

Steve

Mid-50s, limited bike experience/knowledge

Steve's first words when he comes in are, "I'm looking for a \$1000 road bike." He wants a bike that can handle mixed-surface riding. He'd like to commute, as he is 11 miles from his office, and a buddy of his did the Magnolia Gravel Galore last year, which sounded fun. Group road rides might be a good way to train for something like that. He likes the idea of bikepacking and getting adventurous. His priorities are versatility, comfort, and capability. He runs 5Ks and likes to play baseball with his buddies, and even though it's a "beer league" baseball team, they're the beer league champions. He's also a decent golfer and appreciates good clubs. Steve rode a mountain bike in college. His older mountain bike is OK for riding around town, but it feels heavy and slow for some of the distances he's looking to ride. He's been on Trek's website and saw that entry-level road bikes start around \$1000. He doesn't feel like he needs anything super fancy since he's "not a professional racer."

Mary

Early 40s, married with kids

Mary is a runner who ran cross country at Mount Union. She still runs road races and is competitive in her age group and overall at smaller races (sub-20 min 5K). She's hoping to supplement her run training with riding and maybe replace some runs with rides as she gets older. Plus, a few of her friends are doing a sprint triathlon at the end of the summer, and she'd like to be able to join them. She once watched a broadcast of that Ironman race in Hawaii: "It was so inspiring! It would be like a dream goal to do a race like that someday, but I probably never will. Right now, I just want to finish the 10-mile bike at the women's tri!" She is NOT a cyclist. It's been years since she's been on a bike – in fact, her last bike was the one her parents bought her in high school. It's a grandma hybrid; the saddle is super comfortable which she likes, but it's kind of slow and clunky and doesn't seem to fit right anymore. She's concerned about balance and thinks a flat bar is probably best for her. As a mom of three, she is also price-conscious and doesn't want to spend too much on herself, since all the kids will need bikes soon too.

Cindy

Early 20s, part-time waitress and full-time student

Cindy is looking for a bike to get around the OSU campus and to work, which is about 4 miles from her apartment. Fitness might be a secondary benefit, but mostly she's looking to get to/from class and work and help the environment. Her biggest concerns are a lack of experience riding in traffic ("I've seen a lot of asshole drivers out there") and bike security when she's in class or at work. She doesn't really have a preference in flat bars vs drop bars, or really even understand the difference, but she does want a rack and bags for textbooks and her laptop. Other potential uses could be grocery trips or local errands, but she's definitely not going to be joining any Lycra-clad group rides anytime soon.

Laura

Early 30s, full-time mom

Laura is a mother of two: Brady, 4, and his sister Ronnie, 1. Her husband works very long hours at Aultman, which leaves Laura at home with two young kids, not a lot of help, and almost no “me” time. She’s feeling a little stir-crazy and looking for a bike with a child trailer for the dual purpose of getting the kids outside and being more active for herself. She’s not looking for a hard workout, more a “get outside and move around” ride. Their neighborhood has some smaller rolling hills, but nice quiet roads and even some wider bike paths. Laura is looking for something comfortable, fun, and fashionable. For her, activity comes from being outside and moving, not from speed or performance. She hasn’t done any research, and her concerns are more about all the stuff for two kids than the bike itself.

Tommy

40s, married to an athlete

Tommy has had a work-from-home job for 4 years. He has been married for 2 years and recently purchased a new house with his wife. His wife has completed sprint and Olympic distance triathlons in the past, and has a road bike set up with aero bars for racing. Inspired by his wife, Tommy is trying to eat better and be a bit more active. Running was a hard pass due to joint pain and previous injuries, not to mention a general lack of enjoyment, so cycling was the next option for a shared hobby. The plan is to ride together on paved paths/roads, probably 15-20 miles. Their new house is out in the country without a lot of vehicle traffic in the area. Some of the roads are a little rougher and occasionally you’ll see a semi-paved, hard packed dirt road. He wants to be able to ride on pavement with his more experienced (and faster) wife, but also thinks it would be cool to find a bike that can handle some of the rougher roads in the area and get a little adventurous exploring the new area.

Amy

Early 60s, school administrator

Amy is starting to think about retirement. Her husband Larry retired earlier this year, and she hopes to do the same in the next 3 years. Larry has always been a cyclist, and now that he’s retired, he plans to ride more frequently. He has a Giant Contend and usually does a standard 22-mile loop from home, but also tries to join SCBC rides of 20-40 miles when he can. Amy wants to be able to ride with Larry on some of his shorter rides (probably 10-20 miles for herself). She knows she can’t hang with the bike club, but would like to do some weeknight rides as a couple. They also plan to get an RV and do some traveling, and maybe go for bike rides along the way. She’s looking for a bike she can do everything on, and has been researching ebikes. She hasn’t tried one yet and is a little apprehensive that it won’t be enough of a workout: “I still want to ride, I just also want to keep up with Larry!”

Todd & Missy

Mid-30s, triathletes

Todd is a triathlete who owns both a tri bike and a road bike. He's been racing casually for 5+ years and is familiar with the tech and jargon of road bikes. Missy has also been racing triathlons for a few years. She has a road bike, but never felt comfortable on a tri bike. Todd is more comfortable with bike handling than Missy, even though she's decently fast. Both occasionally find their way to the 3rd place podium spot if they have a great race. They're members of a local triathlon club, and a few members are starting to branch out into other types of cycling, like mountain and cyclocross. Todd is especially interested in trying mountain biking and wants Missy to try as well (despite her nervousness). He's at the shop to do some fact finding; he knows road bikes but nothing about mountain bikes ("It's like a foreign language! I don't know what I'm looking at here at all. Please help!"). They don't really know a lot about the local trails yet, or even what "technical" vs "groomed" means, much less the terrain they're going to be on. Some of the other club members ride at Camp Tuscazoar. They'll be buying two bikes, so price is a consideration; Missy is concerned about obstacles/falling, and Todd is convinced he won't be able to ride the more challenging trails because a lack of skills.

Chris & Paula

Mid-30s, married, no kids but an awesome dog

Chris, Paula, and their Great Dane puppy, Gilbert, live in an apartment complex right along the Towpath. Paula is a high school Spanish teacher and Chris is a data analyst. They're looking for bikes they can ride for fitness and fun. They look at riding as something they can do together to get outside and take advantage of the local trails. They are a young, mostly fit couple. The section of the Towpath close to them has beautiful scenery and a packed limestone surface. A stretch goal might be to do a 40-mile weekend trip. Chris did some research on various bike websites and saw the FX 1. This looked like it would be good for paved surfaces and fitness riding, with the added benefit of still being lighter weight. The bike seems to have good reviews and to check the boxes for these fairly new riders.

Viola & Eugene

60s, outdoorsy

Viola and Eugene have been married for 45 years. They've had a lot of adventures together, and have bought all 6 grandkids bikes at Ernie's. They're extremely active, fit for their age, and determined to keep up with the grandkids. They love being outdoors and regularly go kayaking and hiking. Their old ten-speeds have aged worse than they have, so they're looking for something more comfortable that will let them ride with their family. Primarily they'll be on flatter, paved bike trails, and will also ride around the neighborhood with their grandkids. Their daughter rides an FX bike and likes that a lot. The priority is leisure and comfort, but weight is a factor as well since they need to be able to load it on and off their bike rack. They're not very familiar with bike technology and don't know what any of it means or how it works. Viola

wants something pretty. They both retired in the last couple years, understand the value of buying a quality bicycle, and expect to spend anywhere from \$500-\$1000 per bike.

Susan

46, mother of teenagers

Susan has a private practice as a therapist and is looking for a bike for her group/social rides. Currently she's on a hybrid she got from Dick's a few years ago: "I know it isn't the nicest thing out there, but when I got it, it was mostly just to ride with the kids. I dusted it off when my friend Linda asked me to go for a ride last year. Now I feel a little obsessed!" Susan started doing weekly rides on the Middlebranch Trail with a group of four other women. Sometimes they ride and then have lunch at Gervasi Vineyards. The group has been a lifesaver after her recent divorce, and they've even invited other women to join the group. The rides are about an hour long and at a social pace, "but Linda just got a new bike and is so much faster than all of us now! It's a road bike, and so light!" Susan is pretty sure it's a Specialized — it's purple and really pretty. Janet has been raving about how fun and easy the new bike is, and told the group they should get new bikes too. Linda purchased her new bike at Eddy's in Stow, but Susan lives locally and stopped here first. Cost is a concern, but she also really wants to be able to do something for herself. She's just started the bike buying process and wants to learn more about pricing and what to look for.

John

34, reformed-ish BMX rugrat

John and his wife Kaylee recently moved back to the area to be near family. Growing up in the area, John used to ride BMX bikes around town and get into a little bit of mischief. Some of his old BMX buddies are into mountain biking now and he's looking to hit the trails with them. He's mechanically inclined and used to work as an assembler in a bike shop when he was in high school. He's pretty good with bikes but there's a lot that's changed with modern mountain bikes. He's not a racer, but he is interested in getting the wheels off the ground and tackling some tough courses. How hard is Vulture's Knob? And he DEFINITELY wants to spend some time at Ray's. Kaylee is already worried about potential broken bones.

Stephen

44, planning a big trip

Stephen is a math teacher who's "having something of a mid-life crisis" and has planned a major summer project: he wants to ride from Ohio to the Gulf of Mexico. It's a solo trip and self-supported. He'll need to carry everything with him and also be prepared for various road/weather conditions. Cost is also a concern, because he's on a teacher's salary and the trip will mean that he can't pick up a second summer job like he usually would. Stephen would not classify himself as a "cyclist," and has only ridden casually previously. He's half excited-half terrified; comfort and the ability to pedal back-to-back days are important. He needs to know what type of bike, tires, and gear he'll need, and how in the heck to carry all of his stuff!

Terri

60s, retired snowbird

Terri spends her winters in Florida, and she's sick and tired of hauling her hybrid back and forth to their vacation house every year. She just wants a bike she can leave down there to ride. The bike will be for around town – trips to the coffee shop, the boardwalk, the beach, the shops with her sister. Speed is not a priority. Looks and comfort are both king: “I want a cute bike with a basket!” Her current bike is an old Diamondback Wildwood, and she does do some Towpath riding on it for exercise. This bike will definitely get fewer miles and is going to be all about leisure, not fitness: “As long as I can carry a beach towel and a bottle of wine and it's got a comfy seat, I'm happy!”

Andy

39, dealing with an injury

Andy used to be pretty active in high school, where he played baseball and golf, but a few years ago he was in a car accident and injured his neck and spine. After a few months of physical therapy, he regained most of his mobility, but he experiences serious back pain on any bike ride longer than 6-8 miles. He's riding an older entry-level mountain bike and thinks the problem may be a sizing issue – he's 6'2", but the bike is a medium frame. He would really like to do some longer rides to combat the effects of a mostly sedentary office job, which he thinks probably isn't doing his back any favors, either. Andy is an avid fisherman and loves being outside and riding along the Towpath. If he could combine a bike trip with a fishing trip on occasion, that would be awesome.