



Selecting the Right Bike & Helmet

While iCan Bike provides the bikes that the rider will use during the camp, an important part of our program is transitioning the rider from our bikes to their own family bike. It is important that the rider is comfortable and confident on their own bike in order to begin practicing immediately following the program.

A good quality bike is more likely to be ridden as it is more comfortable and less likely to be in disrepair. A correct fitting bike will also lead to more riding time because your rider will feel safe and confident. Please be aware that iCan Bike's "fitting" differs from advice you'll get at a bike shop. Please follow our guidelines for your rider's first bike.

- Choose the largest wheeled bike upon which your rider is seated and can place both feet flat on the ground (heels slightly off the ground may be appropriate if the rider can support themselves and the bike). Being able to put both feet down when they feel insecure or when the bike comes to a stop, helps them feel safe and confident. If they feel safe and confident, they are going to want to ride the bike and will continue improving their skills. There will likely be avenues to sell an outgrown bike, especially back to other families taking part in future iCan Bike camps. Stay in touch with your camp host.
- The bikes that we recommend are usually sized by the diameter of the tire (16", 20", 24" 26"), not the frame. This means that your rider may not fit the same on all bikes even if they have the same tire size. The best way to find a suitable bike is to bring your rider with you and have them sit on the bike.
- Choose an easy stepthrough and compact frame bicycle. Easy stepthrough meaning that the top tube of the bicycle is lower to the ground, making it easier for riders to get on and off. These are often called women's bikes, but

they are best for our learning riders. A compact frame promotes an upright riding posture, meaning that the handlebars are closer to the rider and should be noticeably higher than the seat. An upright riding position will allow riders to pedal while keeping everything above their waist relatively static. This all makes it easier to balance because you aren't shifting your center of gravity while riding. The smaller bikes (16" & 20") may be called youth or junior style bikes. The larger sized bikes (24" & 26") may be referred to as cruiser bikes.

- The pedals, at their highest point, should be no more than 3/4 the height of the tire. Pedals higher than this will cause the rider's feet and knees to elevate too high with each rotation. This is uncomfortable while trying to sit on the seat and results in the rider's weight shifting from side to side making it more difficult to maintain balance.
- This is not required, but we do recommend bikes with a handbrake. It is easier for most riders to differentiate the two motor skills of "feet go forward" to make the bike go and "squeeze with the hand" to make the bike stop. Geared bikes and 20" single speed bikes will often come with handbrakes. Larger (24" & 26") single speed beach cruiser bikes will not usually come with handbrakes, but often can have them installed. Consult with your local bike shop to determine if one can be installed. Be sure to understand the return policy of a bike, especially from large retail stores, if later you find that you cannot install a handbrake.
- If a 16" or 20" bike has a handbrake, it should be to the back wheel. A front wheel handbrake can be dangerous and may cause the rider to flip over the handlebars. All 16" and 20" family bikes with a front handbrake will be disengaged at the iCan Bike program.
- 24" and 26" single speed cruiser bikes are safe with a handbrake to either or both wheels. They can have one or two sets of brakes and levers, though one is usually adequate.
- If possible, try to avoid competition/freestyle (BMX) and mountain bikes. They are more difficult to ride and not designed for learning riders. BMX bikes are designed for riding while standing (pedals come up too high) and mountain bikes are for riding in hilly environments (rider leans forward over the handlebars instead of upright riding posture) – neither are ideal for our learning riders.

- Geared VS single speed bikes - there are pluses and minuses to each. Single speed bikes keep things simple, but often do not come with handbrakes. It would be an extra step to have a handbrake installed, if one can even be installed. Geared bikes are easier to find and come with handbrakes, but allow pedaling backwards and will have “clicking” shifters on the handlebars, both which may cause confusion, frustration, or be a source of distraction. There are ways to lock out gears and/or use tape to disable the shifters; consult your local bike shop. You know your rider best and the iCan Shine staff will also be able to give you insight to your rider’s pedaling and whether or not they think a bike with gears is or isn’t advisable.
- Be sure the rider likes the selected bike! We want the bike to motivate them to get out and ride.

Modifications to get the perfect fit

- Change the bike seat to be wider and/or softer for comfort.
- Change the seat to be smaller or narrower to help the rider's feet completely reach the ground. This will potentially provide the needed reach to allow the rider to fit on a bigger wheeled bike with both feet flat on the ground. It's simply easier to ride a bigger wheeled bike and this will also allow for more years of growth before needing another bike.
- Remove the seat post reflector, allowing the seat to be adjusted lower.
- For riders that appear to be leaning down and forward to reach for the handlebars, consider adding a stem riser or higher rise handlebars which will promote a more upright riding position. Note that for geared bikes, making the handlebars higher may require changing the brake and/or shifter cables to make the new reach. Your local bike shop can make these assessments.

For additional information on bike selection and fitting, as well as helmet fitting, please watch our *Selecting a Suitable Bike for Learning* video on the parent page of our website: <https://icanshine.org/parents/ican-bike-parents/>.

iCan Bike Program Bikes

The iCan Bike program uses a number of bikes in its program, all of which we recommend. Some of the bikes, as stock, may require some modifications to make them into an ideal learning bike for your rider. See the descriptions below.

Retrospec Bikes

These bikes are direct to the consumer, meaning that you order them online and they are shipped to you in a box. Some assembly is required, but it's not overwhelming. One can do it with some basic knowhow. Otherwise, a bike shop can build it for a fee. iCan Shine will not be able to build these bikes for families.

Retrospec Koda Plus & Beaumont 16" - Single speed bikes. Both are essentially the same and come with both a coaster and a handbrake to the rear wheel, which is hard to find on a 16" bike. They also come with a front wheel handbrake that iCan Bike recommends disabling/removing to avoid flipping over the bars.

Retrospec Koda & Koda Plus 20": Single speed bikes. Both are essentially the same and are good for smaller riders who fit on a 20" bike. iCan Bike recommends disabling/removing the front wheel handbrake on both models. The one drawback is that they come with rear freewheels, meaning that you can pedal backwards without anything happening (much like a geared bike). This can potentially be a source of frustration or confusion. iCan Bike has modified our bikes to have coaster brake wheels, allowing us to teach this braking option. It's relatively easy to find other brands/models of these smaller 20" bikes with a rear wheel handbrake and coaster brake. See the list below for other suggestions.

Retrospec Chatham 20" Single Speed Beach Cruiser: This is a 20" bike that's good for larger riders with shorter legs who aren't able to fit on 24" bikes. This bike only comes with a coaster brake, but can have a rear wheel handbrake installed. It also comes with a large wide cushy seat, which is better for the riders who can fit on this bike, but also can accommodate a smaller narrow seat..

Retrospec Chatham 24" Single Speed Beach Cruiser: This bike only comes with a coaster brake, but can have a rear and/or front wheel handbrake installed. It also comes with a large wide cushy seat. However, in order to get some shorter riders to fit onto this bike with their feet confidently on the ground, switching to a narrow seat will allow for slightly more leg reach.

Retrospec Chatham 26" Single Speed Beach Cruiser: This bike only comes with a coaster brake, but can have a rear and/or front wheel handbrake installed. It also comes with a large wide cushy seat. However, in order to get some shorter riders to fit onto this bike with their feet confidently on the ground, switching to a narrow seat will allow for slightly more leg reach.

[Electra Bikes](#)

This brand of bike will often be found at bikes shops who deal in Trek branded bicycles.

Electra Sprocket 20": iCan Bike uses this version of bike because the pedals are further forward than a typical bike. This bike is ideal for riders with CP, hemiparesis, hemiplegia or riders who have problems pedaling/keeping their feet on the pedals.

While iCan Bike doesn't specifically use other Electra bikes in our program, Electra makes larger size versions of similar frame designs where the pedals are further forward. Look up Electra Cruiser 1 (single speed - 24" and 26") and Electra Townie (geared - 24" and 26").

[Huka Tandem](#)

The model of our tandem bicycle is called *Huka Copilot* and comes from the Netherlands. It is not widely available in the United States/North America. The iCan Bike program uses the 24" wheeled version (with some modifications), but this bike also comes in a 26" version and both can even be made as an e-bike. There are many options/features available for these tandems. Contact iCan Shine if you have interest in this bike and we can direct you to the only vendor in the U.S.

Other Suggested Learning Bikes

iCan Bike is often asked about **Guardian** bikes. These are direct to the consumer, meaning you order them online and some assembly will be required. These are quality bikes, but all but the smallest of the bikes have gears and freewheels (pedaling backwards without doing anything). Their braking system, Sure-Stop, is very good. You know your rider best, so if they can handle gears and freewheels, Guardian is a quality brand.

Bike manufacturers have an ever changing line up of bike models. Below is a list of commonly available bikes. The list is broken into two sections - those you'll find at a bike shop and others found at large retail stores. Some of the bikes will not come with a rear wheel handbrake; however, a bike shop may be able to add one.

The list is further broken down into *Current/New Bikes* and *Discontinued/Used Bikes*. *Current* meaning those likely found in a shop/store, and *Discontinued* found in the used market (think Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, etc.). In most cases, iCan Bike recommends a quality used bike over a lower quality brand new bike. You're on your own when evaluating used bikes, but remember, all used bikes are negotiable!

Bike models with the same name may come in both "men's" and "women's." iCan Bike recommends the easy stepthrough frames, which often are referred to as "women's".

** Canadian campers see your special listing on our Canadian Recommended Bike List.*

Bike Shop Bicycles

16" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Fuji Rookie (has handbrake)
- Liv Adore
- Raleigh Jazzi
- Specialized Riprock Coaster
- Sun Flower Power/Matrix

16" Tire (Discontinued/Used Bikes)

- Raleigh Lil Honey
- Sparrow
- Specialized Hotrock Coaster

20" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Liv Adore
- Raleigh Jazzi
- Schwinn Stardust & Aerostar
- Specialized Riprock Coaster
- Sun Flower Power/Matrix

20" Tire (Discontinued/Used Bikes)

- Giant Moda
- Raleigh Retro
- Specialized Hotrock
- Trek Jet
- Trek Mystic

24" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Electra Cruiser 1
- Sun Boardwalk
- Sun Revolutions

24" Tire (Discontinued/Used Bikes)

- Schwinn Sprite
- Schwinn Streamliner

26" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Electra Cruiser 1
- Pure City Step Through Cruiser
- Sun Boardwalk
- Sun Revolutions
- Sun Streamway

26" Tire (Discontinued/Used Bikes)

- Giant Via W
- Liv Simple Single W
- Schwinn S1
- Torker Boardwalk

It can sometimes be a challenge finding single speed 24" and 26" bicycles. While iCan Bike recommends single speed bikes to keep things simple, below is a list of geared bikes that are relatively simple, suitable, and relatively easy to find (there are more listed under the *Larger Retail Store* section).

24" Tire (Current/New Geared Bikes)

- Electra Cruiser 7D
- Electra Townie

26" Tire (Current/New Geared Bikes)

- Electra Cruiser 7D
- Electra Townie
- Specialized Crossroads
- Sun Boardwalk 7
- Sun Revolutions 3

Large Retail Store Bicycles

The table below has bikes that can be found at larger retail stores such as Dick's, Target and Walmart. These are perfectly acceptable, but just so you are aware, they are usually of lower quality, less durable, not assembled by experienced bike mechanics, and you will likely not find staff that are knowledgeable about the bikes they are selling.

Many of these bikes will not accept hand brakes. You will need to take it to your local bike shop for guidance. Understand the return policy prior to purchase.

Many of these 16" and 20" bikes will have handbrakes on the front wheel. At bike camp, iCan Bike's policy is to disable the front brake on these smaller bikes to avoid flipping over the handlebars. Also, on these smaller sized single speed bikes, if the pedals and cranks rotate backwards (freewheel), then it does not have a coaster brake and is a BMX freestyle bike. It is best to avoid all BMX bikes for reasons stated above.

16" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Huffy Rock It (Walmart)
- Huffy Sea Star(Walmart)
- Schwinn Cosmo(Walmart)
- Next Flare (Walmart)

24" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Beach Cruiser (Target)
- Huffy Cranbrook (Walmart)
- Huffy Nel Lusso (Walmart)
- Kulana (Dick's)

20" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Huffy Sea Star (Walmart)
- Kent 2 Cool (Walmart)
- Schwinn Falcon (Target)
- Schwinn Fenite (Dick's)

26" Tire (Current/New Bikes)

- Beach Cruiser (Target)
- Huffy Cranbrook (Walmart)
- Kent La Jolla (Walmart)
- Schwinn Legacy & Signature

Bike Helmets

A properly fitted bike helmet is required for all riders at the iCan Bike program. iCan Bike strongly recommends that all individuals riding a bicycle outside of camp wear a helmet. Even a low-speed accident can result in a serious head injury. Be a good role model and ensure that both you and your other family members always wear a helmet when riding bikes.

- There are different helmets for different recreational activities. Each type of helmet is made to protect your head from the impacts common to a particular activity or sport. Skateboard helmets protect the back of your head, which is the most common location for skateboarding head injuries. They are designed for multiple low speed impacts. Bike helmets are designed to protect the front of the head, the most common area of most biking injuries. Bike helmets are designed for higher speed single impacts. You can see the differences below.



Skateboard Helmet
(not for biking)



Bike Helmet

- Purchase a helmet that meets U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) safety standards for biking. There should be a sticker inside the helmet or identified on the helmet box stating that it is approved for cycling.

Bike Helmet Fit

The two-finger rule is an easy guide for proper fit. You should be able to:



- Place two fingers between the eyebrows and the helmet. This ensures proper placement on the head, not too far forward or backward. The helmet should fit firmly and level on the rider's head.
- Hold two fingers in a peace sign "V" with the bottom of the "V" just below the ear lobe. This is where the side straps of the helmet should be when the helmet is on the rider.
- Insert two fingers between the chin strap and chin. The strap should be tight enough to secure the helmet, but not so tight as to constrict, pinch, or be uncomfortable.

- For a more secure fit, iCan Shine recommends cycling helmets that use an adjustment dial on the back of the helmet.



- Helmets should be adjusted to fit each individual's head. The helmet should fit securely and not shift on the head.
- Before each ride, a helmet should be checked and adjusted, if necessary.
- Helmets should be replaced if subjected to a severe blow, even if it doesn't appear to have damage. One cannot often see if the structural integrity has been compromised. Some manufacturers use the mantra "one crash and it's trash."