

## **GUIDANCE ABOUT HOW MUCH MONEY TO SPEND ON A BICYCLE**

- **£100 used bike:** If you're on a very tight budget, as little as £100 will get a tatty but fully serviced and mechanically sound bike perfect for use around the city – a much more reliable, more cost-effective and less theft-vulnerable option than spending e.g. £99.99 on a brand new mail order or department store bike.
  - **£175 used bike:** For around £175 we can sell you a good quality fully serviced second-hand hybrid bike which would have been £250 to £400 when new. A bike in this price bracket would probably be ideally suited to purposes such as commuting and leisure rides at the weekend.
  - **£250 used bike:** A budget of £200 or £300 will buy an excellent refurbished tourer or road bike, or a perfectly usable mountain bike, originally worth upwards of £500 when new. These sorts of bikes would be ideal for longer rides, touring, off-road riding etc.
  - **£500+ used bike:** A budget of £500 or more will secure you a very nice fully reconditioned bike built from a mix of new and used components, normally with a 12-month warranty. Typically the bikes we sell in this price range will be good quality touring bikes or similar. Our bespoke commissions also start at this sort of price, allowing you to tailor the bike to suit your requirements and budget.
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- **£250 new bike:** Reasonable quality new commuter and hybrid bikes start at this sort of price, and although you don't get as much bike for your money compared to second-hand models, the advantages of buying new are that you can get a bike in the right size straight away, often in a choice of different colours, and it will come with a 12-month warranty. We always recommend you should never spend less than £250 on a new hybrid or road bike, anything less is likely to be a false economy because soon you'll end up spending more on servicing and upgrades.
  - **£350 new bike:** Spending say £300 or £350 on a new hybrid bike usually means the components and specification will be better than on a £250 model. This can make the bike is lighter or nicer to ride, and at this price point it can also help ensure it lasts longer and could even be cheaper to run in the long term, for example because of stronger wheels, better bearings, or individually replaceable chainrings.
  - **£500+ new bike:** We recommend you should not spend less than £500 on a new mountain bike or tourer if it is going to be used hard, anything cheaper is likely a false economy because you'll spend more on servicing or upgrades. However, don't assume that more expensive always means more reliable: for example, above say £500 or £600 many hybrids will be lighter and faster, but possibly more fragile, more expensive to repair, and more of a theft-risk than a £300 or £400 model.
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**Jake's Bikes, Hamilton House, 80 Stokes Croft (back door via City Road), Bristol BS1 3QY**

## ***SUPERMARKET, MAIL ORDER AND DEPARTMENT STORE BIKES***

Do not buy a bike from a supermarket, mail order website or department store for £59.99 or £99.99 or even £149.99. It will be heavy and uncomfortable, will start rusting in a few months, and if used regularly many parts will be broken and dangerous after only a year or two. At this price point, your money is much better spent on a good second-hand bike.

*"But I've found a real bargain with suspension and disc brakes"*

In fact, this makes it even worse: at this price, suspension or disc brakes can only be of appallingly low quality. Some low-price mountain bikes have plastic brake components and fake suspension which doesn't move. Far better to pay for a simple and honest bike with reasonable components than a flashy bike with lots of low-quality gizmos and gadgets.

*"I've seen the same bike online for £20 less than in the shops"*

Any mail order bike will be delivered disassembled in a box and will require servicing prior to riding. Professional assembly is required by some manufacturers to activate the warranty. Assembly and servicing typically costs £25 to £40.

## ***SHOULD I BUY A MOUNTAIN BIKE?***

If you plan to use it on-road, we advise against buying a bike with suspension and knobbly tyres. There can be reasons for using a mountain bike on-road, (e.g. carrying heavier loads, very low gears, or finding a bike that will fit a small rider) but ensure it has slick tyres and preferably no suspension. Fat, knobbly tyres are noisy, slow and harder to pedal – and contrary to uninformed opinion they do not make the bike any more stable or easy to balance. Suspension adds weight, and can sag and bounce as you pedal, sapping your energy and making hills difficult. Also, mountain bikes have the added disadvantages of being attractive to thieves, and potentially being more expensive to service.

Fat tyres and suspension have their place: mountain bikes are great for use off-road, but bear in mind that if you are serious about regularly using a mountain bike for this purpose you should certainly spend not less than £250 second-hand or £500 new. Anything less will quickly prove unreliable and will be a false economy in the long term.

*"But I don't want a racer, they're so 80's. A mountain bike looks cool!"*

It depends who you are trying to impress. Some teenage boys might like knobbly tyres and cheap suspension, but everyone else will either laugh or pity you as you sweat and struggle along slowly. And not all road bikes are racers by any means: hybrids, commuter bikes, and tourers are all far more suited to regular road use than a mountain bike.

*"I know, but I prefer suspension and fat tyres for bumping up and down kerbs"*

This is also largely myth. Provided a hybrid bike's tyres are kept properly inflated they will withstand all normal urban conditions. The fatter the tyre the lower the tyre pressure, thus the type of puncture known as a pinch-flat (where the tyre gets pinched between the rim and a hard obstacle, e.g. a kerb) are just as likely with fat mountain bike tyres.

If you must ride up and down kerbs, the speed at which you hit them should not require suspension. If you are hitting kerbs fast enough that it hurts your hands/arms/wrists enough to need suspension, you will almost certainly damage your tyres and possibly your wheels. Only expensive downhill mountain bikes or freestyle BMXs are built to withstand this kind of treatment in the long term.

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