

When 2 Wheels Are Better Than 4



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Do you know how to ride a bike? It's one of those things where once you learn how to do it, balancing on those two skinny wheels just isn't that hard, and you never forget how to do it. It's a great way to get somewhere faster than walking, but without driving a car (and having to buy that car). That may be why bikes are so popular: every year **50 million bicycles** are made, but just 20 million cars. In China there are half a billion bikes, which is 250 times the number of cars. We should all follow their lead...in the U.S. about 10 out of every 1,000 trips are by bike, but if we raised that to 15 out of every 1,000, we'd save 426 million gallons of gas. And in cities the bike might be faster anyway: in Tokyo, Japan most trips under 50 minutes are faster by bike! So, lots of reasons to learn how to ride one.

Wee ones: How many more wheels does a tricycle have than a bicycle?

Little kids: If a Tokyo car ride takes 50 minutes but by bike it takes 1 minute less, how long does the bike ride take? *Bonus:* If we make 50 million bikes every year and just 20 million cars, how many more bikes do we make?

Big kids: If we make 50 million bikes and 20 million cars, how many more *wheels* do the bikes have? (No need to count training wheels, steering wheels or spare tires!) *Bonus:* How do you write the number "half a billion" in numbers?