

PERFORMANCE BIKEFIT

Ride Faster for Longer

How To Resolve.....

Saddle Discomfort?

**Stop Wasting TIME and MONEY
buying the wrong Saddle**

Thank you for choosing to download this Free Report, “How To Resolve Saddle Discomfort”.

My name is Steve, and I am Bike Fitter based near Portsmouth Hampshire. I have over 8 years of experience in assessing biomechanics and treating pain caused by poor positioning and biomechanics when riding a Bike.

Saddle discomfort is experienced by nearly every cyclist at some point in their cycling-life. The truth is, there is no excuse to have saddle discomfort when riding a bike. A popular belief is that it is normal to be sore, uncomfortable or even numb after riding a bike for a few hours. This is simply not true and there is always a way to ease the pain.

- Do you experience some form of saddle discomfort when riding?**
- Have you felt the need to stop riding due to your pain?**
- Do you get numbness or pins and needles during or after riding?**
- Do you feel like your enjoyment of cycling is tainted by your saddle problems?**

If the answer to any of those questions was “Yes”, then you’re in the right place!

Keep reading to see what you can do to improve your ‘bum comfort’!

How To Resolve Saddle Discomfort

Why Do We Get Saddle Discomfort?

To figure out how to resolve saddle discomfort, first we must work out why you have developed saddle discomfort in the first place.

I break down saddle problems into two types:

- 1. Fit-Related Saddle Discomfort** – This is when your cycling position is the real cause of your saddle pain. For example, an incorrect saddle height or an overly upright position can all put too much pressure through your sit bones. If you have found yourself trying saddle after saddle and finding them all uncomfortable, it is likely you have fit-related saddle discomfort.
- 2. True Saddle Discomfort** – If your cycling position is correct but you still have saddle problems, then you have true saddle discomfort. This is where the actual saddle is the cause of your symptoms. This report focuses on “True Saddle Discomfort”. If you want a BikeFit to check your cycling position is correct, get in touch using the email at the bottom of the page.

So how do you know which saddle is right for you? There are several things you need to look at when deciding which saddle to buy, so keep reading to find out which type of saddle is right for you.

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Size Matters!

Making sure you have the correct width of saddle is the first thing you should do when looking for causes of saddle discomfort. The width of the saddle should be decided by measuring the distance between your ischial tuberosity (sit bones). The most accurate way to measure your sit bones is to sit on a specialist pad at your local bike shop or bike fitter, which will accurately find the centre of your sit bones. There is a DIY method you can try at home though:

- Lay a piece of tin foil on a step or stairs, sit on it with your feet flat on the next step down and measure the distance between the centres of the two imprints.

You can then use this measurement to determine what width saddle you need for any manufacturer. For example, Specialized suggest the following:

Sit Bone Width (mm):	80-100	100-120	120-140	140-170
Saddle Size:	130	143	155	168

If you would like to have your saddle width calculated accurately, we not only offer sit-bone measurements but also saddle pressure mapping, where we can see exactly where and how much pressure is on your saddle as you pedal.

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Saddle Profile

Now you've decided on the width of your saddle, next you need to consider the shape of your saddle. It's difficult to know exactly what shape saddle will work for you, but there are some useful trends you can look at when choosing:

- Looking at saddles from the side:
 - Flat saddles are more suited to riders who like an aggressive position
 - Saddles with more of a “wavy” profile are preferable for riders who sit more upright
- Looking at saddles from the rear:
 - A larger drop on each side would likely suit a rider with a more upright riding position or someone who sits relatively still on the saddle.
 - A shallower drop is more beneficial to an aggressive position and a rider who likes to move around a lot on the saddle.

If you're not sure whether you have an upright or aggressive riding position, get in touch for a Bike Fit before you choose your saddle.

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Cut-Out or No Cut-Out

(That is the Question?)

The “Cut-Out” has grown in popularity over the last few years, and for good reason. The main reason cut-outs have become more mainstream on saddles is that they take away the section of the saddle that would usually come into contact with your perineum. This is the area of your body that houses nerves supplying the more sensitive areas of your body! So how do you know if a cut-out is right for you?

1. If you suffer with pins and needles or numbness in between your legs when cycling, a cut-out may be the first place to start. If you race your bike or ride in a particularly aggressive position, when you rotate your pelvis forwards your perineum will almost always contact the saddle. A Cut-out or even a Short Nose Saddle could alleviate this pressure.
2. If you ride with a more relaxed, upright position it is less likely that a cut-out would benefit you. Your pelvis is likely to be posteriorly rotated causing your perineum to lift from the saddle. In this case, a cut-out may cause more problems than benefits as the edges of the cut-out could cause excess friction.

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Saddle Padding

If you have saddle discomfort, surely getting a saddle with deeper, softer padding is the answer, right? Wrong!

You may have noticed that a lot of road saddles have made a shift towards thinner and seemingly harder foam. The type of saddles you look at and think, “How on earth am I supposed to sit on that?!” There’s a very good reason for this.

Firstly, the quality of the foam that is used has improved as the design and technology of saddles has evolved. This allows us to perch even the boniest of bums on the right saddle for hours on end whilst remaining comfortable.

Secondly, more padding rarely equals more comfort. The problem with soft and squidgy padding, is that your bones sink into the saddle, often giving them extremely little support. When our pelvis’ sink into these saddles, that pesky perineum starts to sit on the saddle and create the problems outlined on the last page.

It is much more important to be sitting on a saddle with the profile and shape that is best suited to your riding position, rather than choosing a saddle for how soft it feels. Get your riding position checked and optimised with a Bike Fit, then pick a saddle to match.

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Other Things to Consider

- **Saddle Angle**

On the whole, your saddle should be angled horizontally. This is the way manufacturers develop the saddle and expect their customers to ride. You should NEVER be tilting your saddle “nose-up”. This causes all sorts of issues to your riding position. You can angle most saddles “nose-down” to a maximum of 4-5 degrees if you wish, but don’t over-do it as you will find yourself falling forwards onto your hands.

- **Foot Support**

Not having the correct foot support can also lead to saddle discomfort as the lower legs & feet collapse under the pressure of pushing on the pedals causing the hips to move & rotate. Good quality Cycling Shoes, Foot Beds & Wedges can help.

- **Shorts**

It is vital to find a good quality pair of bib shorts that provide you with a chamois pad to cushion your sit bones onto the saddle. This is another reason why most saddles are firm, let the shorts do all the cushioning!

- **Chamois Cream**

Using chamois cream can be very useful on those longer rides. You can apply the cream to your skin or your shorts and it works by reducing the friction between your bum and saddle. If you suffer with saddle sores, blisters or just general discomfort, chamois cream could be the answer.

More Ways we can Help

Thank you for taking the time to read our “How To Resolve Saddle Discomfort”

If you would like to ask any questions more specific to your problems, please email me on info@performancebikefit.co.uk and I will get back to you.

Below is a full list of our services that we can offer to help you resolve your pain and stay pain free throughout your cycling life!
If you would like to know more about any of our services, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Our BikeFit Services

- Performance Bike Fit with 3D Video & 4D Motion Capture
- Standard Bike Fit with 3D Video Capture
- Basic Bike Fit with 2D Video Capture
- Pre-Purchase Sizing (Find out precisely what size frame you need to buy)
- Saddle Fitting
- 3D Aero Position Assessment(3D Virtual Wind Tunnel)
- Cleat Setup or Adjustments
- Foot Knee Alignment Assessment
- Shoe Insoles & Wedges

For more information on all of our services, please visit www.performancebikefit.co.uk