



**The Following Grading System is used for all Helibike Trips:**

The grade gives an indication of the overall difficulty of a ride, and takes into consideration several factors such as, track surface, length, number of tricky challenges, remoteness and navigational difficulty, risk, climatic extremes, slope and altitude gained in climbs. All grades apply to a rider travelling at an easy pace. Those who ride faster will be more challenged. Fitness is not taken into account as this is dependent on personal factors such as stamina, strength, attitude and skill.

It does not take into account the technical difficulty of the hardest rideable section (or 'crux problem') of the ride. This section may be very short and can always be walked.

**Grade 1. Very Easy**

Flat, smooth, wide track or gravel road. Suitable for all beginners.

**Grade 2. Easy**

Gentle slopes (10 degrees maximum), some pot holes and rocks to avoid, 1-3m wide. Requires attention but possible by most beginners with a sense of adventure.

**Grade 3. Intermediate**

Challenging riding with steep slopes and/or tricky obstacles, possibly narrow with drop-offs and tricky stream crossings, etc. Requires average riding experience and reasonable riding fitness.

**Grade 4. Intermediate to Advanced**

Steep slopes (10-20 degrees), loose track surface, many objects to jump, ride over or avoid. Probably easier to walk. Experience riding mountain bikes off road essential.

**Grade 5. Advanced**

Very steep (up to 30 degrees), many large difficult obstacles, sharp turns, dangerous drop-offs, logs, rocks and/or slippery roots. Crashes very likely, definitely easier to walk.

**Grade 6. Elite Riders Only**

Trials skills needed to clear many gnarly obstacles. High risk level. Only a handful of riders in NZ enjoy this grade unless you enjoy carrying your bike!

Notes:

Each Helibike Operator has independently set the grades for their own trips and these apply to the tracks during normal weather conditions. If it is, or has been raining, then the ride may be harder. Although rain makes little difference to gravelled track surfaces, on clay tracks the conditions can become treacherous and the grade can go from easy to advanced.

As different factors can add up to the total difficulty of a ride, someone who can handle an intermediate ride on one type of track (say a clay track) may repeatedly wipe out on another intermediate (say a rocky track) ride.

