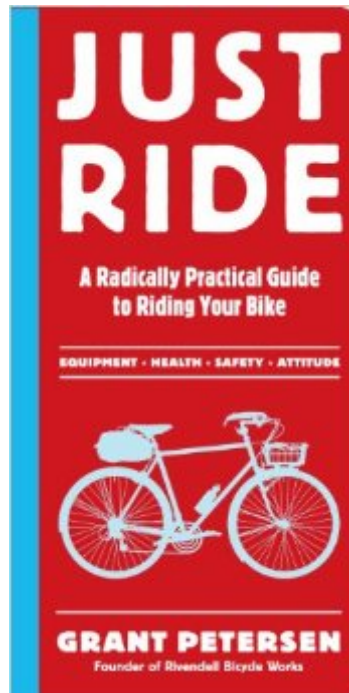


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# Just Ride: A Radically Practical Guide To Riding Your Bike



## Synopsis

In the same way that Michael Pollan's slim bestseller *Food Rules* brought a gust of common sense to the everyday activity of eating, *Just Ride* is a revelation. Forget the ultralight, uncomfortable bikes, flashy jerseys, clunky shoes that clip onto tiny pedals, the grinding out of endless miles. Instead, ride like you did when you were a kid "just get on your bike and discover the pure joy of riding it. A reformed racer who's commuted by bike every day since 1980, whose writings and opinions appear in major bicycling and outdoor magazines, and whose company, Rivendell Bicycle Works, makes bikes for riders ready to opt out of a culture overrun by racing, Grant Petersen shares a lifetime of unexpected facts, controversial opinions, expert techniques, and his own maverick philosophy. In 87 short, two-to-three page chapters, it covers: • Riding: Count Days, Not Miles; Corner Like Jackie Robinson; Steer with Your Hips, Shift with Your Legs • Suiting Up: The Shoes Ruse; Ponchos "the Ultimate Unracer's Garment • Safety: #1 Rule "Be Seen; Helmets Aren't All They're Cracked Up to Be • Health and Fitness: Why Riding Is Lousy All-Around Exercise; Saddles Don't Cause Impotence; Drink When You're Thirsty "Not Before Also includes chapters on Accessories, Upkeep, and Technicalities as well as a final chapter titled "Velosophy" that includes the essential, memorable thought: Your Bike Is a Toy "Have Fun with It.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I came back to cycling after 20 years off, after a concentrated period of accidents that put me in a car instead. However I overcame my fears only to see that the world of cycling had changed, a lot,

and not for the better in my opinion. Strangely enough my previous bike was a Bridgestone, designed by Grant Peterson, only I didn't know it. I even had a well-read old book by Mr. Peterson called "Roads to Ride" which mapped and described every worthy road around the Bay Area at the time (a book available used and still 85% accurate despite all the construction since then). Upon returning to cycling, I was very happy to learn about Rivendell, and that I had inadvertently already experienced the work of Rivendell in a way. I love the philosophy, which is basically how people rode before everyone wanted to be like Lance or LeMond. The fact is, most of us can't be like Lance or LeMond, but when we try, we often look like idiots and don't enjoy the process. This book is about having "fun" on a bicycle again. It's aimed at people who think that cycling is all about racing, when it's not. It's about having a bicycle as a vehicle. It's about the bicycle being practical as well as fun. We're practical with our cars...how many of us drive 2-seater roadsters as our only car? Not many, as they are very inconvenient. The book approaches bikes in the same way. If jolting around on a carbon racer in full race gear is fun to you, go at it. But for the rest of us, who like touring, commuting, who can't afford multiple bikes, or would love to spend a day on a bike without looking like Captain Spandex from Planet Strava...

A few years ago I traveled from my home in Connecticut to Leeds in Yorkshire, meeting up with a group of friends from all over the world to set out on a bicycling tour in which we would make our way up and around the east coast of the UK, pedaling from Newcastle Upon Tyne to Inverness. Prior to the trip, in emails and discussions, my English friends touted their new touring bikes. I expected to behold a couple high tech Tour de France-looking carbon frame wonders of the modern age, but in fact I was bowled over to discover that my pals had been referring to traditional steel frame touring bikes, much like the classic English racers of my youth, a design I thought to be long gone, relegated to history. I was so inspired to find out that this timeless approach to bike building still exists that as soon as I arrived back in the US I immediately began searching for information about how I might bring such a bicycle back into my daily life, to enjoy it again as I had during childhood, and as I'd just experienced it in the UK, riding with comfort and command over streets, paths, cobblestones, rail trails, fields and pastures. My first Google search led me to Grant Petersen, and right away I could see that what Grant knows and thinks about bicycles is exactly what I was after. His thoughts seemed to mirror my vague notions, but with a depth of detail and expertise that reflected a lifetime of professional experience, amounting to practical textbook instructions for how to consider, choose, design and build your own ideal bicycle (or fleet, for which the ideal number is always  $n+1$ , in which  $n$ =number of bikes on hand, and  $+1$ = how many more bikes are needed to

complete the fleet!). Grant's knowledge, as a designer, a builder, and a rider, is truly master level.

I can confidently say that Grant Peterson saved my life. Don't believe me? Let me tell you how. I started riding a tiny hand-me-down Trek about 8 years ago. I weighed about 260 lbs and was really out of shape. I rode the tiny Trek everywhere, and found that I really loved riding. I also had an incredible amount of neck and back and shoulder pain during and after my rides. So I went into my LBS (local bike shop) and said I wanted to get a new bike. I was all prepped up to get a new carbon fiber state-of-the-art material superlight racer. LBS guy was like "um dude, you should get a steel bike, that's what we ride here." So I did. I started researching this whole steel bike thing, and came across the Riv site. I kept riding. On my new, but still too small, 57 cm bike. I am 6'3". I also started reading. This book is an amalgamation of all the stuff that Grant has written in the past, with some new stuff added. I found out that my bike was probably still too small. That I was still trying to become a racer. These readings helped me understand how bikes work, how I can ride safely, and how I can be a normal temperamental dude when discussing hot button issues like helmets, carbon forks, and riding in traffic. They have been invaluable. Since I started riding (and, more importantly, KEPT RIDING) I have lost 40 pounds and kept it off, I feel healthy, I have cleared up a liver issue that was potentially fatal, and am just a generally happy and healthy guy. This liver thing was the kicker. I needed to lose the weight to make it work. I lost the weight by cutting carbs.

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