

# Chainsets: explained

Outer (big) ring

Crank Arm



Inner (little) ring

Chain-ring size  
in teeth



A standard chainset is generally a 53/39 (outer/inner rings). A 39 can be used for most age groups which will just require the front mech/derallieur being screwed off so as the outer ring cannot be used. A 39 front ring is a popular choice for most age groups.

A compact chainset is generally a 50/36 – for children and youths a compact will offer more flexibility as the crank spider is able to accommodate much smaller outer chain rings and so gives more options to enable you to get the right gear.

The chainset pictured is a compact and has had the outer 50 tooth ring replaced with a 46 tooth ring (see inset) – often rings will have the number of teeth written on them to help you establish their size.

# Chainsets: explained



Chain-ring BCD



Compact 5 arm spider with a 110 BCD

## PCD & BCD

You may wish to change chainrings to enable you to get closer to the maximum roll out distance. Chainrings are sized by the number of teeth they have and their PCD or BCD (Pitch or Bolt Circle Diameter). Generally this is 130mm for a standard 5 arm spider crank and 110mm for a compact 5 arm spider. Some rings have this marked on them (see inset). So if changing chainrings you will need to know what PCD/BCD you require. More information on PCD/BCD can be found on this link: <http://www.wolftoothcycling.com/pages/how-to-measure-bolt-circle-diameter-bcd>

Shimano are soon to bring out a 52/36 chain-set on a compact 110mm PCD that will be extremely versatile and give the best of both worlds.