



Bike Fit Night & Retrospec Buying Guide

One of our primary goals at camp is to transition riders from our adaptive bikes to their own personal bike by the end of bike camp. Finding an appropriate bike for their riders can be a challenge for parents, but is vital to riders' success and continued practice once camp is over.

Oftentimes, bike shops will not carry the style of bikes we recommend – simple single speed bikes, and especially the larger 24" and 26" wheeled bikes. Also, families tend to wait until the week of bike camp to purchase a bike. This adds unwelcomed stress for the families and if they need a bike shop to order one, it rarely will arrive while the camp is ongoing.

Working early with your local bike shop partner and/or coordinating your own bike fittings before camp can make all the difference. Thus, iCan Shine recommends that hosts consider holding a *Bike Fit Night* months or at least weeks prior to the camp.

If families do purchase bikes ahead of time, **it's important that their riders do not attempt to ride these bikes before camp.** We don't want there to be an accident, which would likely add fear, anxiety, and/or other challenges with getting them on a bike at camp. We want them to know about their bike and be excited and looking forward to bike camp but wait to ride it for the first time when they are at camp.

Benefits of Bike Fit Night

- Allows families an early start in getting an appropriate bike to ensure their rider is well prepared for camp.
- Allows the host to be in early communication and coordination with the bike shop partner to ensure they have done their homework (e.g. watched the 10-minute video entitled *Selecting the Most Suitable Bike for Learning* found on our Parents page at <https://icanshine.org/parents/ican-bike-parents/> and read the document entitled *Considerations when Fitting Individuals with Disabilities for Bikes* found on our Host page at <https://icanshine.org/program-hosts/ican-bike-hosts/>).
- Allows bike shops to order more efficiently in lieu of estimating models and sizes, thus avoiding excess inventory for bikes they really don't stock otherwise.
- It also gives the shops time to build and possibly modify the bikes so they are ready at the start of camp.

Sizing Considerations

iCan Shine's recommendations for appropriate bikes and sizing our learning riders on these bikes is different from what a typical bike shop will suggest. While there will always be exceptions to what our riders can ride, below is a high-level summary of what we recommend.

- It's simply easier to ride a bigger wheeled bike, so we recommend riders be on the largest wheeled bike upon which the rider is seated and can place both feet flat on the ground (heels slightly off the ground may be appropriate if the rider can support themselves and the bike). Being able to put both feet down when they feel insecure or when the bike comes to a stop helps them feel safe and confident. This will also allow for more years of growing before needing to move up to a larger bike.

- Step-through frame (easier to get on and off) for all riders. Some people might refer to these as women's bikes.
- Single speed (keeps things simple).
- Upright riding posture (handlebars higher than seat). This promotes a steady upper body and is easier on the rider's core.
- Handbrake(s) – we often say, “pedaling is for going and squeezing your hand is for stopping.” Separating these gross motor skills makes it easier for the riders to digest that information. For bikes with wheels 24” and larger, brakes can be on both or either wheel.
- Bicycles come in a wide range of shapes and sizes. The chart below is a general guide for sizing individuals on bicycles, using the inseam as the critical measurement that allows a rider to sit on the seat with their feet flat on the ground. However, nothing will beat actually sitting on a bike for proper fit. To measure inseam, have the rider stand against a wall with shoes on. Place a hardbound book between their legs and raise it until snug against the crotch. Measure from the floor to the top of the book. Confident riders can likely size up on a bike, while less confident riders should size down.

Bike Size	Inseam
(wheel diameter)	(with shoes on)
16”	16” - 22”
20”	19” - 27”
24”	23” - 30”
26”	27+”

** If the bike has a fat wide seat, switching it to a narrow seat will likely reduce inseam length by 2”.

Additional Modifications

- Change the bike seat to be wider and/or softer for comfort.
- Change the seat to be smaller and/or narrower to help the rider's feet completely reach the ground while seated. This will potentially provide the needed reach to allow the rider to fit on a bigger wheeled bike with both feet flat on the ground.
- In regards to our recommendation of an upright riding posture, one can often achieve this on bikes that don't have this by adding a stem riser or more upright handlebars. This may require a longer brake cable to be added, so it's a good idea to add this before finalizing the brake line.
- Remove the reflector on the seat post to get the seat lower.
- Invert the clamp that holds the seat onto the seat post to allow the seat lower.

We encourage the use of helmets at *Bike Fit Night*, to drive home the point that you always wear a helmet when you're on a bike. This may also shed light on riders who are unwilling to wear a helmet. For those riders, their families should start working on wearing a helmet prior to camp. Every rider must wear a properly fitted helmet at bike camp. If we spend an entire session coaxing a rider into a helmet, that will likely impact their progress at camp.

Planning Considerations

- Designate a couple date(s) and time(s) for registered riders to come into the bike shop to be fit for a bike.
- Have bike shops select date(s) and time(s) when they are less busy and can devote more time to assisting families. Sometimes, bike shops will even open their shop up to our families during off-hours.

- Collaborate with your bike shop on a few models of bikes that meet iCan Shine's suggestions that can be made available for riders.
- Have at least one of each size present for riders to sit on.
- Recommend that the shop has alternative seats (narrow/wide) and seatposts that can be swapped between bikes to see if this will allow the rider a better fit or bigger bike. See end of document for suggestions.
- Recommend having additional wide and narrow seats available to swap amongst the bikes. See sizing considerations for more information on this.
- 'Boys' cruiser style bikes typically have a higher top bar making it difficult for many riders to get on or off. We recommend 'Girls' or 'step-through frames' for all of our riders.
- Ideally, we want bikes with a handbrake or one where a handbrake can be installed.
- The host or Camp Director should attend *Bike Fit Night* to help collaborate between bike shop and parents/riders.
- Determine with the bike shop a "latest date" to order bikes and still be ready in time for camp.
- Some shops will deliver the bikes to camp. Monday or Tuesday of camp is ideal to ensure iCan Shine staff have ample time to confirm the bike is appropriate for the rider and to make any other suggestions for an even better fit.
- Establish with the bike shop the options available to families in the event they need to exchange the bike for another size.

Bike Fit Night with iCan Shine Bikes (Retrospec Bikes)

iCan Shine has partnered with Retrospec to be able to sell similar bikes that we use as our own adaptive bikes directly to parents. You can view and order these bikes via the 'Buy a Bike' button on our website or by visiting this link: <https://icanshine.org/parents/buy-a-bike/>.

A few points with regards to Retrospec bikes:

- These bikes are direct to the consumer, meaning that they are ordered online and shipped in a box. This means that some assembly is required, but it's not overwhelming. One can do it with some basic knowhow. Otherwise, a bike shop can build it for a fee. iCan Shine will not be able to build these bikes for participating families.
- The purchase, processing, and shipment of these bikes is through Retrospec. Any bike return will need to be handled through Retrospec customer service. iCan Shine has no role or insight into the purchases or returns.
- Some of the Retrospec bikes, as purchased stock, will not include a handbrake. These can be added after the fact through a local bike shop.
- Retrospec makes both "boy/men's" and "girl/women's" versions of some of their bikes. iCan Shine does not recommend the boy/men's version as it's harder to get on and off. We only recommend the step-through (girl/women's) version.

Retrospec Recommendation Lineup

Retrospec Koda Plus & Beaumont 16" - Single speed bikes. Both are essentially the same and come with both a coaster and a handbrake to the rear wheel, which is hard to find on a 16" bike. They also come with a front wheel handbrake that iCan Bike recommends disabling/removing to avoid flipping over the bars.

Retrospec Koda & Koda Plus 20”: Single speed bikes. Both are essentially the same and are good for smaller riders who fit on a 20” bike. iCan Bike recommends disabling/removing the front wheel handbrake on both models. The one drawback is that they come with rear freewheels, meaning that you can pedal backwards without anything happening (much like a geared bike). This can potentially be a source of frustration or confusion. iCan Bike has modified our bikes to have coaster brake wheels, allowing us to teach this braking option. It’s relatively easy to find other brands/models of these smaller 20” bikes with a rear wheel handbrake and coaster brake. See *Selecting The Right Bike and Helmet* document on our Parent page:

<https://icanshine.org/parents/ican-bike-parents/>

Retrospec Chatham 20” Single Speed Beach Cruiser: This is a 20” bike that’s good for larger riders with shorter legs who aren’t able to fit on 24” bikes. This bike only comes with a coaster brake, but can have a rear wheel handbrake installed. It also comes with a large wide cushy seat, which is better for the riders who can fit on this bike, but also can accommodate a smaller narrow seat.

Retrospec Chatham 24” Single Speed Beach Cruiser: This bike only comes with a coaster brake, but can have a rear and/or front wheel handbrake installed. It also comes with a large wide cushy seat. However, in order to get some shorter riders to fit onto this bike with their feet confidently on the ground, switching to a narrow seat will allow for slightly more leg reach.

Retrospec Chatham 26” Single Speed Beach Cruiser: This bike only comes with a coaster brake, but can have a rear and/or front wheel handbrake installed. It also comes with a large wide cushy seat. However, in order to get some shorter riders to fit onto this bike with their feet confidently on the ground, switching to a narrow seat will allow for slightly more leg reach.

Depending on your budget, you can either keep these bikes for future fittings or sell them to your campers if you do not have the storage.

Other Suggestions

If planning a *Bike Fit Night* is not a viable option, here are some other suggestions for alleviating the challenges associated with families purchasing an appropriate bike in time for camp:

- Ask a representative from the bike shop to attend the Sunday orientation meeting and bring a few bikes. If possible, the bike shop can leave these bikes at camp (they will be locked up with our equipment). iCan Shine staff can fit riders on these bikes throughout the week and send families to their shop knowing exactly what to purchase.
- Ask the bike shop to order a couple extra of a particular bike that we recommend (e.g. 24" Cruiser style bikes are usually what bike shops rarely have in stock but many riders need).
- Share whatever Family Bike Purchase data (quantity, sizes, models) you may have from previous years to assist the bike shop's order estimates.

Finding an appropriate bike for their riders can be a challenge for parents but is vital to riders' success and continued practice once camp is over. A good bike shop partner and early bike fitting can make all the difference.

Please note that If hosts are purchasing or having bikes donated for your riders, please inform us so we can assist in the process of ensuring all aspects of selecting, sizing and distributing these bikes runs smoothly. In such instances, it is absolutely imperative before procuring the bikes to watch the 10-minute video entitled 'Selecting the Most Suitable Bike for Learning' found on our Parents page at <https://icanshine.org/parents/ican-bike-parents/> and read the document entitled *Considerations when Fitting Individuals with Disabilities for Bikes* found on our Host page at <https://icanshine.org/program-hosts/ican-bike-hosts/>.

Examples of Modification Equipment

Below are suggestions for equipment that could potentially make a bike a better fit for your rider. You may want to consult with your bike shop partner for other ideas and confirmation that selected parts will fit your bike.

[Long Reach Handbrake Set](#)

[Comfortable Narrow Seat](#)

[Seat Post for Retrospec Bikes](#) (25.4mm version for Retrospec bikes)

If you or your bike shop partner has questions and/or need guidance with our bike fitting recommendations, purchasing Retrospec bikes, or having a *Bike Fit Night*, please contact Kent at Kent@icanshine.org. He will be happy to help.