

Frequently Asked Questions

NATIONAL CYCLING CENTRE
HOME OF BRITISH CYCLING



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Questions and Answers

How do I book a club, college, corporate, private or school session at the Velodrome on the track or on the Wattbikes (spin bikes), or a Velodrome Tour?

You first need to check availability with Sam Kelly, in our Bookings Dept. Phone 0161 230 2270 or e mail bookings@nationalcyclingcentre.com. Sam will then send you out a booking form, which needs to be sent back by return.

How do I book a Taster session, Structured Training session, a Wattbike spin session, or buy a Velodrome voucher?

Phone 0161 223 2244 and choose option 3 for reception to book. We can take payment by credit or debit card over the phone. Each customer needs to complete a health questionnaire, which can be downloaded from our website documents page. It can be returned via e mail to: admin@nationalcyclingcentre.com

What can I expect from a taster session or schools/college taster session?

There are up to 16 riders on the track at the same time, for 1 hour's duration. You will be given a set of skills to learn by the coach. Each rider will be provided with a bike and helmet. You need to advise us in advance of rider's height details. For schools/college 15 riders is the limit. There is a progression pathway for schools.

What can I expect from a private or club session longer than 1 hour?

You can have 16 riders on the track at the same time, if they are novices, so best to split your members or guests into groups, with a group on the track, and a group off the track. A club group of experienced riders can use the track limit of 25 riders. The coach may be able to provide a mock race if a skill level is reached, and novices can race in a 1 lap flying start time trial at the end of your session, racing one at a time. We can provide a result sheet of the time trial for you to take away if required.

What can I expect from a Wattbike spin session?

We have 22 Wattbikes available for club or group spinning sessions. We now accept bookings from cycling clubs, companies, youth and other groups to book a session (minimum 1 hour), that can be coach led, or you and your group free ride for the session. If you choose a coach led session, then we can enhance your activity with virtual training and racing on a big screen.

Do you cater for riders with a disability?

We can accept riders with learning and other disabilities, but they must be able to ride a two wheeled bike, and the coach must be able to communicate with them, and for the coach to be satisfied that the riders has understood the instructions given. We also now run Visually Impaired Taster sessions. Please check with reception for availability.

What are the track limits?

A club session can have up to 40 riders, limited to between 16 to 25 riders on the track at a time, depending on experience. A Structured training session can have 40 riders on the track at the same time. Deryn sessions can have up to 10 riders behind a Deryn, with two Deryns on the track.

What session would be appropriate for a club group of mixed abilities?

If you are booking a private session for 2 hours, you could have 16 novice riders and 24 experienced riders. The two groups would alternate on the track. If you booked 1 hour, then you should just cater for the novices.

Do you have a minimum age and maximum age?

Minimum age is 9 years, (12 years for Wattbikes) but they must also be able to sit safely on our hire bikes, the smallest Dolan bike size is 39.5cms. Riders 70 years plus regularly ride the Velodrome – if you are in your 80's then you need to check with the Cycling Manager before you book.

What is the cost of hiring track, coach, bikes, Wattbikes etc?

The track hire, per hour is £105.00. You will need a member of our Velodrome Coaching staff, which is £30.00 for the 1st hour, and £22.00 per hour thereafter. Wattbike hire per hour for 16 Wattbikes is £50.00, with your own coach or free riding. A Velodrome spin coach is £30.00 per hour and a video screen for virtual racing is £25.00 per hour. The spin coach delivers a 45 minute session for 15 spinners.

Bike hire per rider is £10.80 for the 1st 2 hours and £16.50 for over 2 hours. Concessions: £8.30 for the 1st 2 hours £12.30 for over 2 hours and this includes helmet hire. Pedals cannot be removed or changed, and the only adjustment that can be made to the bike is the saddle height. Step in adaptors are available for riders with trainers. Lake shoe hire is £4.80. For corporate rates, please contact Sam Kelly, in our Bookings Dept. Phone 0161 230 2270 or e mail bookings@nationalcyclingcentre.com.

Can I be issued with probationary accreditation?

Please read the information sheet on probationary accreditation first, to see if you meet the criteria. This opportunity is only for the experienced track rider, who is not already accredited. Any rider seeking probationary accreditation can do this by applying in advance to the Cycling Manager, who will make a decision if the candidate is suitable. Candidates must be 15 years or better.

The Cycling Manager may consult with British Cycling Talent Team or Coaching & Education, or other Velodrome coaches on the matter, but the Cycling Manager's decision is final and not negotiable. Only the Cycling Manager may issue probationary accreditation. This probationary accreditation is not valid for SQT Deryn paced or Sprint/Keirin sessions.

What is the specification of a Manchester Velodrome bike?

- Track bikes must have a fixed wheel, 165mm cranks, and 280mm (11") bottom bracket height (measured from floor to centre of bottom bracket), no braze ons, and must have track ends. Coaches must advise riders to check their own bikes before taking to the track, including: tyres, chain tension, wheel nuts. If a "fixie" bike is used, that matches the measurements above, and has brazed ons or cast cable or gear stops, and must be padded with foam and taped over with insulating tape.
- Use Continental, Schwalbe, Tufo or Vittoria clinchers or tubulars (black tread only), 21 mm wide or better.

Recommended clinchers and tubulars					
Make	Model	Width	Make	Model	Width
Conti	Tempo	22mm	Tufo	S3 Pro	22mm
Conti	Sonderklasse 165/175	22mm	Tufo	S3 Lite 135	21mm
Schwalbe	Durano T	22 and 25mm	Tufo	Elite 120	21mm
Schwalbe	Ultremo R1	22 and 25mm	Vittoria	Pista EVO CS	22mm
			Vittoria	Pista EVO CL	22mm

- Tyres must be inflated to 8 bar (119psi), and the pressures, and tyre condition checked regularly. Do not use Michelin tyres or any dual compound tyres. Other tyres and tubulars may in future be recommended after analysis. Do not use tub tape to fix tubulars to sprint rims – use proprietary rim cement.

- Do not use brand new tyres on the track without first preparing them thus; rub the surface with alcohol or white vinegar or other degreaser before use. Ride the first three laps on the Cote d'Azur or bottom of track.
- No spare sprocket on double rear hub
- Bar ends must be fitted, and secure in handlebars.
- No quick release spindles. Wheel spindles should not extend beyond the track nuts, front and rear, and should be sawn off flush with the nut, and filed smooth.
- Recommended gears for novices, and all riders on taster sessions - 84" gear adults, 74" for 9 -12 year olds.
- The gearing on Velodrome hire bikes range from 72.6" (44 x 15) to 83.9" (50 x 16).
- Gearing for all endurance SQT's, including Madison and Derny, shall be restricted to a maximum of 88". It does not apply to Sprint or Sprint/Keirin SQT's. However, youth accredited riders should ride a gear as per the relevant Youth category gearing in BC Technical Regulations, or lower – see table.

Age	CATEGORY	Chain ring/sprocket teeth	Imperial	Metres
Under 16	YOUTH A	48 x 15	86.4"	6.93
Under 14	YOUTH B	48 x 16	81.0"	6.45
Under 12	YOUTH C	48 x 17	76.3"	6.05
Under 10	YOUTH D	48 x 19	68.2"	5.40
Under 8	YOUTH E	Not old enough for Manchester Velodrome!		

- Do not have any active devices such as bike computers or digital displays that can distract you whilst riding. As a computer is a "projection" it is not allowed.

How do I check the correct specification of a track bike for racing?

Visit the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) website on www.uci.ch to download any track specifications. They are also available within the Technical Regulations of British Cycling.

What clothing do I need for a taster session?

You need to wear two tops, a tee shirt and cycling top or two tee shirts. Cycling shorts or running shorts and trainers are ideal, or you can hire cycling shoes. We provide helmets. If you have track mitts, please wear them. We also sell track mitts in reception.

What is the routine on arrival?

Arrive 20 mins before the start of your session. Inform reception you have arrived, and collect your Limar helmet, (and Lake shoes if you have hired them). Do not walk in these cycling shoes; put them on when you are in the riders D.

Collect your bike if you have booked one (it will have your name on it), and sign the attendance register on the coach's clipboard on the table in the riders D. The coach will give you all the safety and riding instructions for you to enjoy your cycling on the track.

How can a Youth rider gain accreditation?

The accreditation process is explained in documentation available from reception. Our programmes have been expanded to include more opportunities for 9 to 16 year old riders. There are many children introduced to the Velodrome through their school or cycling club, but then find it difficult to attend other track sessions.

To gain Youth accreditation, there is a 5 part process, starting with Skills analysis and skills taster improver over 1 hour, progressing to 2 x 1 hours of skills and then two x 1 hours of induction. Progression through each stage needs to be signed off by the Velodrome Coach. Youth riders 15 years or better can attend the adult Skills and Induction sessions, after gaining their blue and pink slips.

Once a rider has achieved accreditation, they can ride the Friday Youth SQT session, in our summer programme. During the winter – if a youth rider has had previous Manchester Velodrome track experience of at least two hours, they can be booked onto the Adult Taster Skills Improver on a Friday night, to gain their Youth accreditation, with the same 5 x 1 hour sessions described above.

How can an Adult rider gain accreditation?

The route to track Accreditation is via the Skills and Induction sessions, and is for riders 15 years old or better. Access to these is obtained via the Taster and Taster Skills Improver sessions. The Taster "skills improver" session is a half-way house between Tasters and Skills. Riders wishing to gain accreditation start the process by being assessed during a Taster session. They should inform the Coach they wish to be assessed at the beginning of the session to gain a "blue slip".

The skills required to gain a blue slip are that a rider must be able to ride safely and easily in a line of riders on the blue Stayer's line for 20 mins. They must ride closely to the rider in front and not kick back. They also must be able to change from the front of the line to the back cleanly and safely, with confidence and not before looking back to ensure it is all clear. Only then may the coach issue competent rider with a (blue) slip enabling them to book onto the Taster "skills improver" session.

The Taster "skills improver" session needs to be booked and paid for in advance with reception – 0161 223 2244 (option 3). Available Monday and Friday during the winter programme. Riders successfully completing the Taster "skills improver" session achieve a (pink) slip, and can then book onto the Skills session and progress to the Induction session. Unsuccessful Skills riders will be asked to ride another session or, in exceptional cases, asked to ride more Taster or Taster "skills improver" sessions to practice their basic track skills. Successful Induction candidates will be issued with full track accreditation.

Why do the riders go anti clockwise?

The Chariots in Roman times raced this way round, and athletic races and most other sports have followed in the same direction.

Can a child under the age of nine ride on the track?

Below 9 years old, they are unlikely to be able to ride our bikes safely; therefore we have to stick to the minimum age of 9, to avoid disappointment of booking on and then not being able to ride the bike safely. There is a minimum age of 12 for the Wattbikes.

Do you do cycling proficiency?

Cycling Proficiency is not available from us, but British Cycling can offer Go-Ride opportunities, so please visit their website www.britishcycling.org.uk. They may be able to nominate a coach to visit your school, through the local cycling club.

Can I come and watch Team GB train?

Tickets are not sold to watch the GB team in training. If you visited the Velodrome you would be able to watch the teams train, but there are different squads on depending on their training programmes, so you may not see Olympic champions. British Cycling have between four and eight hours track time a day, but the squad programmes are not published or in the public domain. Some sessions are closed to the public, so please check in advance.

What Public transport is available to the Velodrome?

Bus routes appear on our website – nationalcyclingcentre.com on the downloadable map thus:
http://www.nationalcyclingcentre.com/static_info/map.pdf

Do you provide one to one coaching?

It is possible to have a private session for one hour or longer, with one of our Velodrome coaches, and book a Velodrome bike.

How is the NCC funded?

We receive a grant from Manchester City Council each year. Manchester City Council own the building, and we also receive income from the GB Cycling Team who train here, and private and club bookings, as well as income from public sessions in cycling and other sports, badminton, basketball and netball.

Is there a Youth Cycling Club based at the Velodrome?

Eastlands Velo is based at the Velodrome. Visit their website: www.eastlandsvelo.com, or email via eastlandsvelo@hotmail.com.

There are other cycling clubs within Greater Manchester and the North West. Search the BC Website for a club near you on <http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/web/site/BC/clu/cluClubFinder.asp>.

What are the coaching qualifications for a Velodrome cycling coach?

Coaches need to take the BC Level 2 track module to add to the club coach status. This course replaces the course a similar Manchester Velodrome coach's induction course. As part of your coaching mentoring and diary following the BC Level 2 track module, you need to do six hours with another Velodrome coach, and the first hour of facility induction.

What are the Track Safety Guidelines and Rider conduct?

The session Coach should stress the need for safety and good practice with the riders under their charge at all times. The following notes are for guidance and should be followed by the Coach as well as the riders:

Do not eat within 2 hrs of a training session.

Riders must not spit or clear their nose onto any surface within the Velodrome. It costs £8.00 in time and materials to clean up bodily fluids on each occasion. If you are feeling sick please remove yourself from the track area if possible, as the session may be cancelled if any part of the track area is contaminated, and needs specialist cleaning. Riders must not eat or chew gum whilst on the track, and must dispose of any gum appropriately.

Track mitts must be worn to reduce injury risk on any contact or impact – and can also be used to wipe your nose! If you have a rear pocket in your jersey, take a handkerchief or tissue with you to clear your nose or throat, and be careful when you take your hand off the bars!

Riders should wear two layers of clothing above the waist. If you are hiring Velodrome shoes you must wear socks, and it is good practice anyway as it prevents chafing. If your helmet has a peak fitted, it must be removed. No other fixings to helmets are allowed, including light(s), cameras and mascots. Cleats should be unworn and in good clean condition. When not on the track riders should wear warm clothing.

Riders must not ride up or down on the ramp, must not ride in the riders "D" or on the track centre floor. No drinks are to be consumed or taken onto the blue safety zone – keep them on the ramp or in the riders "D".

Do not walk from the riders "D" to the changing rooms in cycling shoes.

Riders should not ride outside the Velodrome and then bring the bike back in as this brings more dirt onto the track surface.

How can I find out about track meetings and championships at NCC?

We do not promote any events at the Velodrome ourselves; they are presented by external promoters. Please check the British Cycling website, as the events will be registered with them. Go to: http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/web/site/BC/tra/track_calendar.asp to see the calendar of events. There will be a link to the promoter's website, so you can purchase tickets by phone or on line if available. We do not provide any e mail updates for events. You would need to contact the promoters of the events where you are able to receive information direct from them. Visit www.britishcycling.org.uk www.cyclingrevolution.com.

What are your opening hours?

We are open from 8:00am to 10:00pm, seven days a week. In our Velopark Cafe there is a self service salad bar, a selection of sandwiches including bloomer bread, Panini's, wraps and baguettes. We have an extended jacket potato menu, breakfasts from 7.30am, and a hot food offer all day, every day, plus open till 8:00pm, 7 days a week (10:00pm on Revolution and other events, and MCFE evening matches). We have homemade soup on each day, a salad of the day, four hot specials of the day, and a new 'barista' type coffee machine, so we can finally make 'proper' coffee!

There are 3 plasma TV's, offering Sky Sport and Eurosport and a facility to now pay by debit/credit card. There are leather settees in the lounge area, and outside eating. Outside of cafeteria hours, there are drinks and snack vending machines in reception, and a vending machine on the Velodrome ramp, selling energy bars, gels, and powders.

Can I take photographs or images of activities at the NCC?

If you are a hobby photographer, you may be able to take photographs of some sessions. Whether hobby or professional, you cannot take images of children (under 18) vulnerable adults or Team GB. If you are a professional, there will be a charge applied. All photographers need to complete a filming or photography request form in reception. Any activities filmed need permission from all the participants.

What cycling spares do you sell?

We do not sell spares in reception now, as Evans Cycles have a shop within the NCC that sells track and BMX spares, equipment and clothing.

Can I store my Velodrome track bike at the NCC?

There are two bike stores for the public, and currently we have spaces available, at £100.00 per year. Please book with reception.