

Walking and Bicycling Resources

PEDALS: WHICH SYSTEM IS RIGHT FOR YOU?



There are many options for bike shoes and pedals, but you shouldn't have to suffer aching knees or busted calves with the wrong ones! Here is more information about different pedal types to help you get around comfortably.

PLATFORM PEDALS

Platform pedals are exactly what they sound like: platforms that you put your feet on. Perfect for beginners, they are easy to use, but careful you don't lose your footing; these pedals can bruise your shins.

TOE CLIPS

Also called cages, toe clips attach to your pedals, stabilize your feet, and allow upward pull to help the pedal stroke. Many commuters find these pedals to allow the largest versatility in footwear – a hard sole is preferable, but otherwise anything goes.



www.sheldonbrown.com/harris/index.html

CLIPLESS: ROAD PEDALS

If you decide you want that extra burst of power, clipless is the way to go. They maximize pedaling efficiency, stabilizing your foot and holding it in proper position. Most clipless pedals work by merely stepping down on the pedal with the proper shoe/cleat arrangement, and twisting the heel outward to release. With a little practice this will be easy, so don't worry about falling over!



www.angletechcycles.com

CLIPLESS: MOUNTAIN BIKE PEDALS

Whether you're tearing through the mud or just trying to get to work, mountain bike pedals provide a durable, walkable pedal-and-shoe combination that will work smoothly even in the worst conditions. Mountain bike pedals tend to be heavier and have more float than road pedals do. For additional versatility, you can get "flip-flop pedals" that have the clip on one side and a platform on the other.



www.cadence120.com

SHOES

Road bike shoes tend to be "racier": great for long rides but not so good for walking around your destination. On a mountain bike shoe, the cleat is recessed into a walkable sole. Many serious commuters like the versatility that mountain bike shoes provide as well as their continued functioning under wet or dirty conditions.



www.rei.com

DEFINITION: FLOAT

Float is the horizontal or lateral rotation of your foot as you pedal – often people need 3 degrees of float, and most pedals provide 7. The trade-off is that the more float, the harder it is to pull your foot out of the clip, but less float can put undue pressure on your knees. If you have continuing knee pain as you ride, consult your local bike shop and get your pedals fitted to you. Ask about float when purchasing pedals, but know that proper cleat alignment is crucial.