



# Bicycle Trailers

**Some parents use bicycle trailers as an option for transportation with young children. Trailers 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 trailer, they should be able to sit upright, have good head control, and should be over one year of age.
- Make sure your child wears a properly fitted bicycle helmet, even when he is riding in the trailer. 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.

## Bicycle Trailer

A bicycle trailer is a wheeled vehicle that is attached to the back of a bicycle.

### What to look for in a bicycle trailer

- **A rotating hitch.** This mechanism will prevent the bicycle trailer from tipping over.
- **A five point harness system,** similar to a child car seat harness.
- **Metal bars or a roll cage around the carrier.** If the trailer tips over, this feature will reduce your child's risk of injury.
- **Plenty of room in the trailer so the child can wear his helmet properly.**
- **Non-removable sides** to prevent the child from falling out of the trailer.
- **Reflectors** on all sides to increase visibility. Display a reflector that complies with local regulations.
- **A cover or screen** to protect your child from road dirt and debris.
- Make sure that whatever **trailer you select works with your bicycle.**

## Bike trailer safety tips

- Ensure the trailer is properly secured to the bicycle. Consider having a professional install the trailer onto the bike.
- Attach an orange safety flag to the trailer for greater visibility and try to ride with another adult cycling behind the trailer.
- Practice riding on quiet streets before heading out onto busy roads or pathways. Complete a test drive without your child. Put something in the trailer that is similar to your child's weight to get used to handling your bike with the added weight.
- Be aware of the increased length and width of the bicycle with a trailer.
- Make wide turns and watch out for hazards, including curbs, bushes, or other objects.
- Do not put anything in the bicycle trailer other than the child. These items can become projectiles and hurt the child if there is a big bump or the trailer tips over.

- Never leave a child unattended in a bike trailer.
- Make sure the child is always wearing the harness straps.
- Do not wear headphones while biking.
- Keep both hands on handlebars, except when making a hand signal.

**Always follow the trailer manufacturer's age recommendations and instructions.**



## Second Hand Items

- Check with the manufacturer to make sure the trailer 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 trailer correctly.

## Additional Tips for a Safe Bike Ride with a Biker Trailer:

- Dress your child for the weather. Weather shields and a canopy are available to protect children from rain, wind, and sun. Make sure there is ventilation; it can get hot in the trailer.
- 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.

## References:

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