



Smart Money: Biking v. Transit

Want to start biking to school this fall? It could save you time and money and benefits your mental and physical health! Bike commuting has an initial investment cost, but once you have what you need, it's really cheap to maintain. What you really need is: a bike, a U-lock with cable, and a helmet.

The price of a bike can range a great deal. To get to school, you should be able to get a bike that costs under \$100. Helmets can range a great deal, too! Be sure to get a helmet that's certified by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Although it may seem like a good idea to buy a used helmet, avoid this option because you can never be sure if that helmet has been through a crash in the past. Once you have the bike, you'll need to maintain it. That can be almost free if you do the work yourself (Neighborhood Bike Works in West Philly is a great place to start), or you can pay a mechanic to do the work for you. If you're paying for the services, count on about \$60-\$75 annually for maintenance.

Weekly TransPass: **\$24** (\$3.62/valid day=**\$18.10**/school week if purchased through the School District)

Monthly TransPass: **\$91**

Single cash fare: **\$2.25**

Token: **\$1.80**

Transfer: **\$1.00** (not included in calculation)

For the purposes of calculation, the initial investment on a bicycle and necessary supplies includes a bicycle (\$100), a helmet (\$30), and a u-lock (\$50) = **\$180**. That amount increases to \$190 after five months, representing minor necessary purchases (inner tubes and/or brake pads). If you already own a bike, helmet, and/or reliable lock, that number might be closer to \$0! We recommend having your bike checked out by a mechanic before you start commuting.

