

## Summary of strengths/weaknesses of cargo bikes and kid-hauling bike accessories

	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Trailer</b>	Ease of compatibility with wide range of bikes, low cost, ease of availability in used market, can fit two children, great weather protection, easy to switch between adult bikes, child is unaffected by a fall for the adult rider so a great option for new or returning riders, ease of carrying both stuff & kid	Limited interaction with child while riding, Some riders feel the trailer makes handling sluggish/unpleasant, some concern about visibility and handling in heavy city traffic
<b>Front mounted bike seat</b>	Low cost, might work on the bike you already have, compact, fun to ride with kid in the front	Less protection than rear seat in case of a fall, most models not compatible with all adult bikes, may require replacing handlebar/stem, kids grow out of these very young, usually at about 3, some people feel the kid interferes with steering/handling depending on the seat and geometry
<b>Rear mounted bike seat</b>	Low cost, easy availability (including very affordable used seats), might work on the bike you already have, compact which is good for both storage and city street riding	Some people struggle to handle weight high to the rear of the bike, loading and unloading are unstable, compatibility between different brands of seats and bikes is unpredictable, carrying both stuff & kid can be a challenge, for lower-weight limit seats (40 lbs) some kids grow out of seat before they are able to pedal a trailer bike
<b>Trailer-bike</b>	Relatively low cost (compared to a cargo bike), fits on the bike you already have, the kid gets exercise and contributes	Stability is notoriously poor for seat-post-mounted trailer bikes (like the Adams), can be particularly hard for small adult riders. Burley Piccolo is more stable, but handling can decline as child gets bigger, particularly for small adult riders
<b>Follow-me tandem coupling</b>	A very stable pedal-behind option, the kid gets exercise and contributes, works with your child's bike which can be taken off for independent riding in favorable environments, the only pedal-behind option that is compatible with a rear bike seat	High cost, can be difficult to find in the US
<b>Midtail cargo bike</b>	Ease of carrying both stuff & kid, cargo bike that fits on bus racks, easier to store than other cargo options, generally a more stable ride with a kid on the rear deck than a standard rear-mounted bike seat due to longer wheelbase, fits any-size passenger including really big kids	Cost (compared to a rear seat), can't easily fit two kids on the back deck, though can set up with a front-seat for a small second child
<b>Workcycles Fr8/Gr8</b>	Designed for stable handling when riding with two children (on both front and rear), front saddle seat is a really fun way to ride with your preschool-aged kid, easy loading/unloading and mounting/dismounting, easy to carry both stuff and kid on bike at the same time	High Cost, Heavy

	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Longtail cargo bike</b>	Most moderately priced two-kid cargo bike (some models), easier to store than box-bikes, can carry a truly phenomenal amount of stuff, ease of carrying both stuff & kid(s), some brands have very well-developed accessories for all ages of passengers (yuba, xtracycle), generally the lightest weight of two-kid cargo bike options	Can be unstable when heavily loaded, especially with weight on top of the deck and far to the rear (like a second child). Whether this is manageable depends a lot on the adult rider and the bike model, so test rides are recommended if you will need this type of bike for two kids. The Xtracycle Edgerunner, which has a lower back deck, somewhat mitigates this problem.
<b>Box-bike/long-john/bakfiets</b>	Fabulously stable way to carry multiple kids and a lot of stuff. Fun to ride with kids in the front. Rain covers are available for most models. Extremely stable during loading/unloading.	High Cost, (Very) Heavy, Bad if you have a lot of hills to ride regularly
<b>Cargo trike (box in front)</b>	Extremely stable way to carry multiple kids and a lot of stuff. Very stable at stops and slow speeds. Fun to ride with kids in the front. Rain covers are available for most models. Stable during loading/unloading.	High Cost, (Very) Heavy, Handling on corners requires practice (it's easier than you would think to tip a trike on a corner). Riders used to bicycles may find the handling sluggish or strange.
<b>Madsen</b>	Low cost compared to other multi-kid box-style bikes, seating for 4 kids in a relatively compact package	Less longevity than some of the nicer cargo/box-bikes. Some riders report handling is less secure than bikes with the box carried in the front.
<b>Kid-specific tandem</b>	The kid contributes and gets exercise, some models (e.g. bike Friday) also fits adults in stoker position so bike will last forever, better handling than trailer bike options	High cost, harder than a longtail or box-bike for carrying both stuff and kids, some models (e.g. onderwater, kidztandem) do not fit adults, so there is a limited lifespan
<b>Tandem with kidback</b>	Can later remove kidback for use with an adult stoker, the kid contributes and gets exercise, lots of different models available and can be found on the used market	Mounting for a child on a kidback tandem is challenging and they cannot do it without help, harder than a longtail or box-bike for carrying both stuff and kids

This summary reflect opinions based on personal riding experience. These general guidelines are not a guarantee of safety or comfortable handling for a particular rider or setup. Use your knowledge of your child's behavior and development to guide your choices. The experience, size and strength of the adult rider will impact the handling and safety of various setups, and different models within a class can handle very differently. Practice with a test weight is highly recommended until the adult feels comfortable with the handling of a particular bicycle setup. Compiled by Nathan V-C with Brian Postlewaite, Megan Ramey & Carice Reddien 5/2014. Carfree with Kids: <http://carfreecambridge.com>  
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