First look
As comprehensively equipped as the Cube but with battery lights and 650B wheels

Photography: Shirley and Simon Withers

> *Both bikes have low enough gears for my local double-digit inclines*

The racks were initially a little puzzling. Both are attached directly to the frame only at the bottom of the seatstays. The other attachment is via the mudguard, which has metal reinforcing struts to connect the rack to the brake bridge. Whether that will work as well long term as separate upper rack struts remains to be seen, but both were stiff and secure during the test, even when loaded.

The Trek has a rechargeable front LED light and a double-AA battery-powered rear. The Cube has lights powered by a Shimano front hub dynamo, the rear staying illuminated when you're stationary. Both systems are adequate to be seen by, with nice white front beams, but are better under streetlights than for lighting your way on unlit routes.

Top: Cables and hoses are routed through a dedicated headset top cap, which complicates maintenance
Bottom: Like the Cube, the Trek has a sturdy kickstand. It's handy around town and might find a use on tour

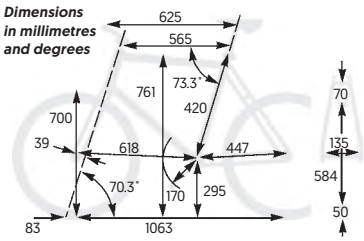
Both bikes have handy kickstands (very European) and fittings for a nurse's lock (likewise!) to round out fine all-round packages.

Ride

With a lot of rubber between you and the road or trail, you'd expect comfort – and that's what you get. In addition to plushness, the tyres also provide decent grip when you leave the tarmac. The Cube's super-wide tyres coped with a muddy canal towpath with aplomb.

The main disadvantage of a flat-bar setup compared with a drop handlebar is the reduced number of handhold options. For extended touring I'd always fit grips with forward-

Tech Spec

TREK DUAL SPORT 2 EQUIPPED GEN 5

Price: £925.
Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL.
Weight: 14.42kg (M).
Frame & fork: Alpha Gold Aluminium frame, internal cable routing, rack and mudguard mounts, post mount disc, kickstand mount, 135mm QR. Dual Sport alloy fork, internal brake routing, rack and mudguard mounts, 100mm ThruSkew QR.
Wheels: 50-584 Bontrager GR0 Comp wire-bead tyres, Bontrager Connection alloy rims, 32 14g stainless steel spokes, Formula DC-20 alloy 6-bolt front hub, Formula DC-22 alloy 6-bolt Shimano rear hub.
Transmission: Wellgo nylon body/alloy cage pedals, 46-30t 170mm forged alloy chainset, sealed cartridge bottom bracket, KMC X9 chain, Shimano HG200 11-36 cassette. Shimano Altus shifters, Shimano Acera front mech, Shimano Altus rear mech. 18 ratios 22-112in.
Brakes: Tektro HD-R280 hydraulic disc, flat-mount, 160mm rotors.
Steering & seating: Bontrager Satellite grips, Bontrager alloy 660×31.8mm bar with 15mm rise, Bontrager 31.8mm Blendr-compatible 80mm stem, 1 1/8in threadless headset. Bontrager Sport saddle, Bontrager alloy 27.2×330mm seatpost.
Equipment: MIK-compatible rear rack, alloy kickstand, SKS mudguards, AXA Greenline 35 USB rechargeable front light, Spanninga Solo rear light.
trekbikes.com