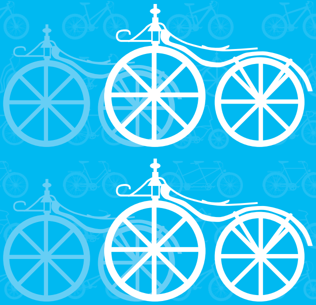
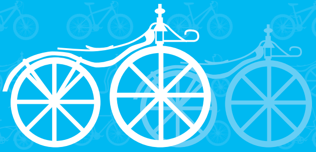
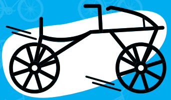


200 YEARS OF THE BICYCLE



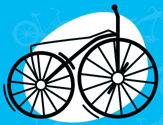
BICYCLE NETWORK®



1817

DRAISINE

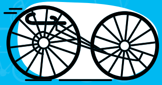
Karl Drais of Karlsruhe, Germany, added steering to two wheels in series and the concept of the bicycle was born.



1818

VELOCIPEDE

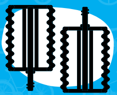
The Draisine was copied across France and Europe as the Velocipede, spreading also to England and the USA.



1820-60

TRICYCLES, QUADCYCLES

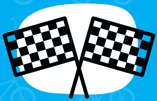
Many designs were tried as human-powered vehicles captivated imaginations.



1864

PEDALS

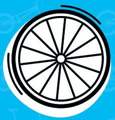
Pedals were added to the front wheel in Paris and the fad took off again.



1868

FIRST OFFICIAL RACE

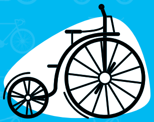
At Parc de Saint-Cloud, Paris, over 1,200 metres. Won by expatriate Englishman James Moore on a wooden bicycle with iron tires.



1869

RUBBER TYRES

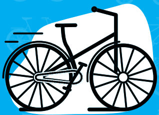
Solid rubber tyres were an improvement on the iron rims used previously.



1870

PENNY FARTHING

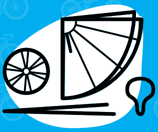
The need for speed – the solution a bigger wheel.



1876

SAFETY BICYCLE

A lower seat so that the rider's feet could touch the ground and a chain to drive the rear wheel and keep the feet away from the front wheel.



1878

FIRST PORTABLE BIKE

William Grout devised a way to dissemble a Penny Farthing for carrying if necessary.

1880

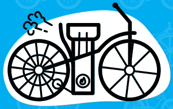
LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WHEELMEN

Formed to organise rides and advocate for the needs of bike riders. The Good Roads Movement was formed at a similar time to advocate for roads suitable for riding.

1884

TRANS-AMERICA CROSSING

Thomas Stevens is the first person to cycle across the USA.



1885

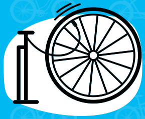
MOTORBIKE IS BORN

Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach added an internal-combustion engine to the bicycle to make the first motorbike.

1887

FIRST PERSON AROUND THE WORLD

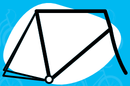
Thomas Stevens takes it a step further and circumnavigates the planet on his Penny Farthing.



1888

PNEUMATIC TYRES

John Boyd Dunlop commercialises the air filled tyre, providing a vastly smoother ride for cyclists.



1890s

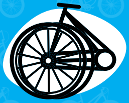
ALUMINIUM FRAME

Cycles Aluminium of France begin to produce aluminium frames for bicycles.

1890s

WOMEN CLAIM BIKE RIDING

Practical clothing makes this possible and women claim independence previously unknown.



1890s

FOLDING BIKES

Folding mechanisms for bicycles are developed by various militaries around the world.

1893

FIRST TRANS-AUSTRALIA RIDE

Percy Armstrong and R Craig rode from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Melbourne

1893

WRIGHT BROTHERS

Established Wright Cycle Company in Dayton Ohio, USA, later producing the first plane.

1894

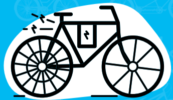
FIRST FEMALE AROUND THE WORLD

Annie Cohen Kopchovsky, AKA Annie Londonderry, rode across the USA, Asia and Europe in one year.

1897

OLYMPIC CYCLING

A cycling race is first included in the modern Olympic Games



1895

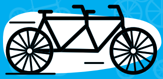
FIRST ELECTRIC BIKE

Ogden Boulton is granted a patent for a battery powered rear-hub motor for a bicycle.

1897

RIM BRAKES

With pneumatic tyres becoming standard, rim brakes had to be developed, replacing the spoon brake directly on the rim or tyre used since the Draisine.



1898

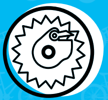
TANDEM BICYCLE

Commercialised successfully by Danish inventor Mikael Pedersen

1900

FIRST AROUND AUSTRALIA

Arthur Richardson is the first person to ‘overland’ by bicycle around the perimeter of Australia.



1898

FREEWHEEL

With this invention the wheel could

spin without the pedals also rotating

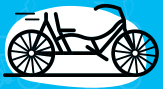
1900

INTERNATIONAL RACING ESTABLISHED

The Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) is founded on 14 April 1900 by Belgium, the United States, France, Italy and Switzerland.

1901

RECUMBENT BIKES

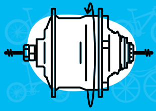


The Brown Recumbent Bicycle is sold commercially

1902

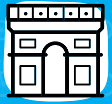
HUB GEARS

Sturmey Archer begin to produce internal hub gears.



1903

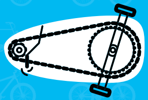
TOUR DE FRANCE



Today's ultimate in professional cycle racing begins as a publicity stunt, and endures in popularity as a compelling test of human endurance.

1905

DERAILLEUR GEARS



Paul de Vivie invents a two-speed derailleur

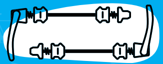
1916

THEORY OF RELATIVITY

Albert Einstein declares that he thought of his break-through theory while riding his bicycle.

1930

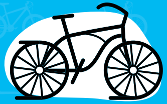
QUICK RELEASE



Tulio Campagnolo invents the quick release wheel skewer.

1933

SCHWINN CRUISER



The Schwinn Cruiser was introduced.

1934

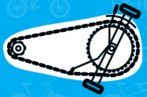
RECUMBENT BIKES BANNED

UCI bans them from racing in 1934 by after a recumbent rider smashed a 20-year-old racing record.

1937

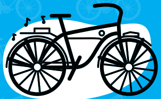
DERAILLEURS ESTABLISHED

Derailleur gears are used in the Tour de France and become the standard gear changing mechanism for bicycles.



1955

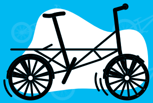
HUFFY RADIO BICYCLE



1962

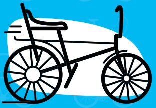
MOULTON

The Moulton bicycle established.



1969

RALEIGH CHOPPER

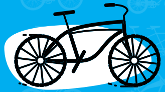


Icon of the 70s. Even better if it had a three-speed shifter on the top tube.

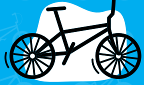
1970s

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Developed by Garry Fisher, Charlie Kelly, Tom Ritchie, Joe Breeze in California, USA



1970s



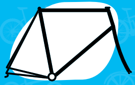
BMX

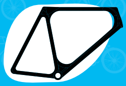
Kids in California mimicked motocross dirt bike riders on their Schwinn Sting-Ray bicycles and a new riding style was born: Bicycle Motocross or BMX.

1974

TITANIUM FRAMES

The first mass-produced titanium frames produced by Teledyne Linair, USA.





1975

CARBON FIBRE FRAMES

Exxon Graftek produces the first carbon-tubed, metal-lugged frames.

1976

BROMPTON

The iconic English folding bike arrives.

1976

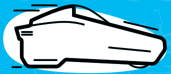
REPACK DOWNHILL RACE

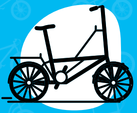
The first organised mountain bike event in Marin County USA by Charlie Kelly and Fred Wolf.

1979

SPEED RECORD

A recumbent records the fastest speed ever for a human-powered vehicle: 81.8km/h by Freedie Markham.





1980

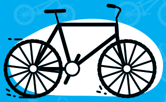
DAHON

Dahon bicycles established.

1981

SPECIALIZED STUMPJUMPER

The first mass-produced mountain bike (MTB).



1982

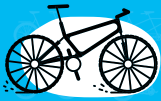
BIKE COMPUTER

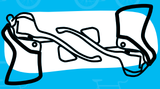
Sportronics releases the first bike computer, the Pacer 2000

1987

DUAL-SUSPENSION MTB

The first full-suspension mountain bike by Paul Turner opens up a new range of riding.





1990

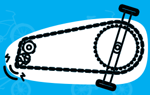
BRIFTERS

Shimano releases its integrated brake levers and gear shifters – the first to market.

1992

ZIKE EBIKE

Vector Services brings back the battery-powered electric motor for bicycles.



1993

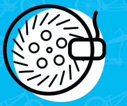
FIRST ELECTRONIC DERAILLEURS

The Mavic Zap makes a brief appearance on the market.

1994

DISC BRAKES

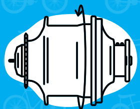
SRAM produces the first hydraulic disc brake system for bicycles.

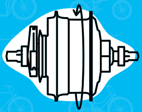


1998

ROHLOFF SPEEDHUB

Rohloff launches a 14-speed hub gear system with bombproof construction.





2006

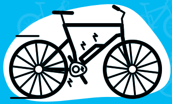
INFINITELY VARIABLE HUB GEAR

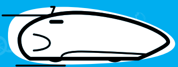
NuVinci n170 offers un-indexed shifting in a hub gear that operates under high torque.

2011

BOSCH EBIKE SYSTEMS

The premium ebike system, the Bosch mid-drive motor, is launched.





2013

NEW SPEED RECORD

A new world speed record for unassisted cycling of 133.8km/h is set by Sebastiaan Bowier in a velomobile.