



Smartphone cycle apps

Whether you want to plan journeys or report potholes, there's an app for that. **Alec McCalden** picks ten of the most popular

Smartphones can tell you where you've been, where to go, how fast you did it, and much more. All you need is the right app, a piece of software that can be downloaded from your network and installed on the phone in seconds. There are lots for cycling. I found 62 for the iPhone alone.

There are more apps for the iPhone than any other platform, which is why we've focused on Apple's smartphone here. Its nearest rivals are smartphones

running Google's operating system, Android, which is steadily gaining market share. Where an app also exists on Android, it's noted here.

I've picked my top ten list to show the range of apps available, choosing between similar apps by reference to the aggregated five-star rating from users that's shown on the UK iTunes site. (Ratings are from 28th February 2011.) The full list of apps is on the CTC website: www.ctc.org.uk/mobile. Prices are from the UK iTunes store.



B.iCycle

'The cyclometer for your iPhone'

Price: £5.99

More info: b-icycle.com

Android? Yes

Uses the GPS to measure current and average speed, total and trip distance, altitude and calories burned. Maps can be stored and used to plot the route. Trips can be imported and exported. Units can be set to metric or imperial. Maximises battery life with GPS and has pause detection for the trip timer. Top selling app in the 2010 Healthcare and Fitness category.

UK iTunes rating: ★★☆☆☆



BikeGears

'Bicycle gear calculator for iPhone'

Price: £2.99

More info: www.bikegearsapp.com

Android? No

Calculates gear ratios, gear inches, development and gain ratio using a bike's measurements. It comes with over 200 preset tyre sizes, and even includes a skid patch analyser. Useful in building a new bike from scratch or converting an existing one. Saves guesswork and costly mistakes. Also works on iPod Touch.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



Bike Doctor

'Always have a bike mechanic in your pocket'

Price: £2.99
More info: bikedoctorapp.com
Android? Yes

Costs much less than a bike maintenance manual and is a fraction of the size. Each step has a picture and a description. It includes the basic things to keep a cycle working and safe on the road. Typical repairs can be selected by bike type, and it can save a lot of money on workshop charges. Also works on iPod Touch.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



Cyclemeter GPS

'Turns the iPhone into a powerful GPS stopwatch'

Price: £2.99
More info: www.abvio.com
Android? No

It continuously records time, location, distance, elevation and speed. The results are presented as maps and graphs, and can be summarised over time. Progress can also be monitored by configurable announcements. You can compete against previously stored results in order to push those goals a bit further. It includes automatic stop detection and allows both import and export of data.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



EveryTrail Pro

'Track, share and explore with EveryTrail'

Price: £2.39,
More info: EveryTrail.com,
Android? Yes

Creates an interactive trip map with GPS whilst you travel, adding photos and videos that make up a complete travel story. It links with social media to share experiences, including a dedicated website. There is a library of 400,000 trips to explore from other global travellers, and a collection of audio guides for points of interest. It can store maps for use when there is no network available.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



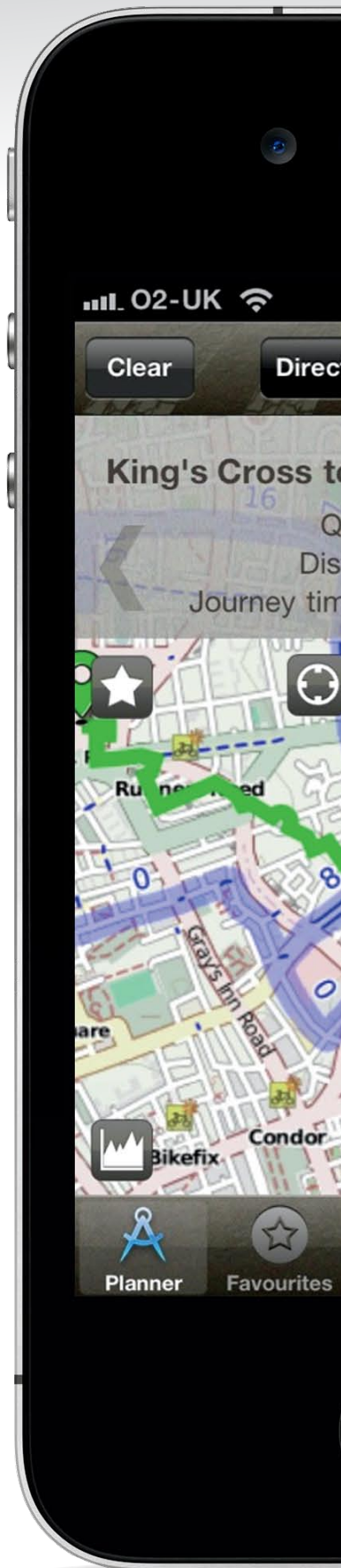
Fill That Hole

'Report potholes from the kerbside'

Price: £Free
More info: www.fillthathole.org.uk
Android? No

This app works with the CTC-funded website to create a mobile reporting tool for potholes and other road hazards. It makes use of the GPS and maps to locate the hazard, gives you the camera and notepad to record the details, and transmits the details immediately for reporting to the relevant council.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★





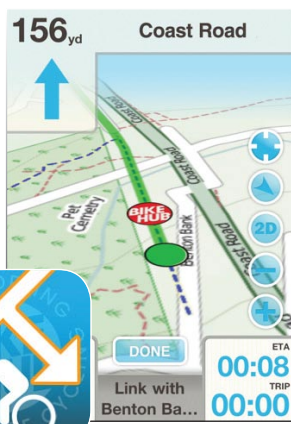
London Cycle Pro

'Find London hire bikes and docking stations'

Price: £1.79 (free with adverts)
More info: www.londoncycleapp.com
Android? No

This was the highest scoring of all 16 London cycle hire apps found. It gives real time availability data, nearest docking stations, and cycle-optimised routes based on your start and end points. There's a rental timer and alarm, colour coded status of docking stations showing their capacity, offline maps and even cycle safety tips. The developers even offer online customer service.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



Bike Hub Cycle Journey Planner

'A satnav that finds quickest or quietest routes'

Price: £Free
More info: www.bikehub.co.uk
Android? Yes

This satnav uses roads and cycle paths including Sustrans routes, and finds cut throughs and short cuts. It's based on CycleStreets.net mapping, and also has a local bike shop finder. Selecting quickest routes will use main roads, and using quietest will use backstreets and cycle routes. Selecting 'balanced' will give a mix. It will also find London hire bikes and has a news section.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



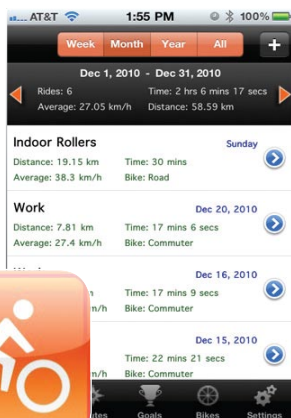
Bixou

'The essential companion to urban bike sharing'

Price: £0.59
More info: www.bixou.info
Android? No

Uses GPS to find docking stations nearby, and show the number of available bikes and docks available. Can display the information as a list or plotted on a map. Scaled map icons show station status at a glance. Works in many cities across the world using the BIXI or B-cycle systems. The page arrangement can be customised by the user, and the data update time is shown.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



Cychosis

'A journal and log for biking and cycling'

Price: £2.39
More info: www.cychosis.com
Android? No

Keeps track of heart rate, cadence, power, elevation and many others. Plot high resolution graphs of ride distances, average speed and time. Export data for more advanced analysis. Set distance goals and track progress against them, and refer back to previous rides to compare. Does not use GPS and therefore also works on iPod Touch.

UK iTunes rating: ★★★★★



Biologic Bike Mount

Price: £49.99, **More info:** www.thinkbiologic.com

The Biologic Bike Mount for iPhone4 suits all models of the Apple iPhone. It's supplied neatly packaged and includes the allen key needed to fit the clamp to your handlebars or stem. The clamp copes with a wide range of tube diameters, and the iPhone Bike Mount is designed to pivot on the clamp with detent stops to hold it in position.

The Bike Mount has a large window to view the screen, a control to operate the home button, a window at the back for the camera, and cut outs for the charger cable and headphone lead. It has a well designed clamp to keep the holder firmly closed, and is advertised as being splash proof but not suitable for heavy rain.

The touch screen works correctly through the window and the clamp holds everything in position. The pivot mount gives a choice of orientations, although you may need to clear some clutter off the handlebars first. The soft insert that cradles the iPhone is not secured when the case is open and falls out easily. I lost mine inside two hours.

The manufacturer's website is www.thinkbiologic.com. It's sold in the UK under the brand name of Dahon Biologic.

NB. The latest version of the mount is needed to fit the iPhone 4 correctly.