



## STATIONARY CYCLING

For cyclists who feel they need assistance with their first ride on Emotion rollers, this information will be helpful.

First a little background on stationary cycling.

When you ride a cycling device such as a roller or a treadmill, which relies on natural balance to ride, the physics of stability are the same as riding outside. There are no PHYSICAL adjustments or skills required to ride them. What is different however is the lack of visual feedback you would normally get during outdoor riding. For starters, you have no part of your visual field moving with you as you ride, so the natural subtle steering for balance is thrown off, sometimes wildly at first. You also get no feedback as to your speed, which is important because it's tough to ride at 5mph...lots of wobbling and swerving. So the first time on a roller is all about re-training your brain to ride without the full sensory input. For most people this is a very short period, especially with a little guidance and encouragement. In some respects, riding rollers the first time is much like learning to ride a bike for the first time.

By far the best way to learn rollers is to have an experienced person lead you through it. In our facility we teach new riders by gently supporting them at the seat-post. As they get up to speed and stabilize, we let go without them realizing they've gained their own balance...works every time! If you are learning on your own, here are a few hints that should get you up and riding.

First the obvious set-up requirements: Make sure your tires are at 100 psi or more, that the front drum is adjusted correctly for your bike and that the magnetic resistance unit is in the off (0) position. Refer to the setup sheet for more info on that. Additionally you should consider using regular shoes (if possible with your pedals) to reduce any anxiety about clipping in your first time on rollers.

Next, place the rollers near a wall or in a doorway so you can use it to help start out. When you get on and clipped in, start by riding with one hand very lightly on the wall. Do not make the mistake of actually leaning into the wall for balance...that doesn't work. You need to be upright and centered over the bike so that there is only fingertip pressure on your hand. At this point you should be able to pedal gently up to 12 to 15 mph. Choose a gear which reaches that speed with a normal cadence. I also suggest you not look down at your front wheel, instead look ahead 5 to 7 feet to project the road surface and keep your front wheel in your peripheral field of view.

When you are balanced and up to speed, the bike practically steers itself and at no time should you be making large steering corrections...it's all about subtle shifts in balance that keep the bike tracking right down the middle. Just as when you ride outdoors, the faster you go the less steering is required. When you are rolling along at normal speeds outside, you don't turn the handlebars...you just shift your weight a little.

You're riding with one hand at this point, so you can begin to remove your hand from the wall, but keep it close at first and avoid trying to make a quick grab for the handlebar because that will probably make you veer to one side. If you make a slow and controlled transition, you will have much better luck. If you begin to tip while removing your hand from the wall it's because you were leaning on it too much and were not balanced. You may still feel some apprehension during this time, but things should begin to settle down as you remain in control of the bike. Most people feel as though they are riding on ice at first. The initial few seconds of free cycling is important because your brain is making adjustments rapidly. The thing to remember is that the bike won't veer unless you tense up and cause it to do so. It's really just reacting to your input. Breathe easy and think about riding outside, holding a very smooth line without any sort of movement. But, you must be riding at a reasonable and steady speed and NOT be staring down at your front wheel.

Over the next 30 to 60 seconds you should begin to recognize the bike's normal response to your input and if you keep going, the whole experience improves rapidly. The ice feeling fades away and never returns because it was a kind of false sensation. Try not to make judgments about whether you like or dislike the rollers until after you have ridden successfully for at least 2 minutes. It gets MUCH better in that short time span and you will find that you can begin to relax and slow down a little, perhaps take a break and try again in a few minutes. Some will find it helpful to ride for just a few minutes at a time then rest before resuming. A twenty minute ride without any drama should be the goal for beginning riders.

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