



Burley Flatbed

£314.99, burley.com

Burley has been making cycle trailers since 1978, and the range includes everything from dog trailers to trailer cycles for junior pedallers. I'd planned to review the upright Travoy shopping trailer but it was temporarily unavailable. The Flatbed is more of an all-rounder, accommodating longer loads as well as things like groceries – for which you'll need a large bag, such as a Burley Drybag (£98) or a blue Ikea Frakta (75p), or maybe just a Burley Cargo Bungee Net (£22).

The Flatbed is lightweight for its size as the base and sides are tarpaulin and the tubing aluminium. It goes together and come apart without tools: it's secured with (slightly rattly) retaining pins. I could pack it down to 80×62×22cm, including the 16in wheels, in a couple of minutes, using two bungees to strap it all together

The minimalist hitch is simple and effective. It's designed for solid axles and – with a spacer that's easily lost if you're careless – quick releases. Dedicated Burley Thru Axles (£65.99) are available. While the Flatbed arrived without one, the hitch hole is wide enough to admit a 12mm thru-axle. If you tow the trailer like this, make sure the axle engages plenty of threads. Otherwise buy a Burley Thru Axle.

You can easily hang the Flatbed on a wall for storage. The reflectors are its only real weakness: they protrude and will eventually get snapped off, as my old, battle-scarred Burley Nomad attests. They also stop you standing the trailer on its end when not in use.

Weight: 6.7kg. Max load: 45kg. Load bed: 80L×52–56W (cm). Overall width: 77cm.

★ A lightweight, versatile and easily stored trailer that needs a big bag for loose loads



Carry Freedom Y Trailer Small

£360, carryfreedom.com

This is the smallest of Carry Freedom's Y Trailers. There's also a Large (£420), which I tested in the June/July 2016 issue, and an XL (£500). All three have just had a cost reduction which, given the spartan design, they needed.

The build quality is excellent. With its hard wooden base, the Y Trailer works well with a box strapped or bolted in place. Alternatively, you could strap on a large bag – or anything else that fits the load bed. For wider loads, Carry Freedom has an Extra Wide Axle Beam (£95). For long loads, there are various tow-bar extensions (from £122). Other extras include a Hand Cart Handle (£158), flags, straps and more. These options make the Y Trailer very versatile – and potentially quite dear.

Like the Burley Flatbed, the Y Trailer has a simple, sturdy hitch designed for solid and QR axles. Again, the spacer for the latter is easily lost. There's no provision for thru-axles. Carry Freedom's 14mm e-bike hitch (£34, pictured below) does work if there's enough axle thread engagement. A better solution, I found, is an M-Wave 12mm Converter Thru Axle (see overleaf), with its threaded cam lever replaced by a 40mm M6 bolt and a washer. This makes room for the 'lollipop' hitch.

The Y Trailer is usefully narrow, so I could wheel it into my workshop. It's flat and easy to store once its 16in wheels are removed. You can pack it small enough for a train if you have a 5mm Allen key for the tow bar. The reflectors are inset, so they're less likely to be snapped off.

Weight: 6.37kg.
Max load: 45kg. Load bed: 58L×38W (cm). Overall width: 62cm

★ A sturdy and versatile flatbed trailer with accessories for everything – but no dedicated thru-axle at the moment

