How To Pack a Bicycle For Shipping

The following guide will help you properly pack a bicycle for shipping using the same packaging materials and techniques that bicycle manufactures use to ship their new bicycles.

Where to get what you need
The best place to get packaging materials for your bicycle is a nearby bicycle shop. Better shops will gladly provide you with the following used bike packing materials at little or no cost.

Materials
- 1 cardboard bike box
- 1 cardboard small parts box
- 10 or more foam tubes protectors
- 2 or more foam blocks
- 2 or more bubble wrap bags
- 1 fork protector
- 1 rear drop out protector
- 4 wheel axle protectors
- 4 wheel axle protectors
- 10 or more cable ties

Tip: Call ahead and provide the size and type of bicycle you want to ship so that the shop can prepare packaging. Be sure to ask for a high quality bike box in like-new condition, extra foam tubes, and an assortment of package padding material to account for differences in bike design.
Tools
- 15mm pedal wrench
- 3, 4, 5, 6, 8mm hex wrenches
- Torque wrench
- Soft rag
- Permanent marker
- Electrical tape
- Clear packing tape

Tip: You will need these tools to dissemble and assemble your bike. When traveling be sure to make arrangements that these are available where you are going or make sure to pack in your small parts box.

Time
- 90 minutes for the first time packer.
- 30 minutes or less with practice.

Tip: Before you start, clean your bicycle and inspect for worn parts that could keep you from enjoying your ride later on. Remove all dirt or mud from your bike, including the tires, to reduce the spread of soil-borne diseases and pests that can cause major losses in field and horticultural crops.

Step 1: Remove your pedals.
Remove your pedals with a 15mm or 8mm pedal wrench, wipe with a rag, and place immediately into a plastic bag so not to lose.

Tip: EVT makes a Knuckle Saver 15mm Pedal Wrench to 8mm Hex Pedal Adaptor that makes easy work of removing stubborn 8mm female hex mounted pedals.

Step 2: Remove your front wheel.
Remove your front wheel from your fork.

Tip: Axle designs vary. For quick release axles, remove skewer from the axle, reattached nut and spring, wiped with a rag, and place into a plastic bag. For through axles, remove through axle, wipe with a rag, and threaded back into your fork legs.
Step 3: Remove your handlebar.
Remove your handle bar by loosening the faceplate bolts. Once the handle bar is removed, reattached the stem faceplate and lightly tighten the faceplate bolts.

Tip: Mark your stem and bar alignment with a permanent marker or tape to ensure the same position when reassembling. Snap a digital picture with your phone to aid your memory.

Step 4: Reverse your stem.
Reverse your stem by loosening your top cap bolt and steerer tube bolts. Once loose, rotate your stem 180 degrees and lightly tighten all bolts.

Tip: Stem bolts commonly use 4 or 5mm hex bolts and should only be tightened with a torque wrench to their proper specs.

Step 5: Remove your seat and seatpost.
Remove your seat and seatpost as one by loosening the bolt(s) at the seat tube clamp and pulling the seat upward. Once the post is removed, wipe with rag and lightly tighten the bolts.

Tip: Mark your seat post position with a permanent marker or tape to ensure the same position when reassembling. Snap a digital picture with your phone to aid your memory. Integrated seat posts skip this step. Make sure your box is tall enough to accommodate seat height.

Step 6: Protect your rear derailleur.
Protect your rear derailleur by shifting the gears to the lightest setting. Clip a rear derailleur protector on the hub axle and rear quick release nut.

Tip: For added protection you can opt to remove your rear derailleur using a 5mm Allen key, wrap it with proper padding, and secure to the frame with ties.

Step 7: Remove some air pressure from your tires.
Remove some air pressure from your tires so that the tires are not at maximum pressure during shipping. The bicycle will fit better in the inside the box.

Tip: Keep enough pressure to hold tubeless set ups intact so sealant does not leak out.
Step 8: Attach packaging materials to bicycle.
Wrap all the tubes with self adhesive cardboard tubing or foam. If a bicycle shop did not provide these materials to you, make your own using cardboard and tape. Tie the stem and bar to the front of the frame. Wrap the rear derailleur and chain in a rag and secure to the chain stay with zip ties. You are trying to prevent scratching where surfaces meet and to secure any the contact points with zip ties to limit moving back and forth during shipping.

Tips:

Frame: Pad entire frame with foam tubes. Place soft foam or cardboard under cables to protect finish.
Fork: Pad both legs and attach drop out protector (plastic, spare axle, spare hub). If loose use tape to hold in place.
Front wheel: Protect both sides with axle caps to protect axle from tearing box and damaging frame. If caps are loose use tape to hold in place. Secure to frame with ties.
Rear wheel/Rear derailleur: Protect axle with caps and a rear derailleur protector.
Handle bar: Cover with pad foam and a bubble wrap bag. Remove cable ends from frame stops so not to bend or crimp during shipping. Tie to fork or top tube.
Cranks: Tie drive side crank to chainstay and wrap with foam padding or felt. Place foam padding under chainrings to protect teeth from tearing open box.
Seat/Seatpost: Wrap in bubble wrap or foam and tie to rear wheel.

**Step 9: Place your bicycle in the box**

Place the bicycle in the box while making sure everything is secure. Ensure that the box flaps will close without bulging. Do not forget your small parts box. Adjust bicycle and small parts box as needed. Apply any extra padding to fill empty space. Tape up the box with packing tape.

Tip: If your bicycle’s seat tube sticks out the top of the box, get a different box. Do not make a chimney. If your bicycle is too long for the box, you should get a longer box or attempt to adjust the fork.

**Step 10: Ship your bike at Bikeflights.com.**

Ship your bike at Bikeflights.com. We’ll process your order and email your shipping label as in about 10 minutes. Simply print your label on a standard 8.5"x11" sheet of paper, fold in half and affix it to your bicycle shipping box so the label's barcodes can be scanned.