Start Thinking Like a Cyclist - This is not much different from thinking like a driver. The law in New Mexico gives bicycle riders the same rights and responsibilities as auto drivers.

Check Your Fitness Level - You may want to consult your physician to make sure you're fit enough to ride.

Talk to Your Employer - Your company may offer benefits for bicyclists such as bike racks, showers, lockers, changing facilities and more. Leave a change of clothes at work on days you drive. Additionally, 2009 marks the enactment of the federal Bicycle Commuter tax benefit. Check with your employer for details.

Look for Route Options - Do the buses in your area have bike racks or will the drivers allow you to bring your bike on board? Call your local Transit Department.

Photo by Andy Hume, Las Cruces MPO

Tips for Safe Bicycle Riding

Bicycles and automobiles share the roads. They both must operate responsibly and respectfully, and obey all traffic laws. Remember to follow these rules of the road when riding your bicycle:

- Always wear a bicycle helmet; for cyclists under the age of 18, wearing a helmet is the law in New Mexico
- Ride on the right side of the road—in the same direction as if you were driving a car
- Obey all traffic signs and traffic lights
- Ride as far to the right in the driving lane as practical
- Signal your intent to change lanes or make a turn
- Be visible if you ride at night; use an appropriate headlight and rear reflector or light and wear light colored clothing
- Be predictable; don't weave from the sidewalk to a driving lane
- Ride no more than two abreast
- Only one person per bicycle—no handle bar riding
- Make sure your bicycle is in good working order

New Mexico Department of Transportation
Bicycle, Pedestrian & Equestrian
Advisory Committee—Info on the Web:
dot.state.nm.us/main.asp?secid=11190

Bicycle Awareness

New Mexico DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE

Bicycle, Pedestrian & Equestrian Advisory Committee

NMDOT Bicycle, Pedestrian & Equestrian Coordinator
Phone: (505) 827-0050
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Why Cycling?

It's Healthy! Riding a bike to work can keep you in shape without having to set aside additional time for exercise. Bicycle riders tend to enjoy healthier lifestyles, get sick less often and feel less stress.

Photo courtesy of Bicycle Coalition of New Mexico

It's Smart! Bicycle commuting is one of the least expensive ways to get to work. There's no gas, parking fees or insurance to pay for, and maintenance costs are much lower.

It's Fast! In many areas, trips by bicycle door-to-door are faster than by car, especially where the one-way commute distance is less than five miles.

It's Clean! Bicycles don't pollute the air or require lots of roads or land for parking lots. Eight to 12 bicycles can park in the space required for one car.

It's Fun! A bicycle ride at the end of the day is a great way to relieve stress. Discovering routes on back roads through residential neighborhoods can be scenic and fun.

Commuting by Bicycle:

Gear Up - Have your bike checked out by your local bike shop professional.

Select a Route - Design a route by looking at a city map. Look for extra-wide travel lanes, low traffic volumes and buses with bike racks.

Consider a Bike Buddy - Knowing that someone is counting on you to ride can strengthen your resolve to bicycle. It can also be safer to ride as a pair, too, since you're a more formidable force on the road and have someone to help you in case of an emergency.

Photo by Andy Hume, Las Cruces MPO

Photo by Tim Rogers, NMDOT

Do a Test Run - On a day you would regularly take your car, drive the route and look for things like street conditions and parked cars. You may even try a test ride on your bicycle on a weekend prior to riding the route on a busy weekday.

Put Safety First - Buy a CPSC approved helmet, then wear it. Under New Mexico state law, cyclists under the age of 18 are required to wear a helmet. Also, check your bike for reflectors and other safety features. Wear brightly colored clothing, especially if you ride at dawn or dusk.