

## **How to pack a bike for shipping.**

Go to Home Depot or other home improvement store and buy some foam pipe insulation. This looks like a black foam tube slit down one side. Also buy some plastic zip ties long enough to go around the foam tube.

Get a bike box from your local bike dealer and ask if he has any of the plastic spacers that go between the front and rear dropouts. Most bikes shipped from a manufacturer come with these and they just get thrown away.

Remove the pedals and take the wheels out of the bike. Put the foam insulation on all the tubes and attach with zip ties. Turn the handlebars sideways and fasten it to the top tube with a zip tie. (Make sure there is foam between the handlebars and top tube.)

Remove the rear derailleur from the rear dropout but leave it attached to the chain. Put the derailleur bolt in a large plastic bag (A grocery bag is fine) and wrap the bag around the derailleur and tape it. Make sure the chain is on one of the chain rings; hook it on the rear dropout, or better yet the chain hanger if the bike has one. Then tie it up to the brake bridge with a zip tie so it is not flopping around loose inside the box. Also any place where the chain might touch the frame; make sure there is foam or cardboard between to protect.

If you could not get plastic spacers from your bike dealer; cut pieces of wood to fit tightly between the front and rear dropouts and fasten with wood screws and washers. Next and probably one of the most important things in packing a bike; put foam followed by extra cardboard on the front and rear dropouts or they will poke through the box for sure and end up bent. Also put padding and cardboard on the bottom of the chain ring.

Remove the seat post with saddle attached only if it is too big to fit in the box. Remove the quick release skewers from the wheels and attach them to one of the foam covered frame tubes with tape. Place a wheel on each side of the frame making sure there is foam between the frame and wheels. Attach with zip ties or masking tape. Make sure the freewheel cluster is on the inside and nowhere near a frame tube. You could also ship the wheels in a separate box if you wish. Place the pedals in a small cardboard box or put adequate padding around them. If necessary attach them to the frame tape. The same goes for the seat and seat post if you removed them from the bike.

Put the whole bike in the box and seal with tape. Some shipping companies prefer re-enforced brown paper tape over clear tape. The main thing is make sure the box is not going to bust open. Don't forget to check the bottom of the box. I have seen people over tape the top of the box; only to have the bottom fall out.

Ship UPS or FedEx Ground is the most economical way. Insure it for the value of the bike plus the cost of the shipping.

Dave Moulton.

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