Family Friendly Rides

These routes are great for beginners, children, and riders seeking a gentle adventure. Mostly paved, these easy rides have minimal elevation changes and offer spectacular views. E-bikes (pedal-electric power-assisted bicycles) are permitted on these trails. A few rest stops along these rides. Always remember to pack out everything you bring in.

1. Sundance Trail

3.7 km one way
Starting Point: Cave and Basin National Historic Site
This paved trail is perfect for families with kids and bike trailers as it winds along the Bow River and climbs gently to the Sundance Canyon picnic area where you can explore a lovely creekside riding trail. To experience the canyon, bring a bike lock.

2. Tunnel Campground Loop

6.4 km loop
Starting Point: Tunnel Mountain Campground
Perfect for beginners and children, this simple trail forms a large loop around Tunnel Mountain Campground. Water features are best for this loose gravel trail and there are many places to stop and rest. Be sure to watch out for strolling elk, deer, and coyotes.

3. Banff Legacy Trail

29 km one way
Starting Points: Valleyview, Cascade Ponds, Vermilion Lakes and Fish Creek picnic areas on your Banff Avenue
The Banff Legacy Trail offers cyclists, runners, skiers and other outdoor enthusiasts 29 km of paved trails and roadways with breathtaking views, rest stops and picnic areas. The trail connects the Bow Valley Parkway with the town of Banff, Cascade Ponds, the Banff East Gate and the town of Canmore. This three-season trail is typically snow-free and rideable from April to October. An absolute must.

Easy Rides

1. Golf Course Drive

10.9 km loop
Starting Point: Bow Falls parking area
Cross the bridge over the Spray River at the end of the parking area. Follow the road as it winds gently along the golf course before it loops back. This is a peaceful road with lovely views over the Bow River and surrounding peaks. While close to town, be alert – wildlife also enjoy this area.

2. Vermilion Lakes Drive

4.3 km one way
Starting Point: Sentinel Day-use Area, paved trail to Vermilion Lakes Drive
Vermilion Lakes are a series of three shallow lakes surrounded by marshes – a high speed ride along this trail will provide classic views of Banff’s signature peak, Mount Rundle. There are benches, bike racks and small docks where you can relax with a snack and enjoy the view. Connector: Banff Legacy Trail (5) to the Bow Valley Parkway (8).

3. Lake Minnewanka Road

13.1 km loop
Starting Points: Cascade Ponds and Lake Minnewanka Day-use Area or the Banff Legacy Trail (3)
Lake Minnewanka Road is popular with cyclists and offers a pleasant ride through varied terrain, with panoramic views and many attractions including Cascade Ponds, Banff Lakehead, Lake Minnewanka and Two Jack Lake. This narrow road can be busy, so ride with caution and be on the lookout for bighorn sheep on the slopes above Two Jack Lake. Connector: Banff Legacy Trail (3).

4. Tunnel Mountain Drive/Road

10.7 km starting point: Central Park parking area, West end of Buffalo Street
Start by heading east on Buffalo Street, rising gently past Surprise Corner with its extraordinary view over Bow Falls and the world famous Fairmont Banff Springs. Continue climbing and bending along its lower section as it travels along the Mountain Road. Turn right (east) and pass the campgrounds for incredible views before you drop back down to the Banff Legacy Trail (3). Go left into town, or right towards Lake Minnewanka. Elk and deer are common along this narrow roadway.

5. Bow Valley Parkway

57.5 km one way (Banff to Lake Louise)
Starting Points: From downtown Banff, access the trail via Vermilion Lakes Drive (5) and the Banff Legacy Trail (3) or begin at Fish Creek
The Bow Valley Parkway (Highway 1A) ride is a classic, gently rising and falling as it meanders through the Bow Valley to Castle Junction, and beyond to Lake Louise. On your trip, stop and enjoy the many picnic areas and rest stops along the way. From Banff, ride the narrow road to Johnston Canyon (50 km return), Castle Junction (63 km return), Baker Creek (39 km return) or Lake Louise (115 km return). This is a very popular road so be prepared. In the spring and fall, the eastern section of the Bow Valley Parkway has limited vehicle traffic. Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/Banff-cycling-BVP for more information.

6. Mount Norquay Scenic Drive

6.1 km one way
Starting Point: Mount Norquay Scenic Drive, on the North side of the Trans-Canada Highway
This challenging climb up the mountain rewards riders with a spectacular panoramic view of the town of Banff and surrounding Bow Valley. The Norquay Green Spot Viewpoint offers onto a grassy slope – a great place to stop for a picnic lunch or for photos. From the viewpoint, the road continues up to the Mount Norquay ski area and then follows the Sheep on or near the road and the sharp turns, especially on the way down.

7. Mountain Avenue

3.4 km one way
Starting Point: Mountian Avenue, on the South side of the Banff Avenue Bridge
This route is a gradual, but continuous climb ending at the Banff Upper Hot Springs. Gains in elevation from the valley bottom provide riders with exceptional views of the Bow Valley and the rugged profile of Mount Rundle. Mountain Avenue offers ample width for riders, however, vehicular traffic is heavier during the summer.

8. Sunshine Village Access Road

8.2 km one way
Starting Point: Sunshine Village access road, 7 km West of Banff on the Trans-Canada Highway
The Sunshine Village access road begins its steady rise almost immediately, and offers a few steep ramps along the way to its termination at the ski area parking at the base of the Sunshine gondola. Vehicular traffic is moderate in the summer months, but be aware as the road is narrow and twisty throughout its length. Watch for wildlife.

Recommended Rides

Lakeside Cruising

If your ultimate ride includes reflecting by a lake or river, Vermilion Lakes Drive (5) should be on your list. Several docks and benches along this flat paved road provide opportunities to sightsee, take photographs or have a lunch break.

Flora and Fauna

Lake Minnewanka Road (8) rolls along through the area’s rich montane habitat. The mix of forest and open grassland is home to bighorn sheep, deer, elk and bears. This 13.1 km loop offers a pleasant ride through varied terrain and a chance to stop at the area’s popular sightseeing locations of Banff Park, Two Jack Lake, Lake Minnewanka and Cascade Ponds.

The Original Highway

One of the most breathtaking road rides in the area, the Bow Valley Parkway (8) offers something for everyone. This classic ride on the original road through Banff National Park gently rises and falls as it meanders past open meadows, dense forests, and soaring mountains. Most often started in Banff, riders can choose one of the many picnic areas and proceed along the parkway as a final destination or choose to embark on a full day trip to Lake Louise making for a 115 km day back to Banff! Please ride in single file as this road can be busy with vehicular traffic and be aware of your surroundings as you travel through this bustling wildlife corridor.

Plan Ahead and Prepare

Rules of the Road

Always ride on the right, pass others on their left. If you are riding on a road with a sidewalk, stay on the road.

Obey all traffic rules when riding on roads. At intersections, use hand signals to let drivers know which direction you will be travelling.

On highways, ride as close as possible to the right-hand edge or curb. For your safety, it is recommended that you ride a single file.

Stay within the posted speed limits.

Road closures, speed limits and traffic controls apply to bicyclists too. The Bow Valley Parkway (8) Mandatory Seasonal Travel Restriction applies to all travel, including bicyclists. From March 1st to June 25th, travel is not permitted between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. on the 17-kilometre section of the parkway from Johnston Canyon Campground to the Fireside Picnic Area. This is to ensure the area remains a high-quality home for wildlife.

Be visible when riding at dawn, dusk, or night. Always have a white front light and red rear and side reflectors, and consider wearing reflective attire.

Be bear aware. Cyclists are particularly susceptible to sudden, dangerous bear encounters because of the speed and silence of their travel. Be alert, make noise, slow down, carry bear spray, and look ahead.

Leave no trace. Be sure to pack out what you pack in – this includes all food and garbage.

Leave natural and cultural objects undisturbed for others to discover.

Do the right thing – protect wildlife. Littering, feeding animals or harassing wildlife is illegal and violators may be charged under the Canada National Parks Act.

E-bikes (pedal-electric power-assisted bicycles) are only permitted on select trails in Banff National Park. Visit parkscanada.gc.ca/banff-e-bike for more information.

Share the Roads and Pathways

• The bike trails in Banff National Park are all share-use trails — expect to encounter hikers, vehicles and horseback riders. Ride in control and be ready to stop at any time.

• If you are passing other bikers, walkers or runners, please be courteous. Use your voice or use a bell to let them know you will be passing on their left so they have a chance to move out.

Safety

You are responsible for your own safety. Be prepared for a breakdown or accident. Know how to repair your bike and carry the necessary tools and parts.

• Select a trip which best suits your group’s abilities, experience, interests, equipment and the time you have available. Be conservative—start with easier, shorter routes.

• Park Canada staff or bike shop employees can help you select a suitable route.

• Wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

• Bring extra food, water and clothing. Surface water may be contaminated and unsafe for drinking. Mountain weather changes quickly and it can snow any month of the year.

• Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.

• Travel with others and keep your group together.

• Avoid wearing earbuds. Be alert at all times.

• Ask for advice at a Parks Canada visitor centre about route conditions, descriptions and weather.

More Information

Banff Visitor Centres: 224 Banff Avenue and 327 Railway Avenue
403-762-1550
parkscanada.gc.ca/banff

Trail Conditions Report:
Environment Canada Weather Forecast:
403-762-2088
weather.gc.ca

For bike rentals, Banff area maps and guidebooks, visit a local retail biking outlet.

Take Roam public transit with your bike.

In case of EMERGENCY, call 911 or satellite phone: 403-762-4506.
Cell phone coverage is not reliable throughout the national park.

Limited bike rack space available on buses. roamtransit.com

Also offered en français

Keep it clean. Follow Leave No Trace principles.

Plan ahead. Know your location.

Be visible. Be visible to others.

Be prepared. Be properly dressed, with emergency supplies and clothing.

Be visible. Be visible to drivers.

Following the rules of the road.

Always be prepared.
Family Friendly Rides

1. Sundance Trail
   3.7 km one way
   Elevation gain 75 m, elevation loss 60 m

2. Tunnel Campground Loop
   6.4 km loop
   Elevation gain 70 m

3. Banff Legacy Trail (Banff to Canmore)
   29 km one way
   Elevation gain 24 m, elevation loss 113 m

Easy Rides

4. Golf Course Drive
   10.9 km loop
   Elevation gain 68 m, elevation loss 68 m

5. Vermilion Lakes Drive
   4.3 km one way
   Mostly flat

Moderate Rides

6. Lake Minnewanka Road
   13.1 km one way
   Elevation gain 160 m, elevation loss 160 m

7. Tunnel Mountain Drive/Road
   10.7 km loop
   Elevation gain 180 m, elevation loss 180 m

8. Bow Valley Parkway (Banff to Lake Louise)
   57.5 km one way
   Elevation gain 340 m, elevation loss 177 m

Difficult Rides

9. Mount Norquay Scenic Drive
   6.1 km one way
   Elevation gain 327 m, elevation loss 12 m

10. Mountain Avenue
    3.4 km one way
    Elevation gain 214 m, elevation loss 32 m

11. Sunshine Village Access Road (Trans-Canada Highway to Sunshine Village parking lot)
    8.2 km one way
    Elevation gain 271 m, no elevation loss

All elevations are an approximate to give riders an idea of what to expect on each route. Elevations are calculated as the total amount of elevation gained and the total amount of elevation lost (all the ups and downs) over the entire distance of an out-and-back trail or a loop.

EASY

• Suitable for all cyclists, including those with little or no experience.
• Flat to gently rolling.
• Little or no elevation gain or loss.

MODERATE

• Suitable for most cyclists who have some basic experience and are prepared with proper equipment and water.
• Gently rolling with short, steep sections.
• Moderate elevation gain or loss.

DIFFICULT

• Suitable only for cyclists who have experience and are prepared with proper equipment and water.
• Long, steep sections.
• Major elevation gain or loss.

Looking to ramp up your adventure?
Pick up the Mountain Biking Trail Guide at a Parks Canada visitor centre or view online at pc.gc.ca/banff-brochures.

Done with this brochure?
Please return to a park facility or share it with others.

How was your trip?
Please send your comments to banffinfo@pc.gc.ca

Roam Public Transit to Lake Minnewanka runs in the summer only. Visit roamtransit.com for more information.

Share the trail
Partageons le sentier