

Cycle commuting – to shower or not to shower

For a lot of potential cycle commuters the issue of “ponging a bit of sweat” is what puts them off giving it a try and I must say I’ve been very lucky. The last few jobs I’ve had provided decent facilities for their cycling workforce, including showers. So I’ve always got showered and changed when I got to work. Not everyone in my office does, though, even though there are shower facilities, some folk don’t see the need.

That very thought has led to a bit of an experiment this week, there is currently road works on my route, meaning I’m getting to work about 25 minutes later than normal and the normal routine of getting showered and then eating breakfast before I start work is a struggle. Add to that the fact that there has been no hot water in my building for a few days (ice cold shower in the morning) and the decision was made. This week I’m going to test the no shower routine. I must admit to being a bit apprehensive but I love a challenge.

There is a wealth of advice on ‘tinternet about commuting when you have no access to a shower, mostly around not cycling too fast or putting in enough effort to make you sweat. This isn’t really for me. My commute is 7 miles each way with a few hills thrown in, plus my cycle commute is my exercise as well as my commute. I’m going to get a little sweaty. So for me, the option is to carry on having separate cycling clothes and work clothes and to keep some baby wipes at work to get cleaned up.



Clothing wise, I always wear cycling clothes that will dry quickly as there is nothing worse than putting on wet, damp cycle kit to come home after work so I tend to go with nylon.

It's not pretty, and it can get smelly but it dries super fast. I also wear a high viz reflective jacket in the dark and a bright, yellow jacket during the day. Not to do with showering or not, just part of my cycle commuter kit. I also avoid having a bag on my back, because that basically leaves you with a big sweaty patch on your back and your shirt. I prefer to use a good pannier bag. I must stress though, you do get what you pay for here so it's worth shelling out for a good bag, with plenty of room and make sure it says it's waterproof. NOT just shower proof.

So today is day one, it's still early and I still smell of baby wipes and deodorant. Check back on Friday and I'll let you know how this experiment goes.

- Morning activities: just the commute and breakfast
- Time saved: 30 minutes
- Smell rating: 0 out of 10 (at 8:30am)



Me in my commuting gear.