



Family Bike Ride Recommendations

Take the family out on some of our great nearby biking paths. To make your planning easier, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

Be sure to bring these necessities along on your ride:

- Helmet
- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Map and route directions
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Tire mini-pump or CO2
- Spare tube or patch kit
- Tire levers



For a complete cycling checklist, visit [Expert Advice](#) on REI.com.

Here Are Four of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Bike Rides

Rustler's Loop

Terrain: **Dirt singletrack**

Distance: **3.5-mile loop; 290 feet of elevation gain.**

Why This Ride: This “practice loop” was built to help inexperienced riders hone their skills, so it’s a perfect ride for kids looking to get a taste of off-road fun without a high level of difficulty.

Ride Description: Go through the walk-thru gate to get to the start of the trail (be sure to close it behind you). This well-marked singletrack starts with a moderate climb to the East Horsethief Bench above the Colorado River, but you will be rewarded with amazing views of the river valley and the surrounding sandstone cliffs. Look for interpretive plaques along the way that describe riding techniques and trail ethics, so you can learn as you go. You’ll encounter a variety of small technical challenges—slickrock, dry wash, cobbly sections—as you go, but none are too difficult. The trail eventually begins its descent back down to the trailhead via a gravel road, thus completing the loop.

Driving Directions: From Grand Junction take I-70 to the Loma exit (Exit 15). Cross over the interstate to the south. At the access road turn right. Just short of the weigh station, turn left onto the gravel road, which crosses the cattle guard. Follow this frontage road for about 0.5 miles to the Kokopelli trailhead parking lot. Pass this parking area and turn left up a road and over the ridge. Continue to the end of the road to a parking area near a fence. Parking is free.

Tips: Go in the morning and evening during the summer. Weekends can be busy. There are restrooms in the parking lot.

Highline Lake

Terrain: **Gravel path**

Distance: **3.5-mile loop; 40 feet of elevation gain.**

Why This Ride: This easy ride around a popular local lake is a good intro to off-road biking for kids.

Ride Description: Begin your ride at the dam and travel clockwise around the lake. You’ll encounter a couple of small climbs and little descents that may challenge young ones, but they can either walk them if they’re quite small, or they can practice their technical skills. Highline Lake is known to attract a lot of birds—more than 200 different species have been observed there—so stop off at one (or both) of the Watchable Wildlife kiosks on either side of the lake, which even have viewing scopes. Keep your eyes peeled for mule deer as you ride, too, as they are abundant in the area. Also, be sure to watch for a marshy area at the north end of the lake, where there may be some mud that you’ll want to avoid.

Driving Directions: From I-70 west, take the Loma exit (Exit 15) and go north on Colorado Highway 139 for 6 miles to Q Road. Turn left (west) on Q Road and go 1.2 miles and then north on 11-3/4 Road for 1 mile to the park entrance. There is a parking lot by the playground. The fee is \$5 for a park day pass, or \$14 per night for camping.

Tips: Highline Lake has no shortage of things to do—from hiking to fishing to swimming—so consider camping out for a few days. There are restrooms in the park.

Highline Canal

Terrain: **Smooth dirt road**

Distance: **7.5 miles roundtrip, out-and-back. Minimal elevation gain.**

Why This Ride: A unique route for beginners—and not too technically challenging—that parallels a canal through the desert.

Ride Description: Start from where H Road and 27 Road meet and follow the flat, well-maintained service road off to the north as it snakes along the canal. Take in the great views of the Grand Valley and, on clear days, the San Juan Mountains to the south. Though not a ride where you'll likely encounter a lot of wildlife, the desert setting and wide-open vistas have their own appeal. And you may well spot some ducks in the canal. The gate at 3.7 miles will be your turnaround point.

Driving Directions: Take Horizon Drive north from I-70 to H Road. Go left on H Road and follow it to 27 Road. There is limited free parking on the side of road near the intersection.

Tips: There are no facilities—restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.—so be sure to bring plenty of water and snacks.

Colorado River Trail

Terrain: **Paved trail**

Distance: **Varies from small nature loops for beginners to longer rides for older kids; minimal elevation gain.**

Why This Ride: There's easy access from multiple points—Orchard Mesa swimming pool on the east end and James M. Robb State Park on the west end—and a fun interpretive nature loop for little ones.

Ride Description: The Western Botanical Garden is a good place to hop on this paved trail. Beginning riders can practice their skills on the nearby nature loops, while older kids may want to head west toward Fruita. The trail weaves to and fro from the Colorado River's wooded floodplains and through unique Grand Junction neighborhoods. There are several paths that go right along the river, providing some excellent nature viewing: ducks, swans, cranes and others live in this wildlife-rich environment.

Driving Directions: From REI, take 7th Street south and turn right onto Struthers Avenue. There is free parking at the Western Colorado Botanical Gardens, at 641 Struthers Avenue.

Tips: Check out the Botanical Gardens' cool butterfly house after your ride. The only restrooms along the trail are at the state park.



REI's PEAK program uses a fun presentation filled with hands-on activities and games to teach kids ages 6 through 12 about taking care of the outdoors.

Ask an REI team member about scheduling a free PEAK presentation for your classroom or youth group, or visit www.rei.com/PEAK for more information.



First Saturday in June The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day, sponsored by REI, is a nationwide celebration of trails. Celebrate with your family by taking a hike, or volunteering for a trail clean-up project. Ask an REI team member about how to get involved, or visit www.rei.com for more information.