



Photo: Miles McClelland, BRAG

Road bikes (above) are built for riding on paved roads and are ideal for touring or recreational riding.

Hybrids (right) combine some features of road and mountain bikes. Their upright riding position and bigger tires make them ideal for urban riding and commuting.



Photo: Mark Dodson

Choose a Bike That's Right For You

Select a bike suited for the terrain and the type of riding you'll be doing. There are several varieties to choose from. Your local bike shop is the best place to begin shopping. They stock many different types of bikes and have professionals who can make sure you're getting a frame size that's the proper fit. Below are some details on common styles of bikes.

Road bikes: Designed for road riding, there are several variations available. Racing and training bikes are built for speed. Touring bikes have a longer wheelbase and are set up to haul the extra weight of gear needed for trips of several days or more. They frequently include places to attach panniers and accessories. Most road bikes have drop handlebars that make for a lower, less upright, riding position. This is considered advantageous for covering distances and riding into the wind.

Mountain bikes: These are among the most popular bikes sold today. They feature a more upright riding position and do not have the drop handlebars common to road bikes. They're primarily set up for off-road use, especially when equipped with shocks and fat knobby tires. They are usually equipped with a third chain ring up front that allows the rider to access some extra lower gears for climbing. While these are often seen on the road, mountain bikes are slower and less efficient on paved surfaces.

Hybrids: A cross between a road and mountain bike, these are good for urban or paved trail riding. They provide a more comfortable upright riding position, similar to a mountain bike, and are equipped

Mountain bikes with fat tires and suspension are excellent for riding off road on Georgia's unpaved trails.



Photo courtesy of Bikes Belong

with slightly wider tires than a road bike, which provides a more comfortable ride on rough pavement or gravel. Hybrids are functional for road use also, but are not as fast or efficient as road bikes on smooth pavement.

Recumbents:

These look quite different than traditional bikes. They have a reclining seat and sit lower to the ground with the pedals out in front of the rider instead of below. It is recommended to have a flag attached to the back to improve visibility. Generally regarded as faster on flats and downhill, they're ridden mostly by recreational riders. Because recumbents are not mass-produced like ordinary bikes, you may need to search out a shop or dealer who specifically handles or sells them.

Shopping for a bike?

Your local bike shop is the best place to shop for bicycles and accessories.

Tandems. Tandems are popular and seen frequently on rides and tours around Georgia. Riding with another person is a great way to share the cycling experience.

Electric-assisted

Bicycles. Electric-assisted bicycles are becoming an option for many cyclists. A wide range of small, electric-powered motors are now available to provide a needed boost for utility, cargo, or fit-

ness bikes. However, the motors only provide assistance to pedaling power and should not be confused with faster motor-powered scooters. Electric-assisted bicycles in Georgia are defined as a two- or three-wheeled device with fully operative pedals and a small electric motor. The motor may not have a power output of more than 1,000 watts, weigh more than 100 pounds, or propel the device faster than 20 miles per hour. Electric-assisted



Recumbents (above) are becoming more popular and are built for comfort and speed.

bikes may generally be operated in bicycle lanes or paths, but some restrictions may apply.

Many paths in Georgia are designated as shared-use paths for use by walkers, joggers, roller bladers, or equestrians. The speeds achieved by electric-assisted bicycles may not be compatible with these other uses in constrained spaces of narrow paths. Some facilities may have restrictions on motorized vehicles; check with your local jurisdiction or facility manager to determine

if any additional considerations apply. General vehicular laws, common sense, and basic courtesy apply when operating electric-assisted bicycles, just as with any other vehicle.

Choose what's best for you. Set up your bike to fit the type of riding you'll be doing most. Urban commuters will have different needs than those doing fast training rides or off-road trail riding. Your local bike shop can show you different types of bikes and accessories to choose from.



• 40-6-294 (e) Electric assisted bicycles as defined in Code Section 40-1-1 may be operated on bicycle paths.

• 40-1-1 (15.5) "Electric assisted bicycle" means a device with two or three wheels which has a saddle and fully operative pedals for human propulsion and also has an electric motor. For such a device to be considered an electric assisted bicycle, it shall meet the requirements of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, as set

forth in 49 C.F.R. Section 571, et seq., and shall operate in such a manner that the electric motor disengages or ceases to function when the brakes are applied. The electric motor in an electric assisted bicycle shall: (A) Have a power output of not more than 1,000 watts; (B) Be incapable of propelling the device at a speed of more than 20 miles per hour on level ground; and (C) Be incapable of further increasing the speed of the device when human power alone is used to propel the device at or more than 20 miles per hour.



Tandems can accommodate two riders (left) or sometimes even more (right).

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