

CYCLOPEDIA

Knowhow



DAN JOYCE
Author of the
*CTC Guide to
Family Cycling*

Making sense of commonly
misunderstood subjects

Family cycling

How and when can I transport my baby or toddler by bike?

‘When’ depends more on your child’s development than their age. How and where you’ll be riding are also important factors – smooth cycle path or busy, potholed road? Then there’s parental discretion: when do you think your child is ready? In places where cycling has been normalised, such as the Netherlands, you see younger children being transported by bike than in the UK. What follows is a rough guide.

FROM 3-4 MONTHS

At this age babies can’t sit up so need to be well supported. A good car seat, such as one by Maxi-Cosi (maxi-cosi.co.uk), will provide that support. Some cargo cycles with front boxes have adapters for car seats.

The Steco Baby-Mee (Dutch, of course) works well bolted into any cargo box, providing a sprung frame for a car seat to attach to. The Baby-Mee can also be fitted to a rear rack. A longtail cargo bike like a Tern GSD would provide greater stability than a solo bike for this application.

Some child trailers come with seat inserts for smaller passengers. Burley’s Baby Snuggler is one such, accommodating



Photo: Julie Skelton

babies as young as three months. It’s recommended for strolling only but could work for cycling in the right circumstances.

FROM 9-12 MONTHS

When your son or daughter can sit up, they’re ready for a child seat or trailer. Secure straps – shoulder, waist and (for seats) feet – are important for safety and to stop your little one slumping uncomfortably when they drift off. Better quality rear seats can be reclined, while the Weeride front seat (weeride.co.uk) has a sort of padded lectern to rest on.

Child trailers are more expensive and bulkier but offer much better weather protection and plenty of luggage/toy space. Most seat two and can fold for storage.

FROM 18 MONTHS

The bench seats in the front box of cargo cycles offer less wraparound support so

suit slightly older children better. Your child is ready when they’re secure and stable on the seat.

FROM 2 YEARS

There’s another kind of front seat where your child sits on a saddle, surrounded by your arms but strapped in only by their feet. They hold onto your handlebar or a bolt-on mini handlebar. Mac Ride (eu-mac-ride.com) and Kids Ride Shotgun (kidsrideshotgun.co.uk) are good examples. They’re both capable of careful off-road usage but do require that your son or daughter can and will hold on.

Older children (from 3-4 years) can sit on longtail passenger seats with safety bars but no harness, but we’re beyond toddlerhood now. The same goes for child-back tandems and trailer cycles. ●

Try a trailer
Members get 10% off
bike trailer hire from
kidsbiket trailers.co.uk

Problem solvers



**BURLEY BABY
SNUGGLER £79.99**

Trailer seat adapter for
passengers aged 3-12 months.
burley.com



STECO BABY-MEE £84

Attaches an infant car seat to a
rear rack or cargo cycle box.
steco.nl,
reallyusefulbikes.com



**HAMAX RAIN
PONCHO £40**

Weather protection for your
child seat passenger.
hamax.com



**PLETSCHER TWIN LEG
KICKSTAND £44.99**

Very helpful for pre/post-
ride child seat wrangling.
chickencyclekit.co.uk



**CIRCE HELIOS
£2,199+**

Modular tandem/cargo bike
for infant-to-adult passengers.
circecycles.com