

Life Cycle Guide

Tag-a-longs and tow bars

Why a Tag-a-long?

As your child gets bigger, a Tag-along or Trail-a-Bike is a great way to involve them in riding, before they are ready to cycle their own bike, or before they have the stamina to keep up with you. Your child will have lasting memories of riding along with you and be inspired to learn to cycle independently. A trailer bike can help them learn the skills to ride, getting to grips pedalling without having to worry about controlling the bike. The child may pedal or freewheel independently of the towing adult. Unlike a tandem, your child doesn't actually have to cycle, so if their legs get tired they can give pedalling a break. The trailer bike consists of what is effectively the rear portion of a normal Childs cycle but without a front wheel or any steering mechanism.

Rack Mounted Tag-a-longs

More expensive models are rack mounted. This type of mounting makes the adult bike easy to handle and manouever and reduces the stress and strain on the adult rider. It is good for longer journeys, any type of incline and will provide the greatest comfort for parent and child. Although more costly, we would strongly recommend investing in one of these if you plan to cycle regularly or do long-journeys with your children.



Seat post mounted Tag-a-longs

Most commonly trail-a-bikes or tag-a-longs attach to the seat pillar of an adult bike. These models are cheaper, but handle differently to rack mounted ones. There tends to be greater movement and your child's weight can swing slightly from side to side. This can make the ride less comfortable and more strenuous for the adult rider.



Expect to Pay...

Basic models start from about £50. More expensive and fully featured modles up to £300.

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Tow bars

A Tow Bar effectively converts a standard child bicycle into a trailer bike. The tow bar is attached to the adult's bike seat pillar at one end and to the head tube of the Childs cycle at the other. This raises the front wheel of the Childs cycle off the ground to enable you to tow them and to prevent your child from steering independently.

The child can pedal or freewheel independently of the towing adult and can pedal as much or as little as they like whilst being towed. Tow bars can be unhooked allowing your child to ride sections of the route unaided.

Tow bars are not as rigid as a trailer bikes, and the child's riding position is not as comfortable when being towed so they are not recommended for long journeys or on trafficked roads.

Most children's' bikes are suitable for use with a tow bar (check suitability with your dealer) including 16", 20" and some 24" wheel bikes. Tow bars are generally limited to specific weight limits (varies per product) but in the whole are rated for up to 30kg (65lb) total weight (bike and rider).

A tow bar cannot be used at the same time as a rear mounted baby seat.

Expect to Pay...

£35 - £90. Cheaper overall than a trailer bike because it makes use of your Childs existing bike, however they become uncomfortable on long-journeys and are not suitable for main roads.



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Information sheet

Trail-a-bikes

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