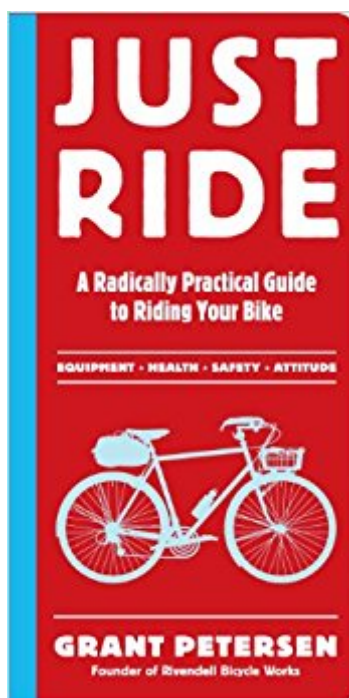


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# Just Ride: A Radically Practical Guide To Riding Your Bike



## 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

Grant Petersen strips away the B.S. --Paul Steel White, Ex.Dir, Transportation Alternatives

Grant Petersen is the founder and owner of Rivendell Bicycle Works and writes the Rivendell

Reader. His writing and opinions have been featured in major bike and outdoor magazines, including *Bicycling*, *Outside*, and *Men's Journal*. He's commuted exclusively by bike since 1980, and lives with his family in Walnut Creek, California.

Having taken this book out of our wonderful public library, I found--I HAD to buy the book. It was exactly how I view the bike, as opposed to spandex zoomers. I'd been off the bike for, ah...years. Look living in Mexico City, you'd had to have a death wish to want to ride in that traffic. Anywhere, anytime. Driving was dicey at times, lots of times. And before that, there were other overseas locations. When your friend's 12 year old is coshed on the head and pushed off his bike, in broad daylight in a "good" neighborhood, would you want to chance it? Or my friend who was killed riding. The list goes on. So when I moved to a place where bikes are common, manners on display in cars AND bikes--I thought. I'd like to try it, again. And did. Thanks Betsy. But so much has changed. Helmets, had never used that back in my cycling days. Etc. And I wanted a hand-held book to take me through the process. And this is *The Reference* book, for many of us. Buy it, and nibble at it as you re-enter the world of cycling.

A good book to make the uncommitted rider feel better, and maybe to convert the over-focused rider to a more relaxed and enjoyable style. Ride in an less bent-over position, ditch the clips, wear non-specialized clothing, buy steel bikes, quit worrying about weight, etc. I bought both the book and the recommendations, although I admit to some age related pre-disposition. Sort of a "slow down and smell the flowers" kind of treatise. Fun to read, if you cycle.

Who doesn't like a highly opinionated book on a topic one holds dear? That's what I like about Mr. Peterson's book (and much of what I've seen written by him elsewhere). As a recreational rider, I have no need to advice on shaving the last few grams off my bike (let alone the hair on my legs). What I can use is good general advice and suggestions on what's important, what to ignore and how to enjoy bicycling even more. That's just what this book has done for me.

Grant Petersen, Advertising Director/Product Designer for Bridgestone Bikes, many years ago now, shares his thoughts and "velosophy" on a range of fundamental cycling topics and more. If you remember the wonderful, educational, thought-povoking, and beautiful-looking Bridgestone catalogs of the early 90s, you'll recognize the content and distinctive style in this collection of short essays. What I love about Mr. Petersen's musing is his ability to effectively and succinctly challenge

a range of conventions and misunderstandings about bikes in a thoroughly engaging manner. He also manages to work in his eccentric wisdom about a range of other semi-bike related issues of global import, such as consumerism, conservation, and independence and freedom of purpose-against the omnipresent influence of the market and one's own peers. Anyone who challenges conventional trends will have their detractors and likely not many agree with all of Mr. Petersen's views. However, honest, thoughtful discourse is always valuable, especially when introduced by someone with his credentials. I find it all very refreshing and liberating. Highly recommended!

This is a short engaging read that will cause even the less avid cyclist to look at the way they think about cycling. I found Peterson's notions of the un-racer and pursuing cycling just to have fun like you did as a kid to be tremendously valuable notions as I have re-engaged with cycling. Not all of his ideas will be for everyone, but I think the book's structure in short chapters and sections that more or less stand on their own make it easy to pick and choose the areas and ideas that are particularly interesting or relevant.

Grant Peterson is one person who you would expect to be heavily entrenched in the conventional wisdom of the bicycling world. Don't be fooled! Mr. Peterson of Rivendell Bikes (some of the most beautiful frames I have ever seen) challenges the conventional wisdom of clipless pedals and bicycle seats with wisdom that only years of experience bring. An enlightening and enjoyable read. So, you don't feel like suiting up in the latest wild colored synthetic jersey and spandex shorts! What to do! Take Grant Peterson's advice and "Just Ride". It is supposed to be fun you know.

There are some good nuggets in this book if you can get past some of the opinions that are a little difficult for me to accept. Some of the suggestions while riding in traffic are not things I would ever try. On the other hand, the basic premise of the book is to just ride and enjoy your bike and not to get caught up in the influence the bicycle racing industry has had on the bicycle retail industry. After reading the book, I felt I learned something about myself and he did provide some suggestions of ways that I can increase my enjoyment of riding a bike. Though the author owns a bike shop, I did not feel his suggestions were totally self-serving. I felt he was honest, but some of his ideas are too far out there for me. But I will "just ride" more often and be a little less concerned about how much and how often. Many of us could dial it back a little, as we are ever going to be professional racers.

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