



Choosing and setting up a bike computer to help find your way

One of the least expensive navigational aids is a bike computer (from about £15). It does need to be carefully calibrated. It will show you exactly how far you have come, and therefore whether you have reached a particular junction. Our routes have all been very carefully measured and these distances provided with our directions. For the main rides simply set your bike computer trip counter to zero at the start of your ride (where indicated in the directions). At junctions refer to your trip distance to determine where you are.

If you take a short cut or link, or miss a turning so that the trip counter is no longer accurate, use the stage-to-stage distances rather than the total trip distance to work out your location.

Buying tips

- Buy a wired rather than wireless computer (the wire runs from the unit to the sensor on the fork). This is because on a wireless model, in order to save battery power, the unit switches off when the bike has been stationary for several minutes. You must remember to switch it on again if you have a short break (it is very easy to forget!) - if you forget to do this you will lose track of your distance.
- Some computers including some more expensive models (such as the popular Cateye range) may only let you set the wheel circumference to the nearest centimeter - if you round up or down by 2mm, bear in mind that over 10km the distance shown may go out of synch with the map by 20m.
- We like the basic Sigma models such as the Sigma BC5.12 which you can buy from us.

Calibrating

- Pump your front tyre to the recommended pressure (rear tyre if the sensor is to be mounted here).
- Wrap some sticky tape around the tyre (this will take pen marks better)

- Using a pen that does not dry quickly, make a narrow line across the tyre width.
- Layout approx 2.5m of paper on a smooth flat floor. Use tape to secure to the floor and pull taught.
- Sit astride the cycle (to get the slight flattening of the tyre when riding) and use the tyre to make an ink mark on the paper. Roll forwards in a straight line until you make a second ink mark. Measure between the marks.
- For best results do this three times and take the average, to the nearest mm. If you don't sit astride your bike, the measurement is likely to be around 10mm greater. Over 10km this will add up to an over-measurement of 50 meters.
- This is the measurement to enter into your bike computer. Some computers (such as Cateye) will only let you set them to the nearest cm, so round up or down accordingly.
- For maximum accuracy on your rides, continue to keep your tyre at the recommended pressure.