant walks. When the child is ready, encourage them forwards for about 10 metres using giant steps

**Kangaroo hops:** Demonstrate kangaroo hops. Encourage the child forwards for about 10 metres using the hops

**Gliding:** Challenge the child to step or hop as a run up and then lift both feet in the air and glide for 2 meters before putting them back down. Increase the distance with confidence

**6.** To improve **balance and safety awareness**, always encourage the child to **keep their head up** and look ahead

To see some of this in action **watch our video:** [tinyurl.com/losestabilisers](https://www.tinyurl.com/losestabilisers)



For more information and guidance, request that your school run a **learn to ride** session or a **parent coffee Q&A** session. Your Sustrans Bike It officer will be more than happy to help.