

Tips on Living Car-Free in Durham, NC

Driving Alternatives

- Biking (where to find bikes)
 - Spinlister - the AirBNB for Bikes, you can rent a bike from a local person for hourly, daily, and weekly rates
 - Borrow a bike from a friend
 - Durham Bike CoOp has a program where you can earn a bike, but they also offer used bikes at really low prices.
 - Bike ride-shares (available in Durham (through Spin), Chapel Hill, and Raleigh)
 - Bike rentals from local bike shops
 - [Durham Cycles](#) (electric and non-electric bike rentals)
 - [Bullseye Bicycle](#) (non-electric)
- Car share service (Uber/Lyft)
- Bus Service, fixed-route (GoDurham, GoTriangle, PART, Duke Transit, P2P (UNC), Wolfline (NCSU), Greyhound, etc.)
 - GoDurham and Chapel Hill Transit are fare free
 - [GoTriangle](#), GoRaleigh, and GoCary returned to fares Summer 2024
 - Standard fares are \$2.50 per ride. <https://gotriangle.org/fares-passes>
 - [GoPass](#) (free or reduced fare prices) are available to connect to your [UMO](#) account
 - GoPasses are available to students and employees of Duke University, NC State, and UNC as well as members of Bike Durham and Oaks & Spokes. GoPasses are also available to those who participate in [Bike Durham's Transit Travel Training](#)
 - Other [GoPass Partners](#)
 - [PART](#) (uses UMO app for fares - \$2.50/ride - free transfers - sometimes has "Free Fare Friday")
 - Connects to GoTriangle in Chapel Hill on Route 4
 - Serves the Triad
 - Connects to:
 - [Greensboro Transit Authority](#)
 - [High Point Transit System](#)
 - [Winston-Salem Transit Authority](#)
 - [Link Transit](#) (Burlington area)
 - [Davidson County Transportation](#)
 - Bikes can ride on ALL GoTransit and PART buses (see instructions in "tips" section below)
 - If traveling to Charlotte, the CATS buses and light-rail also have [bike racks](#)
 - These cannot handle cargo bikes, and the bike must be two wheels only
 - Folding bikes can be carried on-board

- While electric bikes are easier to ride, they are heavier, which may pose a challenge when placing them on racks. It is best practice to put the heavier bike closest to the bus, which means lifting the bike over the slot closest to you. Trust me, it's not easy!
 - GoTriangle's "[Emergency Ride Home](#)" service - free rides by taxi during emergencies. You need to register ahead of time. Qualifications must be met (see link for details).
 - [Duke Vans](#) provide free, on-demand transit for students and employees when/where Duke Transit is not in service.
 - [P2P Late Night](#) services (fixed route and on-demand shuttles)
 - The university services (P2P, Duke Transit, and Wolfline) are free to all users.
- [GoDurham ACCESS](#) - curb-to-curb (or door-to-door upon request) ADA paratransit service for all City of Durham and Durham County to all locations within the city and any location outside the city that is within three-quarters of a mile of any fixed-route bus service operated by GoDurham.
 - GoDurham ACCESS also provides transportation options for County residents who:
 - Are age 60 or older, or
 - Have a disability, or
 - Need work-related, medical, human services, government, or personal care trips, and
 - Reside in rural areas of Durham County
- [Durham Connect](#) (formerly GoDurham Connect) - last-mile options for those in northern or eastern Durham that cannot easily connect to bus routes or shopping centers
- [Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation](#) (NEMT) offered through Durham County
- Town of Morrisville free [Smart Shuttle Service](#) for on-demand transit through Morrisville.
- Scooter ride-shares (BIRD Scooters)
- Roller Skating
- Skateboarding
- [NC By Train](#)
 - Save 20% on [Carolinian and Piedmont services](#), even to destinations outside of NC here: <https://www.amtrak.com/see-north-carolina-save-20-percent> (available until January 2024, there are blackout dates, discount code v531 is the promo code equivalent)
 - This link expired, but the discount code (v531) still works. You must book at least a day in advance to receive the discount.
 - Fares to destinations outside of NC are significantly more expensive if purchased within 3 weeks of departure, so try to book in advance.
 - Children (at varying age ranges) also receive discounts. Infants under 2 years old ride free, ages 2-12 years ride for half-off the adult fare. Must be accompanied by an adult.
 - Additional discounts available [here](#) (you cannot use more than one discount at a time)

- Other routes through NC include Crescent, Floridian, Silver Star, and Silver Meteor
- Some routes have connecting local transit
 - Amtrak offers [Thruway Services](#) to cities not served directly by the train. Sometimes these services are directly provided by Amtrak (with an Amtrak bus) or through a local bus service (like PART). In either scenario, you can buy the connecting service ticket through Amtrak, but it may be more expensive.
 - For instance, to get to Winston Salem from Raleigh, Amtrak will send you to High Point on train, then it's \$5 to take the PART buses to Winston Salem. Amtrak used to offer direct service to WS through HP, but it is now a 30-minute PART Route 3 bus to the Coble Transportation Center (CTC) where you transfer to the PART Route 1 bus (also 30 minutes) to WS. However, you can save time, have more train ride options, and save money if you take the train to Greensboro (it's the stop before HP), and take the PART Route 2 bus to the CTC and do the same transfer to Route 1. The PART buses allow you to transfer between buses for free, which makes the \$5 trip Amtrak offered only \$2.50, or less if you qualify for reduced fare. Sometimes the bus ride is free, depending on whether PART is doing a fare-free day. Greensboro also has more stops during the day on Amtrak than High Point, and it's cheaper due to the shorter duration on the train.
 - Note this [Thruway Connection](#) is not available on Sundays because PART does not run on Sundays. Only [Routes 1, 2, and 3](#), and [North/South routes](#) run on Saturdays. All routes run Monday-Friday.
 - Also note, the [WS Transportation Center](#) does not have any signs explaining this information. You will want to ride Route 1 (which pulls up on the [east side of the building](#) on Liberty St)
- Bikes ride for free (checked) within NC and only \$20 per bike to destinations outside NC (50-lb limit; non-cargo bikes; electric bikes are allowed, just remove the battery before checking it)
 - You need to include this as an "add-on" when purchasing your tickets, even if it is for free. The baggage cars appear to be limited to 6 bikes (at least on Piedmont trains).
 - Arrive at least 15 minutes before departure to check your bike (aka get a tag for the bike). Talk to the Amtrak employee at the service window. They may have additional instructions on where to go and how to handle your bike.
 - You are responsible for bringing it to and from the checked baggage car on the train. In addition to the 50-lb limit, you may be limited by your own

personal ability to lift your bike. The baggage car is about 4-5 feet above most platforms.

- Not all stations along the Piedmont service offer checked bags, but you can still bring your bike, since you are the one responsible for giving it to the conductor at the baggage car. You just might not have a checked-luggage tag for your bike, which tells the conductor which station you are traveling to - they will instead ask you for this information when you hand them your bike. Be sure to put a contact tag (name, number, email, etc.) on your bike - these are available at most stations for free.
- Your ticket includes two carry-on bags (up to 50 pounds each) and two personal items (up to 25 pounds each). If you can carry it, it can go on the train (most of the time). Some items require checking ahead of time.
 - Other places in the country have notices that you only get one personal item instead of two. Check ahead if you're taking the train outside of NC.
- Carpooling with a friend
- Vanpooling (several businesses and GoTriangle/PART services offer this)
- Walking (every trip you take, no matter which mode of transportation you use, starts and ends with walking)

Other things to consider:

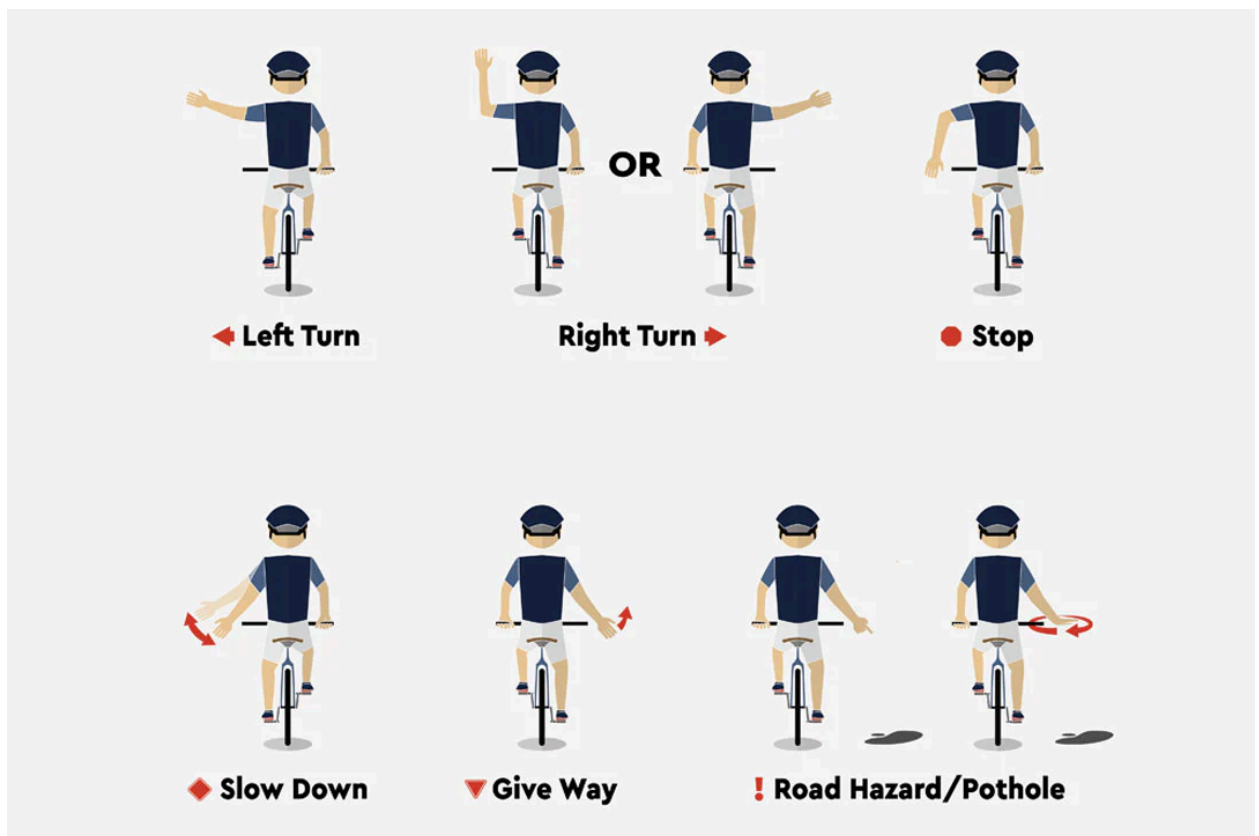
- Send your kids to and from school on the school bus
 - Or let them bike or walk to school (depending on their age and ability, either with a responsible adult, with a friend, or independently)
- Find a closer place to get groceries
 - You can order ahead and determine how much you can carry home
 - Add a basket to your bike, or a pannier, to make it easier to carry home.
 - If you have a partner or roommate, try going together. Enjoy the ride, spend time together, then divide the grocery haul for the return ride.
- Find closer/more accessible places for other errands, like doctor appointments, gym, or going out to dinner
- Work From Home (if you're able and have difficulty finding a safe alternative to get to work)
 - Or, work from a Durham Library, most of which are accessible by bike or bus routes.

Tips for a successful week:


- Prior to the Week Without Driving, GoDurham is hosting Try Transit Week (September 16-20, 2024). Riding the bus prior to the Week Without Driving may help prepare you for the week, in a low-stress environment.
- Everyone has to start somewhere, so it is normal to feel anxious or overwhelmed if you've never used public transportation or taken your bike before. If you have concerns or questions about the process, feel free to ask for help. The City of Durham and GoTransit both provide plenty of information online, some of which is provided below.
- Plan out your trips well in advance

- Check out Google Maps or other services to map out where you need to go and how long it will take you to get there.
 - Locally, Google Maps is limited to not include biking to bus-stops as a “mixed transit mode,” so you can adjust the time provided by reducing walking time if you bike instead
 - The estimated bike travel time can be significantly reduced if you use an electric bike
 - Bus routes may say the bus is running early or behind, but always assume it’s early.
 - Google Maps may say a bus stop exists at a particular location, but this could be outdated information, so it’s best to confirm through the bus service’s app or website.
 - Check out road conditions on Street View before committing to a route. For example, Cornwallis between Alston and TW Alexander has bike lanes and will be recommended as a bike route on Google Maps, but it is not recommended for many riders to use (high speeds, narrow lanes, higher traffic road, etc.).
 - Not all pedestrian paths work for bicycling. For example, a walk through Duke’s campus may include stairs, which would be difficult to bike on.
 - Most sidewalks in Durham do not allow for bicycle riding (except for children). Exceptions include multi-use paths or marked trails (like the one downtown near the ballpark).
- If you regularly store things in your car, bring them inside your home and put them somewhere easily accessible.
- If you’re taking public transit, you may want to bring some ginger chews or ginger candy with you, especially if you suffer from motion sickness.
- If you’re planning to bike regularly, invest in a helmet and bike lock. If you’re renting a bike, most places will provide these items as add-ons.
- If you need to pick up groceries, you can order these ahead of time to save time on the whole trip, and this will help you determine (prior to leaving the store) whether you can carry everything home.
- Consider limiting your trips to places that are closer and more easily accessible (aka safer)
- Consider limiting the number of trips to and from your house each day, especially if places are farther away
- Make it fun! Take a trail along the way! Bring a friend along!
- If taking public transportation (bus or train), think about what you can be doing during the ride.
 - You can enjoy the view and look at different areas in your city
 - You can work, read, or watch a show
 - Amtrak has wifi, though it’s not very reliable
 - The cafe cars offer better seating/table options if you plan to work from the train

- If you take your bike on the train, not all stations are handicap friendly (Charlotte's does not have automatic doors, which makes it difficult to enter and exit the station with a bike)
- Bikes ride for free on trains within NC along the Piedmont and Carolinian routes and on most local buses (like PART and GoTransit)
- In NC, children under 16 are required to wear a helmet while bike riding. People 16 and older are encouraged to wear helmets too.
- NC Bicycling and Walking guidelines/laws:
<https://transportation.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/bikeped-laws-guidebook.pdf>
- [Bike Durham's Beginner's Guide to Biking](#)
- When biking, know and use turn signals appropriately. Practice using these in low traffic areas before using on a street. Balancing with one hand off the handle bars can be difficult.



- Riding on the sidewalk is legal in most places in North Carolina. Local municipalities may not allow it, but statewide, only “motor vehicles” are not permitted on sidewalks. *In NC, bicycles are considered vehicles, but not motor vehicles. ([General Statute](#)) ([Chapter 20](#))
- Before biking, adjust your seat height for a comfortable/safe ride.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_Zpj9m6lf8
- When riding a bike, it may be useful to practice standing or hovering over your seat while riding. To help prevent a sore bottom, you may want to hover over your bike seat when riding over bumps, like speed bumps, railroad tracks, or bridge connections on trails.

- If your bike has gear shifts, practice transitioning between different gears to make riding up hills easier. The lower the gear, the easier it will be to ride uphill, but the slower you will be traveling. The higher the gear, the easier it will be to ride downhill, and the faster you will ride. Lower gears mean less resistance while pedaling, and higher gears mean more resistance.
- In NC, bicycles are vehicles. As a bicyclist, you have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. Obey traffic signals and stop signs. Ride with traffic; use the rightmost lane headed in the direction you are going.
- GoTransit has a [GoPerks program](#). "Get rewarded for your Go! With GoPerks, your smart commute by bus, bike, walk, carpool, or van can get you some cool stuff. It's pretty simple. Go smart, track your trip, get rewarded." This is also known as Share The Ride NC.
- How to load your bike on a bus:  [How to Use the Bus Bike Rack](#)

HOW TO PLACE YOUR BIKE ON A BUS

Bicycle racks are available on the front of all buses.

1: Before the bus arrives at your stop, please make sure that bike pumps and water bottles are secure so that they do not fall off during the bus trip.

2: When the bus arrives at your stop, indicate to the driver that you will be loading your bicycle onto the rack. Remember to look closely before stepping off the curb to load and unload your bike.

3: To release the rack, squeeze the center handle and slowly lower it. If the rack is already lowered and a bike is in position, use the other available bike wheel well. If the bike rack is full, please wait for the next available bus.

4: After lowering the rack, lift your bicycle into the available wheel well, making sure that the front wheel is placed on the side labeled "front wheel." If only one bike is being loaded, use the position nearest the bus, handlebars toward the curb.

5: Pull out and up on the support arm and hook the arm securely over the top of your front wheel. A spring pulls the arm back and holds the bike securely in place.

6: When you reach your destination, notify the driver that you will be unloading your bicycle and use the front door to exit the bus. Raise the support arm up off the tire and return it to its original position.

7: Lift your bike out of the bike rack. If the bike rack is empty, please return the rack to its upright position.

8: Step away from the bus and onto the curb with your bike. Indicate to the Operator that you are clear of the bus.



- Other information specific to bike riding:
 - Panniers and baskets make it easier to carry things and not hurt your back
 - Set out what you need the night before a known ride (like commuting to work), like getting your bike out of storage (if not easily accessible) and getting your work or other things (like jackets if it is cold) ready to be transported by bike.
 - You are required in NC to use headlights and taillights at night. You can (and should consider to) use them during the day too.
 - Hi-Vis vests can make you feel more safe/comfortable riding at night
 - Your ride will be chillier while you're rolling, so be prepared for the breeze
 - Sunglasses also help keep bugs out of your eyes
 - Some traffic lights have sensor strips. The middle strip is to sense the touch (not weight) of a bicyclist. If your presence does not trigger the light cycle to change, you should report it via One Call.
 - Call out "On Your Left" before passing someone on a trail or bike lane
 - Bicyclists may take the entire travel lane, and cars are required to give 4 feet of passing distance
 - You may ride two bicyclists side-by-side in one lane.
 - Cars are allowed to cross a double-yellow line to pass a cyclist safely on a two-lane road
 - Durham's Request a Bike Rack Program: <https://www.durhamnc.gov/1033/Bicycle-Rack-Program>
- Durham's various Bicycle and Pedestrian Maps: <https://www.durhamnc.gov/1027/Maps>

Fun Car-Free Activities

- Bike or ride the bus to Durham's Central Park for the Saturday morning farmers/art market.
- Bike or ride the bus to The Black Farmers' Market at Durham Tech's campus at 1637 E. Lawson Street. It is every Sunday from 1-4 pm, and it is right next to a GoDurham Route 8 bus stop!
- Bike or ride the bus to the South Durham Farmers Market on NC55 at Sedwick Rd. <https://southdurhamfarmersmarket.com/>
- Consider participating in a [group bicycle ride](#).
- Coffeeneuring - biking to a local coffee shop
 - [2024 Challenge Starts Oct 6](#), but you can participate any time.
- Check out the ATT and other Greenways
 - Map of local greenways, bike shop, and fix-it stations created by The Bicycle Chain/Clean Machine: bit.ly/ncgreenway