



Family Bike Ride Recommendations

Take the family out on some of our great nearby biking paths. To make your planning easier, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

Be sure to bring these necessities along on your ride:

- Helmet
- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Map and route directions
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Tire mini-pump or CO2
- Spare tube or patch kit
- Tire levers



For a complete cycling checklist, visit [Expert Advice](#) on REI.com.

Here Are Five of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Bike Rides

Bobolink Trailhead

Terrain: **Paved and dirt**

Distance: **1.5 miles one-way between Baseline Road and South Boulder Road. For a longer ride, you can go an additional 2 miles to Marshall Road. No elevation gain.**

Why This Ride: Nice flat family-friendly ride along South Boulder Creek, with the option to continue south.

Ride Description: This easy-going trail rolls through the beautiful South Boulder Creek riparian zone and features interpretive stops along the way. Look for white-tailed and mule deer, as well as the bobolinks (where the trail gets its name) and other ground-nesting birds that inhabit the field east of the trail from mid-May through the summer. Be sure to stay on the trail so as not to disturb them, though. Also watch for red-tailed hawks and foxes year-round.

Driving Directions: From Broadway Street (CO-93N) take Baseline Road east 2.6 miles all the way past 55th Street. The trailhead is on the right side, just before the "T" intersection with Cherryvale Road. There is free parking at the trailhead.

Tips: Take a rest break at the East Boulder Community Center, where you can use their bathrooms and refill your water bottles.

Boulder Creek Path—Canyon Route

Terrain: **Paved and groomed gravel**

Distance: **6 miles roundtrip; 250 feet of gradual elevation gain**

Why This Ride: A bustling path along Boulder Creek, heading up Fourmile Canyon.

Ride Description: The path starts out paved but eventually turns to groomed gravel as it continues up the canyon, following Boulder Creek and crossing back and forth over the creek several times. Take your time to stop and explore or have a picnic along the way. Eben G. Fine Park, in particular, is a great place to dismount and rest. Check out the whitewater kayakers who frequently practice their moves on the kayak course along this stretch of the creek. Since this route is close to downtown and very popular, it can get crowded on weekends.

Driving Directions: From Broadway Street (CO-93N) go west on Canyon Boulevard one block and turn left into the library parking lot. Parking at the library is free for up to 3 hours. If the library lot is full, continue up Canyon Boulevard to 6th Street. Turn left on 6th and go to Arapahoe. Turn right on Arapahoe and go about 4 blocks to Eben G. Fine Park and you'll find free parking there.

Tips: Boulder Creek is a perfect place for cooling off on a hot day, and there's plenty of access to the creek along the way. However, water flows can be treacherous during spring runoff, so be very cautious. There are restrooms at several places along the path.

Boulder Creek Path—Central and East

Terrain: **Paved path**

Distance: **3 miles one-way to the junction of South Boulder Creek path; no elevation gain**

Why This Ride: It's a fun, easy ride right through the heart of Boulder.

Ride Description: Start either from the Boulder Library or Scott Carpenter Park and ride east. This is just one of many family-friendly bike paths in Boulder, many of which you can access from the Boulder Creek Path. And even though it follows Boulder Creek through the city, there are few street crossings to contend with. In the summer, be sure to take advantage of the creek's close proximity to the path by taking off your shoes and wading in to cool off your feet. The many trees that line the river also provided excellent shade on hot days.

Driving Directions: From Broadway Street (CO-93N) go west on Canyon Boulevard one block and turn left into the library parking lot. Parking at the library is free for up to 3 hours. If the library lot is full (not uncommon on summer weekends), a good alternate starting point is Scott Carpenter Park at 30th Street and Arapahoe Avenue. There is more parking there and it's free—unlike the library, which charges a fee after 3 hours.

Tips: There are numerous places to stop and enjoy the creek along the way. Bring a picnic, go wading, look for aquatic critters, or just watch the kayakers who frequent the creek. There are restrooms in several of the city parks along the way.

Marshall Mesa

Terrain: **Unpaved singletrack**

Distance: **4-plus miles roundtrip, with 200–300 feet of elevation gain at the beginning**

Why This Ride: This singletrack route offers great views of the Flatirons and El Dorado Canyon entrance, but it's a more challenging ride best suited for youngsters with some cycling experience.

Ride Description: The trail climbs steeply at first and then levels off for the majority of the ride as you cruise along the wide-open mesa and take in scenic views of the Flatirons and south Boulder. Bring sunscreen and sunglasses and be sure to take note of any trail closures or "hikers only" restrictions. Look for birds of prey and mule deer, both common in the area. Also, this is a popular place for dog walkers, so a bell is nice to let them know you are approaching.

Driving Directions: Take Broadway Street south out of town and it becomes Highway 93 (S. Foothills Highway). Turn left at Marshall Road (Highway 170) and follow the road as it curves to a stop sign. Turn right and go about a half mile to the trailhead on the right. Be sure to lock your vehicle and do not leave any valuables in the car. Parking is free.

Tips: Self-guided interpretive signs about the coal mining and geologic history of the Marshall area are located along the trail. There are porta-potties at the trailhead.

Cottonwood Trail

Terrain: **Groomed gravel/dirt**

Distance: **About 3 miles roundtrip, with no elevation gain**

Why This Ride: This north Boulder trail is an easy, flat ride that offers great views of the Flatirons to the west.

Ride Description: A great ride for the whole family, the gravel/dirt Cottonwood Trail is a perfect first outing for young or beginning riders. It's a short out-and-back adventure that provides panoramic views of the Flatirons and is a good "off-road" (i.e., unpaved) confidence-builder for future, more challenging rides.

Driving Directions: From 28th Street and Canyon Boulevard, go north on 28th. Turn right on Iris Avenue and access Highway 119 (Diagonal Highway). Turn right on Independence Road and go about a quarter mile to the Cottonwood Trailhead, where there is free parking.

Tips: The Cottonwood Trail—which goes from Jay Road to Independence Road—connects with other trails along the way, if you want to extend your ride.



REI's PEAK program uses a fun presentation filled with hands-on activities and games to teach kids ages 6 through 12 about taking care of the outdoors.

Ask an REI team member about scheduling a free PEAK presentation for your classroom or youth group, or visit www.rei.com/PEAK for more information.



First Saturday in June The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day, sponsored by REI, is a nationwide celebration of trails. Celebrate with your family by taking a hike, or volunteering for a trail clean-up project. Ask an REI team member about how to get involved, or visit www.rei.com for more information.