

Why use 'clipless pedals' i.e. 'Cleats'?



A. 'Easy out' cleat on mountain bike pedal.



B. Close-up of 'Easy out' cleat.

Reasons to Start Using 'Clipless Pedals'

(i.e. pedals that have a clip-in mechanism built into the pedal that you clip into via cleats on compatible cycling shoes - therefore a bit of a misnomer! Check Google for an explanation.)

Power.

'Clipless pedals' let you pull on the upstroke as efficiently as you push down, creating a smooth and constant pedalling.

Confidence.

When clipping in and out becomes second nature, you'll begin to notice that your skills will improve ..

Control.

'Clipless pedals' let you pull your bike up off the ground to help bunnyhop logs, curbs and potholes.

Health

Using correctly positioned and aligned cleat helps ensure that your feet and knees are correctly positioned

However, many new riders and even experienced riders, are nervous about using clipless pedals because it is sometimes difficult to engage your cycling shoe and cleat with the pedal and also difficult to disengage from the pedal. Newcomers to using cleats almost invariably fall off a few times until they get used to using them. Not a pleasant thought!!

A possible solution is to use 'easy out' cleats such as those shown above.

These cleats, which look almost identical to 'normal' mountain bike cleats are subtly different and enable much easier engagement and disengagement but still allow the ability to pull up on the pedal when going uphill.

Unfortunately they are only suitable for mountain bike shoes, i.e. shoes that have two point connection for the cleats unlike shoes commonly used on 'racing road bikes' that have a three point fixing system for the cleat. Mountain bike shoes are normally heavier than road bike shoes (unless you opt for the top end versions at around \$500!) However there is an upside to using mountain bike shoes - once you dismount can walk around in them without having to use 'cave' covers to protect the cleats on the shoes. Mountain bike pedals usually have a raised area each side of the cleat as shown in the photos above.

These cleats are available from Shimano reference - Shimano SM-SH 56 M (cost around \$25)