

We're testing PANNIERS

How do you make room for folders and laptops on your ride? Which bags are best for carrying milk, tomatoes, and white wine? Some people use baskets and others have cargo bikes. But when you need more than a basket can carry but do not require the large carrying capacity of a cargo bike, panniers are the best way to solve your problem. But will you be touring or just riding around the city? What weather conditions do you expect to be riding in? We asked these questions and we tested five panniers.

Arkel: Commuter

Waterproof: No, but very water resistant
Weight: 1,17 kg measure
Volume: 24 l.
PANNIERS.COM

“best for your laptop”



Boring but strong.

Are you looking for a commuterbag for life? Arkel has a lifetime guarantee for this bag which is made from durable nylon and the seams make the guarantee seem credible. Unfortunately you will have to put up with a not so beautiful dull grayish color.

With robust water-repellent nylon and waterproof zippers it does more than it promises, it is seriously waterproof.

The flexible hook system makes it easy to fasten the bag to most racks; it sits securely and does not rattle. The Arkel Commuter is the largest bag in this test. It weighs in at 1.17kg and holds 24 liters. There is one big compartment with a special pouch for a laptop or A4 folders. It also features several small pockets and compartments for your keys, wallet etc.

The laptop pouch is one of the best we have seen. It sits above the bottom of the bag providing good protection.

On foot the commuter is easy to carry. The hooks easily zip under a flap, so that you can carry the bag by the handle or shoulder strap without it getting snagged.

The deep opening makes accessing and searching for contents easy but tomatoes and lemons might roll out if you are not careful, so the Arkel Commuter is not ideal for shopping. But for the commuter looking for function over design, the Arkel is brilliant

Function: ★★★★★
Price: ★★★★★
Design: ★★★★★

Carradice: A4

Waterproof: yes
Weight: 0,91 kg
Volume: 18 l.
CARRADICE.CO.UK



Mainly for documents.

As the name indicates, this bag is designed to carry A4 sized folders and documents so apart from a small mesh pocket it only has one big square pocket that will protect your papers against water damage and bent corners. The A4 weighs 0.98kg and holds 18 liters. It is made from “cotton duck” – a heavy duty canvas with a solid waterproof waxing. The double closure at the top provides a watertight seal. The A4 fits on the rack with two hooks that easily click to the railing making the bag sit securely with no rattling.

It comes with a wide shoulder strap, but there is no cover for the hooks so the bag is uncomfortable to carry for a long period of time.

Carradice have been making panniers since the 1930's and what might seem like retro design is in reality just classic Carradice. Leather straps and metal buckles rather than plastic would complete the retro look but probably also raise the price tag. A4 is a good, reliable and solid pannier for the commuter cyclist.

Function: ★★★★★
Price: ★★★★★
Design: ★★★★★

Ortlieb: Shopper

Waterproof: Yes
Weight: 0,97 kg
Volume: 20 l.
ORTLIEB.DE



“best for shopping”

Faithful shopping bag.

The German-made Ortlieb is legendary in the world of bicycle panniers. They are almost indestructible and their function and design work together perfectly if you choose the right model for your purpose. This bag is brilliant for shopping, but with its narrow base it is a nightmare for any lover of A4 folders.

The Shopper weighs 0.97kg and holds 20 liters. It is made from heavy duty plastic material, is 100% waterproof and closes with a special water-tight zipper that all but seals the inside contents for eternity.

The flexible hook system, fitted on a plastic rail is very user-friendly. Just lift the handle and the two locked hooks will open allowing you to lift the pannier off the rack where the Shopper was securely fastened.

The bag has one big compartment and two small pockets. It could have more but the shopper is easily packed and rummaged through because the material is stiff and the bag does not sag.

The two shoulder straps are adjustable but cannot be removed. However, if you move them to the front of the bag while riding they are not in the way.

Appearance is a matter of taste. The Ortlieb Shopper is our favorite but not everybody finds the raw industrial look appealing.

This is not a small or neat bag, but you will be hard pressed to find a more waterproof, reliable, robust, durable and useful shopping bag.

Function: ★★★★★
Price: ★★★★★
Design: ★★★★★

Basil: Jada Mirte

Waterproof: No
Weight: 720 gram
Volume: 16 l.
BASIL.NL



Neat but not practical.

Jada Mirte is a lady's bag. It is designed like a hand-bag and it hooks easily onto your bicycle rack. It is easy to carry over your arm if you are going into the café. Unfortunately, the Jada Mirte is less than perfect as a commuter or shopping bag.

It holds 16 liters. There is one big compartment and a small pocket for small items like keys, lipstick etc.

The material is water repellent but unfortunately the zipper is not, which allows water to drip inside. The material is not that durable and we estimate that it will last and look nice for about one year if you use it daily.

The hook system is the poorest we tested. The hooks cannot be moved to fit the rack and it is the only bag we tested that bounced off the bike while riding. So as a word of caution, do not put breakable valuables in this bag.

By far the best thing about this bag is the design. The hooks hide away quickly and easily behind a zip-flap making the bag nice to carry when on foot.

Jada Mirte is a light and cheap cycling lady's bag, but for hard every day using you'd be better off choosing something more robust.

Function: ★★★★★
Price: ★★★★★
Design: ★★★★★

Racktime: Buyit

Waterproof: No, but very water resistant
Weight: 0,70 kg
Volume: 14 l.
RACKTIME.COM



Great for small shopping.

Like the Jada Mirte, the Buyit is disguised as an ordinary bag, but this is where the similarities end. Quality wise this bag is in a different league and is specifically designed for shopping.

The Buyit weighs 0.7kg and with its 14 liters capacity, it is designed for smaller shopping trips. The bag is made from good quality nylon. The zipper is waterproof, so in most cases the bag is waterproof enough for average days and the reflective piping on the seams is a neat feature.

The hook system is like all Ortlieb hooks meaning it works easily and holds the bag secure in any situation. To remove the bag you simply lift the handle, thus releasing the locking mechanism.

When on foot, the hooks hide easily underneath a zip-flap. But we advise against long walks because the handle is pretty sharp and uncomfortable.

The Buyit is officially unisex but, the design is pretty feminine while the colors seem masculine. However this odd mix does not overshadow the many good qualities this bag has. For daily and light shopping, Buyit is an excellent choice.

Function: ★★★★★
Price: ★★★★★
Design: ★★★★★

The experts at the **Danish Cyclists Federation** organized and oversaw, on behalf of the EU project, **Cyclelogistics** and the **European Cyclists Federation**, a thorough test of these panniers. The tests were carried out over a period of five days by five experienced persons or small companies who bike daily and are trained to review cycling products. They were simply told to let the item become a regular part of their daily routine. They then gave each pannier a score out of five stars with five stars being the best and zero stars being the worst in addition to providing further comments and critiques. The reviews are honest and based on how well the products function in real life daily use.

Function: Are the panniers easy to load and unload? Are your goods protected within? Are they waterproof?

Design: Is the product's construction thoroughly thought out? Does it accompany the function? Are the materials high quality?

Price: Is the price appropriate for the functionality?

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