

# E-Bike Buyer's Guide







We love bikes!  
We want to see more people  
riding both traditional and  
electric bikes with safety  
being our #1 priority!



## In California, the term “e-bike” applies to bicycles that have:

- > Functioning pedals
- > A motor that provides assistance only up to 20 or 28 mph (depending on class)
- > A motor of no more than 750 watts

## E-Bike Classes

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Pedal Assist			
Throttle			
Max Speed	20 MPH	20 MPH	28 MPH
Age restriction	None	None	16+ years old
Helmet Required	Under 18 years old	Under 18 years old	All ages

## **If your class I or class II e-bike exceeds 20mph, or your class III e-bike exceeds 28mph without pedaling—it's not an e-bike.**

Some manufacturers are selling e-bikes “out of class” or “unlocked”, which means the bike can be modified to exceed the above class definitions. These are no longer e-bikes but rather “electric motorcycles” which require a special driver’s license and wearing a specialized helmet. The consequences for youth riding illegally could include:

- Required participation in the Youth Diversion Program.
- A citation with fines between \$100- \$500.
- Parents are legally and financially responsible for the actions of their children.



# Considerations prior to purchasing an e-bike:

## Battery

Check that the battery meets UL or EN standards. Either of these certifications means the battery has been designed to prevent conditions like overheating, overcharging, or a short circuit that can lead to fires.

## Usage

What are you using this e-bike for? Do you want to carry cargo or a passenger? Will you ride it in the city or on trails? What type of e-bike will you need to reduce car trips?

## Transport

E-bikes can weigh between 40-80 pounds; they may be cumbersome to get up and down stairs or loaded into a vehicle. You may need a hitch rack designed for the heavier weight of an e-bike.

## Security

It's important to purchase a quality lock that allows you to secure the front wheel and the frame to a fixed object.

## Storage

E-bikes are sensitive to the elements. It's important to have a secure location protected from the elements to keep your bike safe and in good working condition.

## Maintenance

When you purchase an e-bike from a local shop they likely offer maintenance services that cover both mechanical and electrical diagnostics and repair. If you purchase an e-bike online or elsewhere, you may find it difficult to have repairs conducted.

## Considerations prior to purchasing an e-bike for youth:

Prior to purchasing an e-bike for your child, consider their **physical ability and emotional maturity**. Knowledge of bike handling, rules of the road, etiquette, and basic mechanics are key to safe operation.

### **E-bikes go fast:**

Higher speeds and power mean higher likelihood of serious injury (or even death) if involved in a crash. Higher speeds also mean reduced reaction time; a safe rider should be able to anticipate and quickly respond to a variety of situations.

### **E-bikes are heavy:**

















They are more difficult to handle and require more bodily strength than a lighter, traditional bike; a safe rider should be able to physically control the bicycle.

### **E-bike brakes wear out quickly:**

Brakes are applied hard and often. Safe riders should be able to recognize when their e-bike is not braking properly and have brakes adjusted or replaced.



## Local E-Bike Resources

	Sell E-Bikes	Mechanical Repair	Electrical Repair	Pick-Up & Drop-off Service
Trek Goleta			Most brands	Yes
E-Bikery Santa Barbara			Most brands	Yes, there is a fee
REI Santa Barbara			Most brands	No
Hazards Santa Barbara			Specialized	No
Main Street Cycles Santa Maria			Most brands	Yes, for store bought e-bikes
Dr. Jay's Bicycle Shop Buellton			Most brands	Yes, there is a fee
Bicycle Works Lompoc			Most brands	No
Bici Centro Santa Barbara/Santa Maria			Most brands	No

Learn to maintain your own e-bike at Bici Centro's DIY station!

## Let's Give E-Biking a Good Rep! Help your child ride smart.

When kids ride respectfully and follow the rules on their e-bikes, it keeps them safe and shows others that e-bikes belong on our streets and trails. Talk about safe speeds, sharing the road, and being friendly, so your child can ride confidently and help make e-biking positive for everyone.

## What's your vision for biking in our community?

Contact your city leaders or advocacy organizations like MOVE Santa Barbara County to make your voice heard.

## Stay connected!



MoveSBCounty.org



@MoveSBCounty

## Local Resources

- [Santabarbaraca.gov/E-bike-safety](https://Santabarbaraca.gov/E-bike-safety)
- [Santabarbaraca.gov/VisionZero](https://Santabarbaraca.gov/VisionZero)
- [Santabarbaraca.gov/SafeStreets](https://Santabarbaraca.gov/SafeStreets)



### Need an e-bike lesson?

Contact our Education and Encouragement team for group rides, skill classes, and presentations.

**Email: [Education@MoveSBCounty.org](mailto:Education@MoveSBCounty.org)**



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