



Bicycle Carriers

Some parents use bicycle carriers as an option for transportation with young children. Carriers can promote a lifetime of healthy, active living. Introducing children to biking is exciting, but it's important to know the potential risks.

Helmet Safety

- Before children are ready to travel in a bicycle carrier, they should be able to sit upright, have good head control, and be over one year of age.
- Make sure your child wears a properly fitted bicycle helmet.
- There are no bike helmets made for children younger than one year.
- A bicycle helmet should have a safety standard sticker from an approved safety organization such as the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Snell, or American Safety for Testing and Materials (ASTM).
- Be sure to set a good example and protect yourself by wearing a helmet, too.
- American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that a child must be at least one year of age before riding in a bike carrier.

Bicycle Carriers (bicycle seats)

A bicycle carrier is a seat that is attached to the bike, either in the front or the back of the bike.

Rear-mounted seats:

- A rear-mounted seat brings your child closer to you when cycling.
- The rear-mounted seat shifts the bicycle's center of gravity and can make it unstable.
- Parents who wish to use a rear-mounted seat should first practice riding with a weight comparable to the child's in the seat.
- A good seat has a high back, a lap and shoulder harness, and foot guards to protect feet from the spokes.
- Make sure the seat has a reflector at the back.



Front-mounted seats:

- Front-mounted seats vary in design and placement on the bicycle.
- Avoid seats mounted to the handlebars, as these can disrupt steering control.
- Other front-mounted seats that attach to both the seat and handlebar stems are more stable and keep your child in front of you, allowing for a more watchful eye on the child and the road.
- Make sure the seat has a reflector or a light at the front.

Always follow carrier manufacturer's age recommendations and instructions.



Bike Carrier Safety Tips:

- Make sure the carrier has a heavy-duty plastic frame.
- A carrier with a high back and sides will stop the child from swaying in the seat. This will keep the bike more stable.
- Practice riding with the carrier before taking the child for a trip. Put something in the carrier that is similar to your child's weight to get used to handling your bike with the added weight.
- Display a reflector that complies with local regulations.
- Don't lean the bike against anything or use a kickstand when your child is in the carrier seat. Whenever possible, have another adult hold the bike upright while you get on or off.
- Make sure the child is always wearing the harness straps.
- Don't overload the bike and carrier. Check and follow the weight restrictions.
- Do not wear headphones while biking.
- Don't let children eat in the carrier while you are cycling. This is to prevent your child from choking.
- Keep both hands on handlebars, except when making a hand signal.

Second Hand Items

- Check with the manufacturer to make sure the carrier hasn't been recalled for safety reasons.
- Inspect the equipment for missing pieces of hardware, and look for signs of an accident or excessive wear and tear.
- Visit the manufacturer's website to be sure that you're attaching the bike seat correctly.

Additional Tips for a Safe Bike Ride in a Bike Carrier:

- Dress your child for the weather.
- To prevent choking, do not give your child snacks or drinks during the ride.
- Do not use blankets, loose-fitting clothing, or scarves that can get caught in spokes, gears, or pedals. Remove drawstrings from children's clothing.
- Do not bike while carrying a child in a backpack or a front sling. It affects your center of gravity on a bike.

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