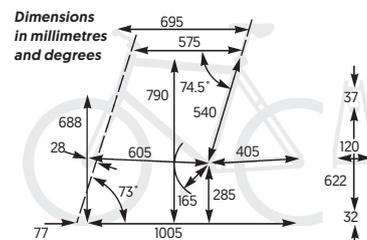




Biketest



Tech Spec
STEED STALLION

- **Price:** £375
 - **Sizes:** S, M (tested), L
 - **Weight:** 11.1kg/24.4lb (with pedals)
 - **Frame & fork:** hi-ten steel frame with fittings for rear rack and mudguard. Hi-ten steel fork with 1 1/8in steerer and mudguard fittings.
 - **Wheels:** 28-622 Kenda Kwest tyres, 622x17 40mm deep section aluminium rims, 32x2 spokes, aluminium solid-axle hubs.
 - **Transmission:** Wellgo plastic pedals, aluminium chainset with 165mm cranks and 46t chainring, square taper bottom bracket, KMC 1/8in chain, 18t freewheel. One ratio: 69in.
 - **Braking:** Unbranded bar-top levers, Promax mid-drop callipers.
 - **Steering & seating:** polymer foam bar tape, 26x410mm aluminium bullhorn bar, 7°x90mm aluminium stem, threadless headset. Anatomic 'vegan leather' saddle, 25.4x300mm aluminium seatpost, Allen-bolt seatpost clamp.
- steedbikes.com

Steed Stallion

Singlespeeds can be simple, affordable transport or stylish lifestyle accessories. **Dan Joyce** tests a £375 model that's both

The fixie fad may be long behind us but singlespeeds with and without freewheels remain popular in big cities – particularly London where Steed Bikes is based. The company has two models: the flat-bar Thoroughbred (£450) and this Stallion (£375).

It looks like you'd expect a London singlespeed to look: skinny (hi-ten) steel tubes, deep section rims, bonkers bullhorn handlebar, and those little cross-top brake levers that people seem to like. Oh, and it's all black. "Cool bike," a bloke said to me when I was parking it in town on my first ride. Score one to the Steed Bikes marketing department.

Beneath the fashionable exterior there's a fairly sensible frameset for urban use. Mid-drop brakes create room for mudguards and there are eyelets to fit them. There's toe room too,



Above: Mid-drop sidepull brakes means room for mudguards even over these nominally 28mm wide tyres

despite a short-offset fork, as the top tube is long. The chainstays are short, however, so you may have to cable-tie a cut-down rear mudguard to the seat tube. The rear dropouts have useful Allen-bolt adjusters. The rear brake cable guides can be removed if you convert the Stallion to fixed-wheel and dispense with the rear brake. (The bike has a flip-flop hub but you'll need to add your own sprocket and locking.)

The components are a mixed bag. Shorter, square taper cranks? Good. That handlebar and those brake levers? Bad. The dinky levers give less braking leverage than 'proper' ones and their position either side of the stem forces you to ride with your hands there while whizzing down the busy urban streets the bike is built for, as you can't reach them with your hands on the

handlebar's forward extensions. I'd much prefer TT brake levers fitted to the bar ends, which I'd first saw several inches shorter. Riding with your hands on the bar ends would also give more steering leverage to counteract what is, for a 'fixie', a lot of trail.

The 69in gear is probably ideal for London but slightly tall for a hilly town like Scarborough. It's harder to spin up to speed than the gear size suggests because the narrow, bar-top hands position prevents you bringing your upper body into play. Heavy, deep section rims with stodgy, price-point tyres don't help, although I did appreciate the tyres' width – which the wider-than-usual rims plump up further. ●

Other options

ELOPS CITY BIKE ▶
SINGLE-SPEED 500
£249.99

Steel frame and fork, flip-flop hub, fittings for mudguards. Not as stylish as the Steed but more than £100 cheaper and comes with better brake levers.
decaathlon.co.uk



RIBBLE URBAN 725S ▶
£599

Long-drop brakes allow pothole-smoothing 40mm tyres but there are no frame fittings at all so you'll need to bodge mudguards to fit. Reviewed Feb/Mar 20.
ribblecycles.co.uk



Verdict

Handlebar and brake levers detract from what is otherwise an affordable, commuter-friendly singlespeed that's rack and mudguard ready. A pair of TT levers and new cables would cost around £50, so Steed's Thoroughbred model looks to be the better buy.