

How to pack your bike and luggage for CQ

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Luggage limits and packing your stuff

The Handbook which is available on our website has good suggestions about what to bring and how to pack it, but here are a few important notes.

You can have a **maximum of 22kg of luggage** (this is in addition to your bike and what you carry when riding). Your gear must be **split between 2 bags with no one bag weighing more than 14kg**. The maximum allowed **size of a bag is 1.0m long x 0.5m wide x 0.5m high**. Luggage is weighed on the first day and randomly through the event. There is a **\$50** penalty for overweight bags and they will not be handled by the luggage crews.

Don't strap anything to the outside since these items seem to have a habit of hitting people on the head during the unloading process.

Weigh your bag before you leave home and ditch any excess luggage. Put all the stuff you don't really need back in the cupboard – refer to the *Handbook* for the essentials.

Put all your camping gear in one bag and your clothes and personal items in another bag. (This will make it easier to find things and you are less likely to accidentally fling your undies around the campsite while searching for an elusive tent peg.)

Packing your bike for travel.

If you are using any of the transport options listed on the entry form, then the Info sheet – *Bike Transport* will note if you are required to box your bike or not. If you are required to box your bike you can only avoid this if you have a special bike or circumstance and have checked with BQ. If you are not required to box your bike we recommend (and prefer) that you still do. Bicycles are an odd shape, boxing them makes them easier to pack, harder to damage and certainly increases the chance they will fit in the bus or truck.

Please note that Bicycle Queensland takes all care but no responsibility for damage to your bike during transportation. **You should pack your bike to your satisfaction.**

As a minimum, your bicycle must have both pedals removed, the handlebars turned parallel to the bike and the seat lowered or at the very least, protected. You should also protect the frame by taping cardboard to it. It is likely the front wheel will need to be removed to fit into a box.

Boxing your bike is recommended.

The box must be a regular shape and typically no larger than 1.4m x 0.8m x 0.3m in size. There should be no bulges and nothing protruding from the box. Some 'swelling' of the box is acceptable. Your bike shop will be able to help pack before the ride if you are unsure (or see our DIY tips below) and there will be people at the start who can help you put your bike back together.

There is a helpful bike packing video available at www.cycleqld.org.au .

Tips for packing your bike – if you do it yourself

Parts: A *bike box* - get a used one from your local bike shop (they throw them away normally) - get the largest one you can for a standard bike. Folks in Brisbane and surrounds can have a large new box delivered from BQ to their home. As cardboard bike boxes will typically be disposed of at the start of the event you need to select one of our bike box transport options so your box will arrive at the finish or order another box for your trip home.

Fork brace - get one from your local bike shop (they throw them away normally). These plastic spacers fit in the front forks in place of the wheel & reduce the chance of damage to the forks. During the packing process have a *friend or family member* nearby to hold items when needed.

Tools needed: a pedal spanner (most of us don't have these so a 15mm open ended spanner will generally do OR many modern bikes have an allen key fitting on the inside end of the pedal axle), allen key set, rags, insulation tape, marker pen, packing tape, scissors.

Process – for flat bar bikes:

The finished outcome will have your bike upside down with both wheels and pedals off. The quick release skewers will also be removed from both wheels. This method avoids the need to remove handlebars, which is the more difficult task for the uninitiated.

Setup:

- Remove any loose, fragile or projecting accessories (such as lights or computers - these are best packed with your luggage)
- Put your chain on the largest front ring & move the rear derailleur to the smallest cog
- Turn any bar ends so they point down (this is to narrow the depth of your handlebars to better fit the box. This may not be necessary on all bikes depending on stem length etc and box size so check first.)
- Turn your bike upside down
- Remove both pedals – see explanation in *Notes* section
- If your bike is travelling by plane it is worth releasing some tyre pressure but only a little
- Remove both wheels – remove both quick release skewers from the wheels also (careful not to lose the little springs) and wrap one side of each wheel hub in a rag (do this to the non cluster side of the rear wheel)
- Place a dummy axle in the forks (it may need to be taped in)
- Move the rear derailleur to about the centre of its range
- Lay your bike on its side to mark your seat height then remove your seat (If you are receiving a BQ bike box at the end of the ride then you probably won't need to remove your seat to pack it).
- Place loose parts in a bag (quick release skewers x 2, pedals x 2 and seat. Wrap some rag around any items that may spread grease or puncture the bag)

Pack:

- Lift your bike & turn the handlebars parallel to the frame on the same side as your chain
- Place your upside down bike into the box – be careful to check it fits & that the rear derailleur is not under pressure – place it so the non chain side of the bike is against the box with some space on the chain side
- Place the front wheel beside the rear of the frame with the rag side facing outwards – turn the pedals arms to what seems to be the best position
- Place the rear wheel beside the front of the frame with the rag side facing outwards – be careful what the wheel sits on – you may need to position it or some cables to prevent damage
- Check that everything is sitting OK and place rags (taped or tied in) to prevent damage – you may need to put something under your handlebars and place some cardboard between the bike and the wheels to prevent damage
- Check that there aren't any bulges in the box – some 'swelling' is OK
- Place your parts bag in the box as suits
- Pack your tools in your luggage so you can reassemble before the ride and pack again at the end

Seal and Label:

- Tape the box well
- Place your name & “up” arrows on the box as well as any other identification required by the Ride Transport info sheet. Label both ends of the box and add some unique markings as finding your box amongst hundreds of others can be a challenge.

The final result should look something like this.



Process – for drop bar bikes:

The finished outcome will have your front wheel, handlebars and pedals off. The quick release skewer will also be removed from the front wheel. Drop bars are too wide for standard bike boxes. Note: If you are receiving a BQ bike box at the end of the ride then you may be able to follow the flat bar method above as the box will be wide enough for many drop bars to fit without removal and it is a better method.

Setup:

- Remove any loose, fragile or projecting accessories (such as lights or computers - these are best packed with your luggage)
- Put your chain on the smallest front ring & move the rear derailleur to the inside of its range
- Turn your bike upside down
- Remove both pedals – see explanation in *Notes* section
- If your bike is travelling by plane it is worth releasing some tyre pressure but only a little
- Remove front wheel – remove the quick release skewer from the wheel also (careful not to lose the little springs) and wrap one side of the wheel hub in a rag
- Place a dummy axle in the forks (it may need to be taped in)
- Mark your handlebar height then remove your handlebars and find the best place to rest them to fit into the box but also not strain the cables (typically on the left side to suit the chain needs noted below)– you may need to tie it in place
- Place loose parts in a bag (quick release skewer and pedals x 2. Wrap some rag around any items that may spread grease or puncture the bag)

Pack:

- Place your bike into the box – be careful to check it fits – place it so the non chain side of the bike is against the box with some space on the chain side
- Place the front wheel beside the front of the frame with the rag side facing outwards – turn the pedals arms to what seems to be the best position.
- Check that everything is sitting OK and place rags (taped or tied in) to prevent damage – you may need to put something under your handlebars and place some cardboard between the bike and the front wheel to prevent damage
- Check that there aren't any bulges in the box – some ‘swelling’ is OK
- Place your parts bag in the box as suits
- Pack your tools in your luggage so you can reassemble before the ride and pack again at the end

Seal and Label:

- Tape the box well
- Place your name & “up” arrows on the box as well as any other identification required by the Ride Transport info sheet. Label both ends of the box and add some unique markings as finding your box amongst hundreds of others can be a challenge.

Notes:

- Rags on wheel hubs - hold the rag in place by tying or squeezing it between the spokes – this is to reduce the chance that a hole will be punched in the side of the box (which is the biggest cause of damage in these situations – rubbing on another bike)
- Placing pedals, skewers and other accessories in a bag means they won't fall out if a hole develops in your bike box. Remember to put them in though. Arriving on the ride and discovering you don't have them with you is a real bummer!
- *Removing your pedals:*
 - For the right pedal turn the crank arm so it points forward, place the spanner firmly in place (the 'bolt' between the pedal and the crank arm) so it points backwards (or near to it) and turn anticlockwise. It may be quite tight since the motion of pedalling tightens it up. Also mind that your knuckles don't get wiped out on the crank arm.
 - For the left pedal turn the crank arm so it points forward, place the spanner firmly in place so it points backwards (or near to it) and turn clockwise.
 - Placing the crank arm and spanner in the positions noted above means they 'resist' each other. If the spanner is placed pointing forward like an extension of the crank arm then it will not work.
- A quick lesson: normal bolts and nuts have threads that turn clockwise to do them up and anticlockwise to undo them – this is called 'right hand thread'. The opposite of this is called 'left hand thread' which means that to do them up you turn them anticlockwise and to undo them you turn them clockwise. On a bicycle the right side pedal is right hand thread and the left side pedal is left hand thread (right is right and left is left – fairly easy to remember). This is done so that the motion of pedalling tightens the pedal rather than undoes it.
When you are putting a thread back together i.e. putting a nut on a bolt or putting your pedal back on, the thread can be 'cross threaded' which means that it will be damaged and not work properly. If the thread does not turn easily then it may be cross-threaded. Cross threading is easy to do but 'hard' to turn so that is how you know you have made a mistake.