

# Quiz:

## How Bike-Friendly Is Your City?

By Jemilah Magnusson, ITDP

Everyone has a different idea of what makes a city bike-friendly. Some point to the most visible factors, such as weather and city terrain; others say it's about a city's commitment to creating infrastructure and regulating cars; and still others believe that cultural support of cycling is the key.

This quiz is designed to highlight some of the ways that a city's policies, culture, and infrastructure encourage or discourage cycling. For a deeper look at these and other factors, keep an eye out for a new Cycling Growth web tool from ITDP, coming in 2020.



**DIRECTIONS:**  
Choose the best answer for your city, tally the numbers associated with each answer, and continue to page 40 to see how your city adds up. Share your answers with us on Twitter @ITDP\_HQ

1. The speed limit in my city is 30 km/h or less, and it is well-enforced.

- Strongly Agree (6)
- Agree (4)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (0)

2. When I bike in my city, I have no problem finding secure bike parking.

- Strongly Agree (6)
- Agree (4)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (0)

3. The police in my city frequently harass or ticket cyclists and often ignore bike lane violations by cars.

- Strongly Agree (0)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (6)

4. Cheap and easy options for accessing a bike are plentiful in my city, whether its bike share or quality used bikes, with affordable options for repair.

- Strongly Agree (6)
- Agree (4)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (0)

5. Thefts of bicycles are common, and there is no mechanism to report stolen bikes.

- Strongly Agree (0)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (6)

6. Most people in my community know how to bike.

- Strongly Agree (6)
- Agree (4)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (0)

7. In my community, owning a car is an important status symbol, something everyone wants.

- Strongly Agree (0)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (6)

8. In my community, cycling is seen as 'poor man's transport', and considered a last resort option for trips.

- Strongly Agree (0)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (6)

9. My city has a well-maintained network of protected bike lanes that I feel safe riding in.

- Strongly Agree (6)
- Agree (4)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (0)



10. My city's streets are designed for all users, including cyclists and pedestrians.

- Strongly Agree (6)
- Agree (4)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (0)

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Answers on p. 40

Photos: Wikimedia Commons

# How Bike-Friendly is Your City?

## Quiz Answers

### If you scored from 48-60

#### Your City is...A Best Practice

Congratulations! You're lucky to live in one of the most bike friendly cities in the world, and your city is likely considered best practice in your region, or worldwide. Bikes are easy to find, inexpensive to own, cheap to repair, and you probably also have the option of a bike share system. Cycling is commonly respected by the police and by drivers. Streets are designed for all users, and as a result, people of all ages and ability levels bike.

While bicycle theft happens everywhere, it is not common. Secure bike parking is available at high volume locations or citywide. A bike lane network takes you to most locations in protected lanes, and low speed limits for vehicles throughout the city make it safer when you do need to cross car traffic. As cycling is an accepted and promoted aspect of city life, harassment is rare, and the police take cyclist safety seriously.

#### Your City is similar to...Copenhagen, Denmark

Copenhagen is often hailed as one of the greatest cities in the world for cycling. Although the Danish city did not have an official bicycle strategy until 2001, the city's modern history of biking as a dominant mode of transportation began as a response to the oil crisis of the 1970s, and has improved steadily since then. In 2016, the number of bicycles in Copenhagen officially outnumbered cars, with 265,700 bikes compared with 252,600 cars. Bicycles are a celebrated aspect of Danish culture. Sixty-two percent of people in Copenhagen commute regularly by bike.

### If you scored between 35 and 47

#### Your City Is...Bike Friendly

Well done! Your city is comfortable and convenient for cycling, with a growing share of trips made my bike. A range of different types of bikes are available and affordable, and your city has a well-designed bike share program, although it may still be growing and not available city-wide. Theft is not frequent, but when it does happen, there is a process in place to report it stolen. Secure bike parking exists, but there may not be enough of it at high volume destinations.

A network of protected cycle lanes and off-street trails offers a safe and comfortable option that encourages all ages and abilities to bike. Low speed limits for cars are



Rush hour cycle traffic is busy in Copenhagen, no matter the time of year.

Photos: Mikael Colville-Andersen



Portland has set an example for cycling infrastructure and support for other US cities.  
Photos: Wikimedia Commons



enforced, and your city shows that it takes cycling safety seriously by designing at least some streets in the city center for all users. Cars that encroach on the bike lanes are ticketed, and crashes between bikes and cars are uncommon. Some tension may exist between cyclists and drivers, but police take cyclist harassment seriously. There is strong political support for cycling, an active advocacy community, and public programs exist to teach and support cycling.

### Your City is similar to.... Portland, Oregon, USA

Portland is a regional best practice, frequently cited among the most bike-friendly cities in the US, and has made major efforts in the last few decades to increase cycling in the city. Bicycle use has tripled since 2001. With so many Portland residents using bicycles, theft is common in the city. However, Portland's Police Bureau established a Bike Theft Task Force specifically to tackle the issue of stolen or missing bicycles. In addition to efforts made by the Portland government, citizens have also organized to advocate for cycling and pedestrian improvements.

### If you scored between 23 and 34

#### Your City Is...Using Training Wheels

Your city provides basic support and infrastructure for cyclists, with a small but growing share of commute trips made by bike. You can find common types of bikes, such as road bikes and mountain bikes, but it can be difficult to find affordable children's, adaptive bikes, or cargo bikes. You likely have some form of bike share, but it may be too small to be effective transport and have low ridership, especially outside the central business district.

Bicycle theft is a concern, but there are some processes in place to report the thefts. Bike parking exists but is not widely available, mostly concentrated around transit stops and major destinations in the city center. Some bike lanes exist, and some may be protected, but they may not be part of a planned, connected network. Low speed limits for cars are only enforced in certain areas, and while there may be policies in place to improve cyclist safety, they are not consistently enforced.

Private car ownership is considered an important status symbol, and bikes are often seen as an inferior transport option by the larger society. However, a growing number of cyclists and advocates are pushing back on this assumption. This may have led to increased tension with drivers, and harassment of cyclists, particularly minority and other vulnerable groups. However, the police are at least somewhat responsive to these incidents. While only some people know how to ride a bike, there are public programs available for adults to learn.

#### Your City is Similar To...Quito, Ecuador

Quito is a big city with a great deal of low-density suburban sprawl, and heavy dependence on car travel. While cycling is

Photo: Ted Timmons





Above: Civil society is hoping to push Quito into a city where cycling is more common, but many obstacles remain.  
Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Below: In Beirut, even organized bike tours traverse roads in hostile environments.

Photos:  
Top: The National  
Bottom: Mohamad Cheblak



not a common commute option, the mode share has been growing as people turn to inexpensive alternatives to the heavily-gridlocked streets of car traffic. Community groups in Quito have been highly active in promoting cycling, and calling for improvement policies from the government.

Cyclists in Quito report that safety and security are issues of concern, both with theft and personal safety while riding. Harassment of cyclists can be an issue, and the police are often not responsive. However, there are some promising trends moving the city in the right direction, such as the Ciclopaseo, a weekly car-free morning on a 28km route that is open to cyclists and pedestrians. BiciQuito, the city's bike share program, is free to city residents, and became the first city in Latin America to include e-bikes in 2016. Quito has more than 70km of bike paths, but they are not part of a well-planned network and there are connectivity issues.

## If you scored between 11 and 22

### Your City Is...Bike Stagnant

Your city is doing the bare minimum to encourage cycling, with a small, and potentially shrinking share of commute trips made by bike. Biking, other than for recreation, is not a major part of the culture of your city, and as a result, access to affordable bikes is limited. Quality used bikes are not easy to find, the cost of a new bike and repairs can be prohibitive for low-income residents. Your city may be planning a bike share system, but you likely don't have one operating citywide.

The majority of streets in the city center are designed only for cars. Concerns about safety and security for both bikes and cyclists is a major deterrent to cycling. Limited infrastructure separates cyclists from cars, and high vehicle speeds are common, either because speed limits are too high, or they are not enforced. Cycle lanes may exist, but they are unprotected and often unsafe to use, and there is no planned cycle network in place. Harassment of cyclists is common and the police are dismissive of complaints. For this, and also for cultural reasons, most cyclists are young, able-bodied men. Cycling advocacy groups exist, and may offer support and services, but they are not part of any official government policy.

### Your City is similar to...Beirut, Lebanon

Beirut is a city of dense, chaotic streets, and poses serious safety concerns to cyclists and pedestrians. While cycling could present a more direct, faster option for shorter trips, very few people in the city commute via bicycle. As of 2016, an estimated 200 people, or roughly .01% of the population, commute by bike. Beirut has indicated support for cycling improvements, including a bike share system, but efforts like these have rarely included consultation with the cycling community (or the public more broadly) and have been limited in scope, often not considering critical details such as capital and operating costs or maintenance.

An overall lack of planning for bicycles and pedestrians has likely contributed to low bicycle ridership. Beirut's small, three-station bikeshare system is priced for tourists: \$17 to unlock for the day and \$3 to unlock for an hour—rates that are too high for regular use or local use. The city has few paved sidewalks and even fewer bicycle lanes. Low rates of ridership have limited the availability of bike parking. However, civil society organizations have emerged, and are working to expand awareness of cycling in the city through street art placed at congested intersections, social media campaigns, bicycle parking installations, crowd-sourced bike-friendly streets and businesses maps.

## If you scored between 0 and 10

### Your City Is...Cycle at Your Own Risk

So sorry, but your city is uncomfortable and unsafe for cyclists. There are very few trips made by bike. Access to affordable bikes is very limited, there is almost no used bike market, and most new bikes are unaffordable. It can be difficult to find repair options, and your city likely doesn't have a bike share system. Bike parking is rare anywhere, secure parking is nonexistent, and bicycle thefts are common. There is no process in place to report stolen bikes. There are very few, if any bike lanes, and no major actions have been taken by the city to improve safety for cyclists. Vehicle speeds are high in the city, and cyclists feel unwelcome on the road, which are designed only for cars. Roads may be unpaved, or poorly maintained, which adds even more difficulty to cycling.

Most everyone in your city who can afford a car has one, and cars are seen as aspirational status symbols. Strong stigmas that identify cycling as a symbol of poverty dissuade many potential riders. Threats of harassment or assault, or cultural norms around gender, may dissuade women and girls in particular, and other vulnerable groups such as immigrants or minorities, from cycling. A lack of political will to support or invest in cycling improvement projects, coupled with very few organized cycling advocacy groups, prevent acceptance of cycling as a viable transportation mode.

### Your City is similar to...Johannesburg, South Africa

Johannesburg is a car-oriented city, with very limited access to affordable bikes. Less than 10% of Jo'burg residents own a bike, and most residents do not know how to bike. Efforts made by the city to create a public bikeshare program have stalled for concerns about affordability, safety, security, and long commute distances. Bicycle theft is high in Johannesburg. In 2013, the city began implementing cycle lanes; however, many were deemed to be underutilized, and wealthy residents complained about lanes being a waste of the city's resources. As of 2016, all future cycle lane projects were halted. A lack of physical separation between cyclists and traffic is particularly challenging for cyclists interacting with Johannesburg's minibuses, which have no set routes and notoriously aggressive drivers. And while the majority of Johannesburg

In Johannesburg, cars are plenty and powerful, making cycling neither a safe nor comfortable mode of transport.  
Photos:  
Top: Wikimedia Commons  
Bottom: Riding through Johannesburg



## Mexico

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Children were encouraged to express, in their terms, their experiences walking to and from school. For that purpose, they used magnifying glasses in cardboard to observe street elements that they liked (dogs and ice cream vendors) and those they disliked (holes in sidewalks and cars parked on the sidewalks), and got adults or older students to take pictures of them. At the end of the day, all the children shared their experience of walking or biking, and parents took advantage of the presence of local authorities to demand safer street environments for children.

Today, these experiences are being implemented in three mid-sized cities in central and northern Mexico whose governments show a strong commitment to the road safety agenda: Puebla, Hermosillo, and San Pedro Garza García. With these tools and technical visits of the ITDP team to the sites, school communities in these cities have collaborated with authorities to organize their own Walk and Bike to School Day. The act of providing space for children to express their ideas about how to use street space and enlisting parents to advocate for road safety was key to the project's success. Vision Zero for Youth is about saving children's lives and creating a sustainable future for everyone.

## Bike-Friendly Quiz Answers

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residents cannot afford a car, the roads in the city are built for cars, and many are unpaved.

However, community-driven critical mass rides have brought awareness to the growing number of cyclists in the city and their calls for safety and improved conditions. Advocacy groups like the Johannesburg Urban Cyclists Association, which developed a bicycle map for the city that identifies preferred commuting routes and continues to pressure the city government to implement its bicycle strategy, are working to change the perception of cycling in Johannesburg.

## China

*continued from p. 15*

the first city in the world with a fully electric bus fleet. The city has 16,359 electric buses that travel a daily average of 2.85 million kilometers. It has built 510 bus charging stations and approximately 5,000 charging piles, a form of charging station.

Pure electric buses have replaced traditional diesel buses and have made progress in mitigating air pollution. Even with an imperfect grid, e-buses are huge energy savers, consuming roughly one-third of the energy of diesel buses, and helping to lower fuel consumption. Electric buses also reduce harmful carbon emissions and particulate matter by over 400 tons and are less expensive to operate. Electrification still has challenges as battery life can be difficult to maintain and capital costs are high, but China is positioned to take full advantage of new technology.

There are many unanswered questions about China's future, but all signs point to electrified transport that is people-centered and bicycle-forward. If China continues on its current trajectory, it will be a highly competitive economic force and an example of sustainability to other high-polluting nations. This shift will require cities to reorient away from growth and investment patterns and priorities from the past 30 years and focus on sustainable and low polluting practices. If successful, China's cities can become examples for previously high polluting cities all over the world.

## Back to the Future: Our World's Cities in 1985, and Today

9 Cities Photo Credits (clockwise from top left of each *Then* and *Now* section)

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