




Refresh Your Ride


Yes, you can satisfy that brand-new-bike craving without a brand-new-bike budget.

You know you've done it. At the trailhead, at the bike shop, you sneak a lustful glance at the newest mountain bike models. You think: How much more fun would I have on that bike? If you're ready to drop \$4,000 on a new setup, read no further. Otherwise, here are six tips from bike mechanics on how to refresh your current ride and lust no more (okay, lust less).


TUNE IN TO YOUR TIRES

 Bike manufacturers often skimp on stock tires to keep costs down, so an upgrade can feel like heaven. Even if your tread still looks good, older tires dry out and get hard, so you lose out on cornering and braking performance. **\$50-100**


NEW WHEELS KEEP ON TURNIN'

 Over time, bearings deteriorate, spokes fatigue and wheels lose their "pop." The wheels are another place where manufacturers often cut corners on stock components. A new set of wheels can lighten—and liven—up the ride, says Nick Soloninka at Salvagetti Bicycle Workshop in Denver. **\$400-1,200**


SHIFT INTO NEW CABLES AND HOUSING

 This might sound elementary, but Bryce Kirk, owner of Tam Bikes in Mill Valley, Calif., says new shifting cables and housing can make a five-year-old bike feel brand new. Cables stretch and wear with age, which can cause derailleurs to skip. If your shifting isn't smooth as butter, it could be time for a replacement. **\$80-100**


GET HIP TO LONGER HANDLEBARS

 If you're looking to modernize your ride, wider, lighter handlebars and a shorter stem can bring you up to date, according to Kirk. Though it all depends on the terrain you frequent. Soloninka says that for the Front Range, a shorter stem and wider stance gives more stability (think about your hand placement doing pushups) for leaning the bike under you around corners. **\$50-200**

BRAKE DANCE

 Disc brakes can bring an old-school V-Brake rig into the 21st century, and newer technology keeps brake fluid cooler longer, so it degrades more slowly. Plus, newer levers are more adjustable, which means more ergonomic. **\$250-300**

DROP IT

 A dropper post takes two wheels to the next level, making for a super-responsive bike on technical terrain. **\$300-500**

—Hilary Oliver

MOVEABLE FEAST: HUMAN POWER DELIVERS AND SAVES ENERGY

COURTESY BOULDER FOOD RESCUE



Meals on Wheels

Boulder Food Rescuce pedals perishable food "waste" to the hungry.

If you pass someone hauling a couple hundred pounds of food stacked above their head on a bicycle trailer, it's likely a Boulder Food Rescue volunteer. The Boulder-based non-profit uses bicycles to rescue and transport perishable foods from groceries, bakeries and other businesses to recipients that serve homeless, low-income and at-risk populations.

Food production in the U.S. consumes large quantities of energy, water and land and yet 40 percent of food goes uneaten, according to a 2012 National Resources Defense Council report. Consider that one in six Americans are hungry and the math is easy. "Food is being thrown away literally blocks away from where people are going hungry," says Hana Dansky, Boulder Food Rescue co-founder. "It just makes sense to bike it and save energy."

Since Boulder Food Rescue began in 2011, the organization has grown from three founders and two interns to over 120 volunteers and has rescued more than 250,000 pounds of food. About 85 percent of the transport is human-powered, with volunteers hauling bike trailers with up to 200 pounds of food at a time.

The organization faced criticism early on about its choice to use bicycles, but co-founder Caleb Phillips is confident that sticking with bikes has been a key to its success. "Boulder has this amazing, vibrant community of passionate cyclists," says Phillips. "By choosing bikes we basically tapped ourselves into a whole community that really wanted to support people that were crazy enough to do the right thing."

The frequent, small-scale shipments allow for rescue of fresh fruits and vegetables—items that fill a nutritional void for many recipients—that would otherwise expire. "The shelters in Boulder have more stale bread, rice, meat and dairy than they could ever possibly use," Phillips says. "What they're really hurting for is fresh fruits and vegetables, so that's what we try to focus on the most."

The volunteers and organizers are not just porters, either. They are educators, public speakers and outreach coordinators. "They are such nimble and vibrant activists," says Shari Leyshon, Director of Nutrition and Kitchen Initiatives at Bridge House, a resource house for homeless and low-income families. "They are premier experts in the community on food waste."

—Casey Flynn

quick
hits

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