



September 25, 2020

To Gel Or Not To Gel?

Anyone who has ever sat on a bike saddle (or seat) will know that it can sometimes be a painful experience. If you have a poor saddle, you might find that your sit-bones feel bruised after a long bike ride. This can especially be the case for new or infrequent riders.

If you've experienced that all-too-well-known pain after a day of pedal power, then you might want to consider a gel saddle. Sure, you can get gel saddle covers, but these can slide around and become more of a hindrance than a help.

A gel *seat* is what you need. These offer more stability than a cover, while still affording the rider the same degree of comfort. Want to know more? Then read on.

What is a Gel Bike Saddle?

In the grand scheme of things, a gel saddle isn't much different than a regular bike saddle. However, there is one major contrast that sets a gel saddle apart from a regular saddle and the clue is in the name. That's right, its the gel.

A gel saddle will generally be shaped in exactly the same way as your standard saddle. However, the top of the seat will boast a soft, malleable layer designed for comfort as you ride. This normally sits on top of the regular saddle cushioning, providing more padding for your sit bones.

Should I Use a Gel Saddle?

To be completely honest, gel saddles aren't suitable for everyone. It all depends on what type of rider you are. If you ride competitively, then the likelihood is you won't be using a gel saddle as they add extra weight to the bike, which you don't want.

However, if you are a casual rider then this extra cushioning could mean that your sit-bones can cope with a longer ride than with your bike's standard seat. You also need to consider how *often* you ride your bike.

Gel does suffer from wear-and-tear. So, if you begin to ride more frequently you may find you need to replace your gel saddle as the cushioning will degrade over time and could shift around beneath you once this has happened.

In addition, professional riders will tell you that gel can cut off circulation to your nether-regions. Obviously this is no good, so once you have strengthened your sit bones by riding more frequently, you might want to switch to a different seat style.

To Gel or Not to Gel

As you can see, gel seats have their pros and cons. You can always go to your local bicycle shop and get a feel for the saddles they have available. Many will offer you a saddle test so you can check them out first.

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