

KANSI 3TWENTY

Chris Peck tries a 20"-wheel folder from new company kansi



Folding bikes either fold well or ride well, rarely both. But the kansi (no, they don't capitalise it) is as good a compromise of these two features as any folding bike I've ridden. Small wheels mean less comfort and more rolling resistance, but these are 20" (406). As a result, the kansi isn't as sluggish as some of its competitors, nor its steering as terrifyingly twitchy. The folded package isn't as neat as a Brompton,

but the ride is superior – stiffer and more comfortable – and it folds in 20 seconds.

Yet the bike isn't without its flaws, chief amongst them being an emphasis on aesthetics at the cost of utility. The bike comes without mudguards. The distributor told us that these were still in development. For me, a folding bike is a tool to get from doorstep to railway station when the weather is too bad to ride all the way to work. In the wet this bike is like standing next to an out



Not the most compact folder, but it will still fit mostly under your desk

of control potter's wheel.

On the plus side, it comes with a large carrying bag and a decent kickstand, the latter a rarity on off-the-shelf bikes today. kansi also throw

in a box of bar end caps and transfers so you can choose the bike's 'colourway' – from pink, green, gold or blue.

The kansi is reasonably light, helped by the lack of practical features – for carrying stuff, or lights, or mudguards. At 11kg there is no trial carrying it up and down stairs – a common activity with a folder. The 3-speed hub on the version we tested gives gears of 48", 65" and 88", which I found wasn't quite low enough. The 9-speed derailleur version (33-95" gears) would be more suitable if, like me, you have a one-in-five haul for the last leg of your commute.

kansi have done something different with this range: they've launched a new brand with a big marketing push aimed at the general public rather than existing cyclists. They've bought advertising space at railway stations – photos of stylish-looking blokes in flat caps and jeans. This is a welcome development but I'd prefer those new cyclists to be encouraged to use a more utilitarian bike.

RIVALS



Dahon Mu P8 £699

Similar frame and fold but this 8-speed is £150 less than kansi's derailleur version. zyro.co.uk



Brompton M3L £735

The best at folding, with great luggage and lighting options. Its ride divides opinions. brompton.co.uk



Mezzo D9 £725

Hingeless main triangle gives this UK folder a solid ride. Integral rack and mudguards. mezzobikes.com

NEED TO KNOW

Kansi 3twenty

Price: £699 (9-speed £850, singlespeed £500)

Contact: kansi.co.uk

Sizes available:
One size. Saddle to lowest pedal point = 62-95cm

Weight: 11kg

Folded dimensions:
88×38×66cm (L/W/H)

Pros: Fairly comfy ride, with reasonable brakes and wheels. A swift fold.

Cons: No fitted lights or mudguards! Long and slightly flexible stem.