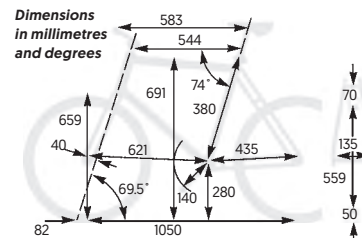




**Biketest**



**Tech Spec**  
**FROG MTB 69**

- **Price:** £755.
  - **Sizes:** One size (but MTB 62 and 72 are similar).
  - **Weight:** 11.9kg (inc pedals).
  - **Frame & fork:** 6061 T6 aluminium alloy frame with fittings for rear rack and one bottle. Frog 26in-wheel, 100mm travel, junior-specific air-sprung fork with lockout and damping control.
  - **Wheels:** 50-559 Kenda K1134 tyres, 26in double wall aluminium rims, 24/28 front/rear spokes, 100mm QR disc front hub, 135mm QR disc rear hub.
  - **Transmission:** Platform pedals, Frog 140mm chainset with 32t direct mount chainring, Thun Shorty ML-SL square taper bottom bracket, KMC 9-speed chain, Sunrace CSM990 9AX 9-speed 11-40t cassette. Shimano Acera SLM3000 Rapidfire 9-speed shifter, Shimano Alivio RD-M3100-SGS Shadow 9-speed rear derailleur. Nine ratios, 21-76in.
  - **Braking:** Tektro M276 hydraulic disc brakes with 160 front and 140mm rear rotors and junior levers.
  - **Steering & seating:** Rubber grips, 600mm UNO aluminium handlebar, 60mm UNO aluminium stem, Neco 1 1/8in threadless headset. Frog junior saddle, 380mm aluminium alloy seatpost, QR seat clamp.
- [frogbikes.co.uk](http://frogbikes.co.uk)

# Frog 69 MTB

The suspension on kids' bikes is often awful – but not always. **Victoria Hazael** and son Noah test a higher-performance hardtail from Frog

**T**he last few years of primary school can be an awkward age for children's mountain bikes. Size XS adult bikes that may fit younger teens are still too large, while a junior, rigid-forked all-rounder may not cut it on singletrack trails with small drops and logs to ride over. Fortunately there are some children's hardtails with decent, air-sprung forks, such as Frog's MTB 69.



Above: As well as lockout, the easily adjustable air-sprung fork has rebound damping so it doesn't just pogo back up over bumps

This is a proper mountain bike so it has a commensurate price tag: £755. With the cost-of-living crisis beginning to bite, many families won't be able or willing to splash out that kind of sum. Our Frog MTB 69 is rented from The Bike Club ([bikeclub.com](http://bikeclub.com)) for £25.99 a month; Cycling UK members get a discount. (For more on the pros and cons of renting versus buying, see [cyclinguk.org/buy-v-rent](http://cyclinguk.org/buy-v-rent).)

We already own a Frog MTB 62. As my eldest grew, we were happy to progress to a Frog MTB 69. We've had the bike since the start of this year and it's been used for family off-road rides, trail centre singletrack, sections of routes like King Alfred's Way, and a spot of Go-Ride level XC.

The aluminium frame is big enough for small bikepacking bags, which is important to me as I encourage the kids carry their own tools and supplies. But its standout feature is its 100mm-travel fork. Being air-sprung, it's easy to set up for your child's (changing) weight. There's rebound damping, so it doesn't just pogo back up over bumps, and a lockout.

Learning gears when you are younger takes practice, so having a visual display of them helped. The 1x drivetrain is intuitive and an 11-40t wide ratio cassette

provides enough range for steeper climbs. The hydraulic disc brakes have junior-sized levers that can be pulled by smaller hands, although more modulated braking would be nice given that this will probably be your child's first bike with powerful, hydraulic disc brakes.

In 2021 Frog upgraded the tyres on this model to actual mountain bike tyres; previously they were more like a hybrid or gravel tyre. The clearance is now a bit tighter. If racing is your child's passion, note that the rims aren't tubeless ready. ●

**Other options**

**ISLABIKES CREIG 26 ▶**  
**£1099.99**

A lighter (11kg), tubeless compatible and more race-ready mountain bike for kids. RockShox 30 Gold RL fork, 150mm cranks, and 1x8 SRAM X4 gearing.

[islabikes.co.uk](http://islabikes.co.uk)



**WHYTE 403 JUNIOR ▶**  
**TRAIL GRANITE**  
**£750**

A nice little trail bike with what Whyte calls 'Downsized Total Geometry'. Air-sprung 100mm Suntour XCR fork, 1x9 Shimano Altus gearing. 13.2kg.

[whytebikes.com](http://whytebikes.com)



**Verdict**

*A very capable mountain bike with a well-thought-out suspension fork that's suitable for lighter riders. Unlike cheap coil-sprung forks, which just add dead weight, this one makes a palpable improvement to the ride.*