



# SURPRISING INSIGHTS

The 7 surprising insights I  
learned after buying my first  
cargo bike

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***XTRACYCLE***<sup>®</sup>

# From pro cyclist to kid-wrangler

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I gave up my professional cycling career a few years ago, but I still love to ride. When I had twins, I didn't want to trade my cleats for mom jeans. But, exhausted from taking care of two small children, I found myself strapping them into car seats, even for short journeys. I thought pushing up a 20 percent grade in mile 30 was exhausting – but that was before I tried to get two preschoolers out the door every day.

When I went in search of a bike I could ride with the twins, I needed something that would make my life easier, not harder. I found the Xtracycle Edgerunner cargo bike with electric assist.

*“Getting an Edgerunner has changed my life.”*

You don't have to be a pro cyclist or a bike geek to love this bike. You can even ride in mom jeans (or you can wear your fancy clothes and never break a sweat).

I'm super stoked about the Edgerunner, but I had a few questions to answer before I made my choice. What I learned made me realize that there are some common mistakes and misconceptions people have when they shop for a cargo bike.

I came up with the 7 insights to know before you buy your first cargo bike to help you make the choice that is right for you.

# SURPRISING INSIGHTS

The 7 surprising insights I learned  
after buying my first cargo bike.

By Brooke Miller

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Insight #1

## Make safety your first priority

Riding with two young kids in tow, my biggest concern is safety. To be safe, I need a bike that's stable, even when the twins get the wiggles. I need to be able to make a quick start when I'm carrying a lot of extra weight. And I need to be able to stop quickly.

Some manufacturers use low-quality parts to lower the price, especially on electric bikes. When it comes to safety, and especially when my kids are on the back, good construction and quality parts are the price of safety.

*"I was blown away by how safe the Edgerunner felt from my first test ride."*

## INSIGHT 1 (cont)

It doesn't feel wobbly or unsafe, even with three kids on back. Fun geek fact: the Edgerunner has a smaller wheel in back, giving it a lower center of gravity for extra stability and balance.

The electric assist makes my ride safer. It gives me the power to make a quick start when the light turns green.

The Edgerunner's high quality brakes give me peace of mind. I am confident because I know I can make quick stops, even when I'm riding downhill.

That adds up to a whole lot of safety. The Edgerunner lets me relax and enjoy the ride.



## Insight #2

### You can do more than you think

Many people, myself included, make the mistake of assuming the grocery store, parks, kids' school, and other locations we drive to are too far for a bike trip. A cargo bike wouldn't do me any good if I couldn't get to where I needed to go.

So, I mapped out the most common destinations that I typically travelled to by car, often with the kids along. Shockaroo: most of these places fell within a six-mile radius of my home – easy biking distance, especially on an ebike.

*"I realized I could easily do 90 percent of my daily errands on bike."*

Running errands by bike usually takes extra time; the electric assist changes that dynamic drastically. Better yet, I could get there without getting all sweaty, thanks to (bike nerd alert!) the Bosch electric drive system with four different assist levels. I can ride 18-20 miles on full turbo mode; if I am worried about range, I dial back the assist to get 40-50 miles.

*“I rarely ride more than 20 miles in one trip, so I usually opt for full turbo. Why? Because it is fun (uh, really fun).”*

How far do you want to go by bike? The Department of Transportation reports that 63% of our daily trips are five miles or less. You might be surprised, like I was, at how easily you can get there by bike.



### Insight #3

## Don't freak out over the price

A cargo bike is built to carry a lot of weight and that requires some fancy parts, like high-end brakes so you can stop quickly and safely, even when you're carrying a big load. If you want electric assist, a good motor can be pricey too.

If you're considering a cargo bike like the Xtracycle Edgerunner, it's a commitment, financially. When you add electric assist, the price tag can go north of \$6,000.

Some of my racing bikes cost more than that, but it was hard for me to spend that much on a cargo bike.

### INSIGHT 3 (cont)

So, I wrote a list of other things I could buy for about \$6,000:

- One Bitcoin
- A used Honda with 200,000 miles on it
- 300 My Little Pony Rainbow Shimmer Princess Luna Pony figurines
- Three and a half tickets to see the Golden State Warriors in the playoffs

Or a well-built cargo bike with electric assist that will last me for thousands of miles of riding over many years. Hmmm.

Here's the breakdown: If I ride my Edgerunner for 10 years (a conservative estimate – these bikes are built to last), that's \$600 per year or \$50 per month. I save more than that each month on gas and wear and tear on my car. If your family can give up a car because of my cargo bike, you can save even more.

***“Bottom line: if I love it and I ride it, my cargo bike pays for itself.”***

If you want a bike that has electric assist, don't let the price tag scare you. If an ebike is not expensive, I get nervous about where they are cutting costs - especially if it is a bike that I am going to ride with my children.

### INSIGHT 3 (cont)

I test rode a lot of ebikes and I found that the Bosch motor on the Edgerunner stood out. Some ebike motors lurch and surge – not something I want with my twins on the back. The Bosch has a smoother ride plus the power to take me up hills and carry heavy loads.

A cheaper cargo bike that is awkward or difficult to ride or that feels unsafe is a bike I probably won't get on too often – so it won't be worth the price, whatever I paid for it. A bike that's fun on wheels is one I'll want to ride every day – and that is worth the price tag.



#### Insight #4

## Do accessorize for safety.

When you are in the market for a cargo bike, the accessories you add on may be almost as important as the bike itself. You're not just buying a bicycle; you're getting a two-wheeled powerhouse that can transport everything you need, with the right add-ons.

Since my main motivation for buying a cargo bike was to ride with my kids, safety was my first concern. With the Hooptie installed, I don't have to look over my shoulder all the time; the twins hold onto the side bars and I know their fingers are protected and they won't tumble off. The bars are adjustable, so I can keep on keeping them safe as they get bigger.

I also added U-Tubes, so the twins can rest their feet, and a pair of CargoBay bags, to pick up groceries on the fly.

No matter why you want a cargo bike or what kind of cargo bike you end up with, don't make the mistake of skimping on the accessories. Those extras don't add much to the cost, but they will give a big boost to your enjoyment of the bike and your peace of mind.



## Insight #5

# Don't put your cargo bike on a diet

In the bike snob world I come from, the lighter the bike the more snob appeal it has. When it comes to cargo bikes, especially an ebike, it's a mistake to get hung up on weight.

In fact, I chose to pack the pounds on my Edgerunner, by adding the accessories I needed. With electric assist, I can pull the extra weight with no sweat – literally.

If you want a lightweight bike, buy a carbon fiber road bike. If you want a cargo bike that will get you and your crew where you need to go, don't worry about the weight.



## Insight #6

### Do consider electric assist

I used to be a professional rider. When I want to ride for exercise, I'll pull a racing bike off the wall and hit the hills. There's nothing like the feeling of coming home, drenched in sweat, knowing I've pushed my body to the max.

But that's not how I want to feel when I get to at work or meet friends at a restaurant. Electric assist allows me to arrive at any destination still feeling fresh.

Before I had kids, I couldn't imagine that I would ever be too zonked to ride. That's because I didn't understand true fatigue. I realized that, if I wanted to power around town with two kids and three bags of groceries on the back, electric assist was a must-have.

If you're a serious bike rider, you might feel that electric assist is cheating. I felt that way too, at first. But the extra boost gets me onto my bike on days when I otherwise might drive a car. I am still moving my body and that energizes me, but it's not such an effort that I'm drained and cranky with the kids.

*“The Edgerunner’s electric assist allows me to preserve my energy so I can be the kind of mother I want to be.”*

The other advantage of an ebike is safety. I appreciate having the power to make a quick start, even when I'm fully loaded. With electric assist, I can even make it up the hill to the kids' school.

What will you do with your cargo bike? Will you ride on the flats or take on hills? Will you carry two watermelons and three kids or a surfboard and one big Dalmatian? Will you go to across town or across a bridge?

A cargo bike with an electric motor is more expensive than one without, but I have found it makes my Edgerunner so indispensable that it's totally worth it.



### Insight #7

## Don't skimp on power

Once I decided on electric assist, it was time to totally nerd out on all the ebike options. There are lots of different types of ebike motors and I test rode a bunch of different models.

The Bosch motor on the Edgerunner stood out from the crowd for its smooth ride. Plus, it's a brand I trust to keep stocking parts, even after a motor is discontinued, so I know I'll be able to keep my Edgerunner on the road for a long time.

I chose the Bosch mid-drive motor and I love the power it gives me to go up hill. If speed is more important to you, you might prefer the Bosch Performance speed motor.

## INSIGHT 7 (cont)

The next thing I had to consider was range. It's easy to make the mistake of going with the smallest battery pack, to save money and weight, but this is not the moment to cheap out.

Here's the thing: all cargo bikes are heavy. Unless you're going to ride your cargo bike in a road race (I wouldn't recommend it), you won't notice a couple of pounds more or less. Ask yourself how far you need to go between charges and buy enough battery power to make it there.

The motor you choose, and the size of your battery pack will affect the price. By this point in my research, though, I was all in. In the Edgerunner, I had found everything I wanted in a cargo bike: stable construction, smooth ride, safety, and accessories that make the whole package work. I wasn't going to stop short of getting the right power and range to take me where I need to go. I'm glad I did.

*“Riding a cargo bike with electric assist has changed my life.”*

Are you ready to change yours?



Okay, that's a lot of information about ebikes. At this point, you might be wondering how you can figure out whether you need electric assist and, if so, which drive system to choose and how much battery life you need. It's a lot to process and I had the same questions.

Getting an electric motor adds to the price and that can put a cargo bike out of reach for some people. Here's the good news: if you start with a mechanical (non-electric) cargo bike, you can add an aftermarket motor later, if you decide you need extra power.

For me, it came down to the fact that a cargo bike is pretty heavy, even more so when I'm loaded down, so I knew I wanted an ebike. The fact that I use my Edgerunner to ride with my twins makes the power of the motor to power me safely to my destinations even more important. I decided to pony up and get an Edgerunner with electric assist. I haven't regretted that decision.

But all this doesn't answer one important question: what is the right cargo bike for you?

## MORE QUESTIONS, MORE ANSWERS (cont)

When I was making my decision, I reached out to the Xtracycle support team. They talked me through what I needed in a cargo bike, so I could choose the right Edgerunner for me. They would love to do the same for you.

[Get Help](#)

Here's the crazy part: when you talk to customer service, they won't even try to sell you an Xtracycle, unless they think it's a good fit for you. The people at Xtracycle think the world will be better if more of us ride bikes more often, and they want to help make that happen.

I know my cargo bike has made my world a better place. I've

# THANK YOU!

Thanks for reading about my journey pro cyclist to kid-wrangler. For more great stories, check out <http://xcy.cl/electricsmile>

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