

# **BMX Bikes**

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# Two Wheels

In 1817 a man named Von Drais had a great thought. He made a bike with two wheels. It was made from wood. All it had was a seat. The bike was fine for downhill glides.

In 1865, a foot crank was added. This bike was called a ‘bone shaker’. Riding on stone streets was not a smooth trip.

In 1870, the ‘high wheel’ bike was made. A high wheel with three wheels was made for girls in long skirts.

Soon brakes were



*In 1870, the 'high wheel' bike was made.*

added to bikes. Steering pitfalls were fixed.

By the 1890s, bikes had two wheels of the same size. There was a chain drive on the rear wheel. After these changes, bikes were safer. They became a smart way to get from place to place.

Then some grown-ups

started driving cars. More bikes were made for kids. Bikes in the 1920s looked slick and flashy.

In the 1950s, bikes for kids and teens became sleeker. They weighed less. They looked more like today's bikes.

## **A New Kind of Bike**

In the 1960s, kids started building bikes. They made the bikes from spare frames and parts. These bikes were ‘tricked out’. They had ‘ape hangers’ and low-rider seats. They were built to look a bit like



hot rods and choppers.

Al Fritz worked for Schwinn bikes. He saw the bikes that kids were making. He made his own bike. The Sting-Ray<sup>®</sup> was born.

The Sting-Ray<sup>®</sup> looked cool. The wheels could also be changed. The BMX bike comes from the Sting-Ray<sup>®</sup>.

Y-shaped bars and grips help BMX bikes make tight turns and do tricks. The rear wheel has a swing arm and big shocks. When the back wheel hits a bump, it swings up and turns. The strong springs in the shocks move the wheel back into place.

The wheels have thick



*Kids ride hard, so BMX bikes need to be tough.*

rims and strong spokes. Deep tire treads help grip the track. The front fork legs have shocks that help steer.

The heart of the bike is its strong frame and welded joints. It has a lot of flex. The bike can take a beating on the track.

## High Frequency Words

a	and	are
at	be	best
but	can	could
do	for	from
go	good	had
have	help	his
in	it	like
long	look	made
new	no	not
of	off	on
out	over	own

put	soon	take
that	the	their
then	they	this
to	two	up
was	were	when
will	you	