



August 10, 2020

Should I get my kid an e-bike?

To answer your first question, yes, kid size e-bikes exist. They exist in almost the same selection and differences as e-bikes for adults. There are purpose built e-bikes as well as conversion kits that can be applied to kid size bikes. There are ones with powerful motors and ones with tiny motors. So the decision on whether or not you should get your kid an e-bike is less about the available e-bikes on the market and more about their aptitude for riding an e-bike.

There are two sides to this particular cycling coin. If the child in question is already an avid cyclist and you already own an e-bike then purchasing one for them could be a great idea for family-style bike rides. Kids learn and adapt fairly quickly so moving them from a traditional bike to an e-bike shouldn't be much of a transition. Soon they'll be leaving you in the dust.

If your kid isn't that great on a bike, whether through balance or performance issues, then an e-bike could be the thing that improves their ability to ride a bike. Especially a conversion kit, because adding the option to later break it down into a regular bike might be appealing to some. Regardless, by assisting with speed, this by proxy assists with balance. An e-bike could very well help a middling young cyclist become better.

So what should I look for in an e-bike for my kid?

Aside from the obvious (making sure they are riding with the proper safety equipment and taught how to properly manage the added power and speed of an e-bike), there are a couple things to consider when purchasing an e-bike for your child. The first is the power of the motor itself.

Kids love to race things (as do many of us adults) so giving your kid an over-powered e-bike may result in them coming closer to getting in an accident than tempering their available power. This is completely

up to the parent, knowing their child best, so it's not for me to say what type of motor to buy for your kid. I'd buy mine the slowest output possible, because they are reckless nutters.

Besides the motor, you'll want to make sure the e-bike has an efficient and functional brake system. Most e-bikes check all the boxes in the brake department, but if you purchase a conversion kit, you'll want to make sure the brakes are crisp and new, aligned and ready to make harder stops at higher speeds. Safety first, second and third.

If you don't want to throttle the motor, then you can throttle the speed. Many e-bikes have an option for limiting the available speed, regardless of the power of the motor. Again, this is a personal choice that depends on the temperament of the child in question and whether their speed needs to be throttled. I know that I have a need for speed and likely passed that down to my children, so for safety reasons, speed would be throttled.

There are other options as well, like a front panel with intuitive controls and GPS trackers (though, that's a bit much). E-bikes are not limited to adult use, nor should they be. It's perfectly reasonable to include your kids in your activities, whether it be riding an e-bike, a regular bike or e-bike converted bike. Plus, your kids might have reliable transportation when that becomes the excuse for them not going out and getting a job.

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