

Responsible Biking

While the managers of mountain bike trails have a responsibility to keep them well maintained, ultimately you as a rider are responsible for looking after yourself as you have accepted the risks associated with these trails. All mountain bikers should also be responsible towards other users of the forest and the surrounding environment.

Below are some ways in which you can be a responsible mountain biker!

1. **Make the Most of Mountain Bike Trails:** These trails have been specifically developed to facilitate high quality mountain biking experiences and are designed to minimise the impact on the natural environment by reducing erosion, avoiding rare species and blending into the landscape. They are built to a specific set of standards and help to avoid conflict with other forest users.
2. **Ride on Open Trails:** Occasionally sections of trails may need to be closed for essential repair work or because of damage – please respect these closures and if you are unsure about the status of a trail ask a land manager.
3. **Follow signage and information:** Most trails have a one way system employed to control the risks of collisions and also to manage conflict with other users. It is very important to follow these systems which are normally well signposted. When riding on dual direction trails – keep to the left.
4. **Look after your and using the right kit:** Keeping your bike in good working order and regularly checking breaks, gears, wheels etc. is essential to safe riding. Always carry a puncture repair kit, a basic tool kit and a small first aid kit when riding trails – especially those that are in remote locations. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear including protective gloves.
5. **Control Your Bicycle:** Inattention for even a moment could put yourself and others at risk. Obey any speed regulations and recommendations, and ride within your limits. A number of **accredited activity providers** can provide skill development training and this is an excellent way to help you push your limits.
6. **Respect others:** Do your best to let your fellow trail users know you're coming — a friendly greeting or bell ring are good methods. Try to anticipate other trail users as you ride around corners. When crossing other trails and forest roads be very cautious and courteous and you should yield to other trail users. Riders traveling downhill should yield to those going uphill, unless the trail is clearly signed for one-way or downhill-only traffic. In general, strive to make each pass a safe and courteous one.
7. **Leave No Trace:** Be sensitive to the environment by staying on existing trails and not creating new ones or creating shortcuts by cutting switchbacks. Leave absolutely no litter behind you – even bio-degradable items.
8. **Be considerate to wildlife and livestock:** Animals are easily startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement or a loud noise. Give any animals enough room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses on dual trails, be very cautious and follow directions from the horse riders.
9. **Plan Ahead:** Apply these principles when considering where you are going and what you are planning to do and strive to be self-sufficient and a responsible rider who earns a genuine welcome at all times to the trails.