



CYCLING FACT SHEET No. 68

Travelling by air with a bike

More and more Western Australians are flying with their bicycles – and I don't mean like Elliott's moonlit ride in the E.T. movie.

Bicycle tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon and many people are choosing to travel with their own bike rather than hiring one at the destination.

The majority of airlines do not charge extra for a bicycle, providing the overall baggage limit is not exceeded, but there are a few exceptions. Some of the American carriers for instance, charge up to \$100 per bicycle for a one-way flight.

Most airlines require bicycles to be packed in a box – Qantas, for example, sells its own bike boxes for \$16.50 at the sales/ticket counter.

The reusable boxes are sold flat and must be taped together, but will accommodate almost any size bike. Passengers can use their own box provided it does not exceed 140cm x 80cm x 30cm.

The packed bicycle must have its tyres deflated, pedals removed and handlebars taped parallel to the frame.

If the bicycle is longer than the box, the front wheel should be removed and fixed beside the rear wheel.

On Qantas domestic and international flights, a bike box constitutes one piece of checked baggage. Additional rates will be charged if the combined weight of the bike box and other checked baggage exceeds the free baggage allowance.

Some airlines do not carry bicycles that have gas-filled shock absorbers, because they are pressurized and pose a safety risk if they should rupture.

You should consider how you will transport your bicycle from the airport at the other end, and putting the necessary tools in the bike box before you seal it up can prove handy.



Will you need to fit it in a taxi? Will you be able to ride it through the airport precinct? Will you be permitted to take it on a train? Folding bicycles are treated as normal luggage provided they are fully enclosed in a bag or case.

The International Bicycle Fund has a web page that lists baggage regulations for all major airlines around the world www.ibike.org/encouragement/travel/bagregs.htm

This fact sheet is one of a series dealing with the use of bicycles for recreation and transport in Western Australia. The series looks at a range of cycling-related topics including ride routes, touring tips, maintenance, safety, road rules, insurance and product reviews. You can find more cycling fact sheets online at www.transport.wa.gov.au/cycling

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