



Junior Club – FAQ's

To deal with the many questions asked, we have developed the following 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) section to help our members:

How old must I be to join the Junior Club?

The minimum entry age is 8, which as a general rule indicates that the rider may be sufficiently physical to deal with Club events and activities. We have considered this criterion very carefully and based on our experience made this an absolute minimum condition.

I am older than 8, but I haven't ridden a bike much and not really confident on a bike. Is it still suitable for me to come along?

All eligible riders are welcome. If your level of fitness and skill is at the beginners' stage of the sport, then we would encourage you to spend as much time possible generally riding around to increase your fitness. This is to ensure you get a positive experience from the Junior Club and also in consideration of all the other riders.

I haven't cycled off-road before, but I do ride my bike quite often with my mates and I think I am fit. Can I join the Junior Club?

Yes, is the short answer. The main purpose of the Junior Club is to develop young riders' off-road MTB skills so that you enjoy the discipline of Mountain Biking.

Is the Junior Club suitable for all genders and abilities?

Yes, we welcome all riders.

What type of bike should I have?

Ideally you should have a bike that is designed to ride off-road i.e. a Mountain or Cross Bike. The main requirements for the bike are:

- It must be well maintained i.e. not rusty or have poor gears and brakes
- It must have a front and rear brake in good working order.
- It must be a 'geared' bike i.e. it should have a minimum of 5-7 gears on the rear wheel.
- It must be of a suitable size for you i.e. not too small or too large.

Remember the coaches can and will offer advice if required, but we are not there to provide free maintenance.

I have a MTB bike, but it doesn't work very well. Can I still come to the Junior Club with it?

No – see FAQ above on bike condition.

If a member's bike is deemed by a coach as being poorly maintain and thus unsafe then the rider will NOT be permitted to join the session that day. It is the responsibility of the Parent/Guardian to ensure the bike is fit-for-purpose and safe.

I don't have a suitable off-road bike and my Parents don't want to buy me another bike until they know I like this type of riding. How can I learn to ride off-road?

Bedgebury on-site cycle hire (Go-Ape) may offer a discount to BFCC members to hire bikes during the summer seasons. Please arrange directly with the hire company on site and allow plenty of time to hire and make you way to the training area.

My bike needs some maintenance work and my Parents don't know anything about bikes. What can I do? Can the coaches help?

Coaches are here to develop your skills, not to maintain your bike. We will when necessary complete emergency repairs out in the forest, as even the best bikes can break whilst riding in difficult terrain.

You should get your bike serviced by a cycle shop.

My Dad/Mum is a keen cyclist and would like to help. Is this possible?

Yes, we are always looking for Volunteers to support coaches. We are actively encouraging Parents/Guardians to help on the Junior Club Forest rides – if you the junior rider is happy for them to be there of course.

How do I become a member?

Please see our membership page on the website for details.

How much does it cost to participate in the Junior Club?

As long as you are a Junior member of Bedgebury Forest Cycle Club (BFCC) then the Saturday Junior Club is included within the membership fee.

Will my Parents/Guardian have to wait around whilst I am at the Club?

Yes or be no more than 15-minutes' drive from the site. There are risks of injury, even small grazed knees that the rider will require/need a parent rather than coach to give comfort. In the event a rider decides they no longer want to be at the session, then we must be able to hand the child back to the parent in a timely manner, otherwise it will impact on the other children and their enjoyment.

I think I'm a very good rider, so can I join the Advance Juniors immediately?

The short answer is No.

The usual route - Advance Juniors are invited to join from the Saturday Junior Club, based on both physical fitness and skills ability. However, by exception, there may be an opportunity for new competent Junior riders to be informally assessed for the Advance Club during the Club social rides that are run by coaches. This exception is subject to our Head Coach's advance approval.

The Junior seeking assessment to join the Advance Juniors MUST be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult whilst on a social club ride.

How will I know I'm ready for the Advance Juniors?

The coaches will continually assess riders during the Saturday Club sessions and when they consider a rider is ready, the coach will recommend to the Head Coach for a move to the Advance Juniors.

I would like my child to have some 1:1 coaching, so is this possible?

It is British Cycling and BFCC policy that 1:1 coaching can only be delivered to riders 16 years old and above.