

You may or may not be aware of the different branches of Mountain Biking which have become popular over the last 5 or 10 years, so I'll give you a quick intro here on what each of the best known are about.

01. **Cross Country, or just XC**

This is more or less what you can see in the photo above - you get out in the countryside, off the roads, or at least main roads, and ride! Hardtails and 3 to 5 inches of suspension. Serious athletes compete at the top end, people like us troll along at the other extreme.

02. **Downhill, or DH**

Big, burly full suspension bikes with 6 to 10 inches of suspension travel front and rear and you simply throw them off the top of a hill and pray! Quickest woman or man down to the finish line wins, against the clock. Normally very rough, dangerous courses for extreme riders only.

03. **Freeride**

A vague mix of everything, usually with 6 inch travel bikes or more, doing a bit of everything, either seriously or just for fun. Bikes a bit heavy to drag up mountain sides.

04. **Dirt Jump**

This is for the Upside Down Brigade who usually lay out a short series of ramps and jumps a few hundred metres long and see who can touch the least ground on the way to the end. Hardtail originally but more recently full suspension bikes are being used

05. **Four Cross, or 4X**

This is the Mountain Bike version of BMX on a short track with banked turns ("berms"), jumps and "tabletops" where four riders race each other from a standing start and the survivor normally wins. Short travel full suspension or hardtail bikes are used.

06. **Dual or Duel**

Four Cross with only two riders!

07. **Trials:**

The pushbike version of motorcycle trials, but with even more skill than the amazing motorbike riders need. Almost solely using hardtail bikes.