

What to expect at a bike fit and recommended fitters in the UK

[Michelle Arthurs-Brennan](#) January 7, 2019 2:29 pm



Booking in for a bike fit can help you to avoid injury, make the most of your power output, and better tailor your position to your riding style.

Bike fit services vary dramatically in approach, tools used and price. The most expensive is not always the best, though a pricier fit might mean that the tools used are more sophisticated.

[>>> Bike fit breakthroughs: four riders who fought off injury](#)

We've explained what to look for in a bike fit, what to expect, and highlighted a few of our favourite fitters in the UK...

Why get a bike fit?

The best time to get a bike fit is generally before you start ramping up your training in preparation for an event. That way you have plenty of time to get used to the new stance on the bike. However, there are other events which might force a bike fit outside of the ideal time frame.

If you're considering buying a new bike, then having a fit first will mean a trained professional can take your ideal measurements and help you to [choose a bike that's most suited](#) to your strength, flexibility, riding style and goals.

[>>> Beginner bike fit: how to set up your bike](#)

If you've made a change to your training regime or goal, or had any major change to your body (crash, injury, pregnancy, loss or gain in fitness, strength or flexibility) then [revisiting your bike fit may be a good idea](#).



Phil Burt at his Manchester studio. Image: Andy Jones

And of course, if you're struggling with pain then a professional bike fitter might be able to help you relieve this. If the pain is related to the way you're positioned on a bike, they'll adjust it to avoid this – but they may

also be able to manipulate the bike to cater for pain from outside factors.

Good bike fitters will also be able to suggest exercises that could help prevent pain in the future.

As Velo Atelier's director and bike fitter Lee Prescott explains, "The difficult thing in a bike-fit is understanding the human body — that's where the real skill is. You've got these organic, asymmetric bodies that you are trying to mate to a perfectly symmetrical engineered piece of machinery."

"Understanding how that person's body moves, you can see whether the bike is forcing them to move in an unnatural way, and what you can do about that.

"If an injury is approached intelligently and sympathetically, there's nearly always some sort of answer to get you to your goal."

Finally, having a bike fit can provide a huge psychological boost, thanks to the reassurance that you've been placed in the optimal position for your given goal or event.

What to look for in a bike fit



There are many outlets offering bike fit, and it can become quite a job to differentiate them and pick out the best.

A basic bike fit can be carried out with you on the bike, attached to a [turbo trainer](#). A well trained eye can get a lot done without additional tools, however extra tech can help to inform adjustment decisions, and to reassure you as the rider that changes made are beneficial.

When a 'jig' is used at a more premium studio, the fitter will be able to make minute changes in seconds, allowing for intricate fine tuning. The measurements can then be applied to your own bike, or planned bike if you're getting fitted in advance of a purchase.

Many fitters will also use devices to capture your old and new positions, and the effect that's having – such as the Retül 3D motion capture system. Here, markers are placed on the body, so that key measurements such as knee angle and extension can be displayed on a screen.

This allows the fitter to use numerical evidence to inform their decisions, and the rider to see what differences small adjustments make to the way

their body interacts with the bike.

Often on offer are saddle pressure mapping, and insole moulding. The former may be useful for riders struggling to find a saddle that's comfortable, whilst the latter can help optimise knee tracking or influence foot comfort.

In the hierarchy of importance, the fitter's knowledge and experience far outweighs the tools at hand. As former British Cycling and Team Sky physiotherapist Phil Burt told us on a visit to his clinic in Manchester, "data is great, but it's not the data that makes you knowledgeable, it's the analysis of it."

There are several well regarded training programmes offered for bike fitters, qualifications to look out for include Specialized Body Geometry Fit, Trek Precision Fit and CycleFit training.

What to expect at a bike fit

Good bike fitting begins with the rider. Therefore, a bike fit should always begin with a rider interview around the sort of cycling you're doing, any goals you have and any discomfort you've encountered.



Following this, the bike fitter will usually want to assess your flexibility and core strength, since this will dictate the position you will be able to maintain comfortably.

Next, the fit will usually move on to the bike, with a shoe and cleat assessment followed by a look at how you're currently sitting and how that can be optimised and improved.

Ideally, you'll be given a document with your measurements, so you can apply them to other bikes or keep them on record should you hire a bike or need to take yours apart at a later date.

Sometimes, it can take a little while to adjust to the new position, so the fitter may ask you to go away and ride your new set up, providing feedback to inform any later adjustments in a few weeks.

UK bike fitters we recommend

Phil Burt Innovation, Manchester

The eponymous studio from Phil Burt boasts his expertise as former Consultant Physiotherapist at Team Sky and Head of Physiotherapy at British Cycling – a post he held for 12 years.

Burt worked with some of the world's best athletes over three Olympic Games cycles and seven Tour de Frances, and now brings his expertise to amateurs. His aim is to help everyone from World Tour riders to weekenders to "ride faster, further and fresher".

The studio is based at the Manchester Institute of Health and Performance, so there's access to a range of complimentary services from MRI scans to DEXA scans. Burt uses the Retul 3D Motion Capture system to conduct fits, and Gebiomized saddle pressure map tools.

A bit fit assessment of 90-120 minutes costs £350, and there are off-bike assessments, specific saddle mapping and aero assessment options too.

Website: *philburtinnovation.co.uk*

Address: *299 Alan Turing Way, Manchester, M11 3BS (Satnav postcode M11 2AZ)*

Soigneur, London

Tim Allen is the man behind Soigneur London. The studio opened in

He prides himself on bringing a more personal touch to bike fitting, with a combination of both science and the 'experience eye'.

Comprehensive fits (£250) take up to four hours and are completed on a jig, so that the measurements can be applied to a bike, or used to build a new or even custom machine to the perfect spec. A basic fit (£165) is carried out on the turbo trainer and takes around 1.5 hours.

Allen has a degree in Sports and Exercise science, and is also trained in Specialized Body Geometry Level 1 and 2 fitting as well as Trek

Precision Fit Level 1 and 2.

Website: *soigneur.co.uk*

Address: *Unit g10, Belgravia Workshops, 159-163 Marlborough Rd,
London N19 4NF*

Velo Atelier, Warwick

Head fitter and director here is Lee Prescott, pioneer of the 'Clinical BikeFit Protocol', which tailors bike fit to a rider's lifestyle, goals and current muscular skeletal condition. Prescott is one of seven IBFI (International Bike Fitting Institute) certified bike fitters in the UK.

The studio is located next to Core Physiatry, a leading clinic which is home to a selection of highly experienced physiotherapists and chiropractors. Rather than charge one set fee for a bike fit, at Velo Aterlier riders will visit Core Physiatry if need be, and fit is charged at £100 an hour. Other services include pedal stroke analysis, custom insole moulding, saddle optimisation and more.

Here you can have a bike fit on your own bike, be fitted on a jig for advice on the best bike to buy if you're shopping, or have custom geometry drawn up.

Website: *veloatelier.co.uk*

Address: *Unit 9, Technology Park, Dark Lane, Hatton CV35 8XB*

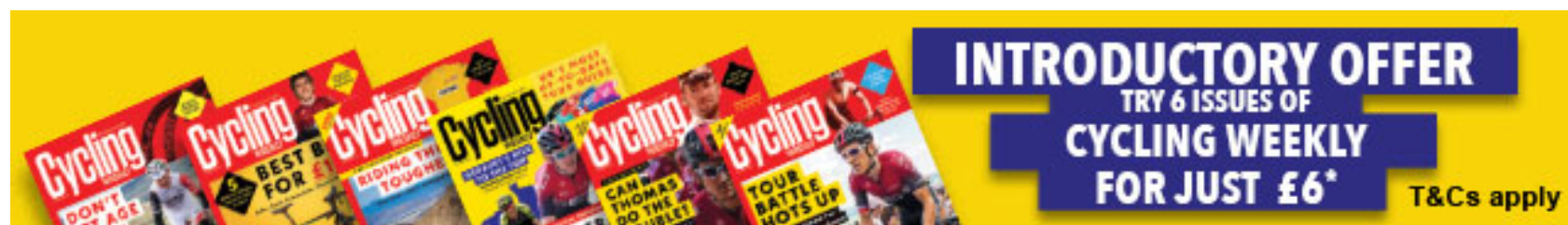
WyndyMilla, Surrey

Surrey's WyndyMilla is best known for its stunning custom bikes, but they carry out bike fits too – either to devise a custom geometry, or for a rider looking to get faster and more comfortable on their existing machine.

David Barnes Page is the chief bike fitter and designer, and he has seven

years experience including training in the Specialized Body Geometry Fit programme plus qualifications in Biomechanics of Sport, Analysis in Sports Biomechanics, Structural Kinesiology and Applied Sports Science from Loughborough University's Sports Technology Institute, and Manufacturing Design, Materials and Manufacturing Processes and Computer Aided Design from Wolfson School of Engineering.

A three hour fit costs £200 whilst four hours is £280, or you can pay per hour for smaller jobs.



Website: wyndymilla.com

Address: *WyndyMilla, Manor Farm Cycle Centre, Wood Lane, Seale, Surrey, GU10 1HR*

Know a great studio we've not mentioned?

We're just kicking things off with this list. Do you know of an excellent bike fitting service that we haven't included? Or do you run a bike fitting service of your own and think you should be included? If so, contact us at cycling@ti-media.com.