

Backpacks for Folding Bikes

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Recently, I have been investigating an effective way of carrying a folding bike. I was looking for a back pack solution to carry the folded bike which I can also easily take with me when riding the bike. I found that the market does not provide many practical solutions with the best options being in the concept or early design stage and not available commercially. Firstly, as most folding bikes are cumbersome and heavy, it is imperative that the back pack separates the bike from your back. The last thing you need is a metal part jutting into your lower back or a dirty oily bike rubbing off your clothes. Secondly, the pack when not in use must be light, foldable and attachable giving you no nonsense when cycling the bike. I have been investigating and have come across the following six solutions.

1. The first bag option I came across is by Robin Davis an engineer living in the UK. This back carry solution was designed for the Brompton but could be modified for any folder. On the upside, you can make this pack yourself, it has pockets that house pieces of ply to stop the bike sticking into your back and the empty bag is minimal size making it easy to take on bike. You can see the full design process including sketches at engtech.net.

2. The second bag option was developed by Jean-Christophe Lebeau and Anatoly Ivanov. It's made with bleeding edge fabric which is very tough, highly resistant to abrasion and extremely water-repellent. On the downside it has no frame or no back padding making it uncomfortable to carry your folder on your back. The coolest feature with this pack is the special backpack container pouch that fastens to the bike's main frame by 2 cross-inverted elastic straps. You can read more at anatolyivanov.com.

3. This Backpack Case by S and S Machine. This is the case to choose if you are travelling to a destination where storage or transportation of a hard shell case is a problem. With the bike inside, it can be carried by the handle as normal luggage or as a backpack. When the bike is removed the case transforms into a regular size backpack that can be worn or easily carried on your rack. The case is made from 1000 denier black Cordura and has four plastic perimeter panels that snap together to protect the 10" edge of the case. It also features four storage pockets that are 13" x 26" each. Two of these pockets are located side by side on each face of the case. When filled with clothing they form cushions that offer added protection for your bicycle as well as valuable storage space. The backpack straps unhook at the bottom and tuck into the pockets when not in use. The case with a bicycle inside measures 26" x 26" x 10" which meets the typical airline standard maximum size limit of 62" combined (length + width + thickness). When the bicycle is removed the case can be made smaller, by any amount, by pulling the 6 side straps tighter until it gets as small as 26" tall x 10" wide x 3" thick. Weight 8 lb. Approximate retail price is \$235.00
Full details at sandsmachine.com.

4. There is also a Rucksack Bag by Birdy. This is clever bag to carry your stuff.....and your bike! Use normally as a rucksack, when off the bike unzip the bag around to edges and it unfolds into a bag large enough to contain a folded Bike. The bag can then be carried either by a carry handle or shoulder strap. Access to all your items in the rucksack section of the bag can still be gained via a side pocket, and the rucksack straps pack neatly away to keep everything tidy. Approximate retail price is £70.00 or \$109.00. Full details at foldingbikes.co.uk.

5. There is a solution by the RV Toy Outlet which is a rather cumbersome 20" Folding Bike Carrying Bag/Backpack. Approximate retail price is \$19.99. Full details at rvtoyoutlet.com.

6. Finally, Radel Max offer a backpack for safe and clean transportation of your folding bicycle. The bag can carry 16" & 20" folding bikes. Approximate retail price is €39.95 Euros. Full details at radel-max.de.

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