

Indoor Cycling Instructor Guidelines

By Chris Kostman

- The following announcements should be made at the start of each class.
 - Please arrive 5 minutes before class is scheduled so classes can start on time.
 - If you are new to this class, let me know so that you can be properly set up on the bike.
 - The tension dial is also the brake. If your feet come out of the pedals, move legs out to the side immediately, then aggressively pull upward on the tension dial to stop the pedals.
 - Always ride with at least a light resistance.
 - If you are wearing athletic shoes, make certain your shoelaces are not dangling and are tucked inside your shoes.
 - Check the seat and handlebar adjustments. Make sure all pins are properly locked.
 - On some bike, the handlebars can be pulled completely out of the bike when adjusting them upwards. (Demonstrate this.)
 - Towels are mandatory. Also, please towel off your bike after class.
 - Bring water to every class to stay hydrated. Drink water before, during, and after class.
 - Go at your own pace and monitor your intensity.
 - If you have any physical limitations pertaining to the class, let me know.
 - Please report any problems regarding the bike as soon as possible.
- Be sensitive and reasonable with music and voice volume level.
- Begin all classes with 6 to 8 minutes of warm-up: riding smoothly in the saddle with light resistance. Late arriving riders must either be discouraged from participating or monitored to ensure that they warm up properly. Riders who regularly arrive light should be approached personally and made aware of the importance of warming up!
- End all classes with 3 to 5 minutes of cool-down/active recovery: riding smoothly in the saddle with light resistance and moderate pedal cadence. After this is finished, lead the class in several minutes of appropriate stretching. Remember, no stretching on the bike unless both feet are in the pedals. Warn riders that the floor will be wet and slippery as they dismount their bike.
- Ask riders to towel off their bike. Also, towels can be put on the floor beneath the bikes to help keep the floor dry.

- Proper leg extension for indoor cycling is approximately fifteen to thirty-five degrees short of fully extended. Use of a goniometer is the most effective manner for measuring knee flexion.
- Saddle forward / backward adjustment is for changing the position relative to the pedals, NOT relative to the handlebars. To check for proper leg position, have the rider put the crankarms parallel to the floor and sit comfortably in the saddle without pedaling. Observe the forward leg: An imaginary line dropped from the bottom of the patella should intersect the pedal axle (and the ball of the foot). If this line drops behind the pedal axle, the saddle should be moved forward. If the imaginary line drops in front of the pedal axle, the saddle should be moved backward.
 - Note: adjusting the saddle forward effectively *lowers* the saddle, while adjusting the saddle backward effectively *raises* the saddle.
 - Once the biomechanically appropriate saddle position is found, never instruct the riders to move more than one notch in any direction away from that position. (Saddles may be moved back one notch during class for an extended seated climb, for example.)
- Handlebars should be as low as is comfortable to emphasize proper technique and posture in all positions except standing tall. If the bars are too high, the abs can not be effectively utilized and worked while riding.
- Direct riders to use the proper hand positions, and be a good role model yourself. The hand positions (HP's) are very specific for several reasons: to replicate road cycling experiences, for safety and proper posture, to provide the best full-body workout, and for visual communication to the students.
 - Center/HP#1 (hands in center of bars, just touching one another)
 - seated flat road with light resistance.
 - Wide/HP#2 (hands on straight part of bars, as on mountain bike)
 - seated climbing, standing tall, seated and standing accelerations, and jumps with moderate resistance.
 - Extended/HP#3 (hands on ends of far ends of bars)
 - climbing out of the saddle with heavy resistance only.
 - Never ride in this position while seated in the saddle.
 - Note: Do not use "HP#2 1/2" (hands just forward of the forward bend in the handlebars.) Hands only go forward of this bend when on the ends of the bars in HP#3 for climbing out of the saddle.
 - Note: Do not use "under-handed" hand positions. Palms should never be face-up or face-out while on the bars. Also, wrists should remain supple and without much flexion.
 - Remember: Direct riders to put little or no weight on their hands. The handlebars are for balance, not to be leaned on/against. By always observing proper hand positions, posture, and working with the abs, weight should be kept off the hands.

- Always keep both hands on the handlebars except when drinking or changing resistance. Never direct riders to ride with only one hand on the handlebars, especially when riding out of the saddle. Sitting up in the saddle without hands on the handlebars for short periods of time is acceptable for advanced riders when control and balance are emphasized.
- Always use moderate resistance for these movements / positions:
 - Standing tall
 - Jumps
 - Accelerations (accelerating must always be with control and riders must ride regularly for four to six weeks regularly before attempting fast legspeed)
 - Note: There is no riding out of the saddle or fast legspeed without at least some resistance!
- Differentiate very clearly and specifically between climbing out of the saddle and standing tall:
 - Standing tall: HP#2, moderate resistance, tall, erect posture.
 - Climbing out of the saddle: HP#3, heavy resistance, butt back, upper body hinged forward at the hips with the abs held in snugly and spine in a straight, neutral position.
- Immediately report all mechanical problems with the bikes. Be specific: bike number and type of problem.
- DON'Ts:
 - Do Not instruct riders to drop their seats all the way down or back, or remove the seat altogether. Seats should never be moved more than one notch away from the biomechanically appropriate position.
 - Do Not instruct riders to take one or both hands off the bars while out of the saddle.
 - Do Not instruct riders to use any "under-handed" hand positions.
 - Do Not spend too much time off the bike. While its true that the class is not your workout, only get off the bike for specific reasons, such as to help new students.
 - Do Not manually adjust the resistance for your students (i.e., get off your bike and go over and pull or turn the resistance knob on a student's bike). They are adults and it is their ride. It is not for the instructor to decide if the student is "working hard enough." The only circumstance in which it is appropriate to adjust a student's resistance is when new students are riding with so little resistance that it is not safe (i.e., their legs are flying around and it would be dangerous for them to stand up at that point).