

Load and behold: should you opt for an electric cargo bike over a second car?

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- Do you cycle to work or school? Why or why not?
- What do you think stops people from cycling in city centres?

2 Key words

a. Find the words in the wordpool in the article. Then match them to the definitions.

paths
afraid

confidence
joy

opt for
urban

encourages
routes

Sydneysiders
transporting

1. people who live in or come from Sydney, Australia _____
2. moving people or goods over short distances _____
3. describing towns and cities rather than the countryside _____
4. ways or tracks that people or vehicles can travel along _____
5. plans that you use to get from one place to another _____
6. happiness _____
7. to choose; select from different options _____
8. scared; nervous and anxious _____
9. the feeling that you can do something well _____
10. helps someone to feel that they can do something _____

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity.

1. It's usual for parents to feel _____ when their children are born.
2. More people now _____ public transport rather than buying cars.
3. We use this company for _____ food from our farms to supermarkets.

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4. Most _____ enjoy spending weekends at the beach during summer.
5. Many young people are moving to _____ areas to find a job.
6. My dad always _____ me and tells me not to give up.
7. The park has several _____ that go from the forest to the lake.
8. My satnav suggested two different _____ to get to the town centre.
9. You need _____ to give a presentation in English.
10. I'm _____ of spiders! I can't stand them!

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Clare Watson
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1 On a trip to Vienna, we watched parents cycle along the city's bike paths on electric bikes, with bags, groceries and kids. We bought a bike of our own and I was surprised how quickly our car trips became bike rides.

2 Can we make our streets safer so that more people will use cargo ebikes? I spoke to a few people to find out.

3 **A Replacing short car trips**

Driving less is the main reason people choose ebikes. Sometimes they want to save money, or be more environmentally friendly, or exercise more. E-cargo bikes are perfect for short trips between 2 and 6 kilometres, says Elliot Fishman of the Institute for Sensible Transport. In many urban areas, ebikes "will be the fastest way that you can get from point A to point B", he says.

4 Sydneysiders take about 4 million car trips under 4 kilometres every day. E-cargo bikes, therefore, have an important role to play.

5 **B Scout your route**

To find out what cargo ebike is right for you, Fishman suggests looking at the type of trips you take each week that are between 2 and 6 kilometres. Then, find routes you could safely ride. Jon Lindley, my neighbour, suggests building confidence by starting with short trips on a weekend when there's less traffic. Check if places have somewhere you can park your bike. You'll also need somewhere safe to store the bike at home.

6 **C Try before you buy**

Ebikes can be expensive, so you'll want to find the right one for you. Bikes that carry things at the front are good for transporting young kids, Fishman says, because the rider can see and talk to their little passengers easily. Fishman suggests asking a bike shop if you can test a bike for at least half an hour.

7 **D Making streets safer**

Being afraid of cycling in traffic is "the number one reason why people don't cycle", says Fishman. Creating bike-friendly paths is the cheapest, fastest and simplest way a city can make cycling safer, says Fishman. It slows traffic and helps people who don't feel comfortable on busy roads to travel by bike.

8 Lindley has carried his three kids around on a cargo ebike for more than 10 years.

9 You see the joy that the kids get out of it, the time you get to spend with them ... [and] it encourages you to use it more."

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3 Comprehension check

- a. Read the article and circle the letter of the section in the article (A, B, C or D) where you can find the following information.

Which section...

1. ... describes how using bicycles rather than cars can help the environment?

A B C D

2. ... discusses the worries that many riders experience?

A B C D

3. ... suggests ways to feel more comfortable riding a bike?

A B C D

4. ... recommends finding somewhere to keep your bike at home?

A B C D

5. ... suggests practising with an ebike to see if it's suitable for you?

A B C D

4 Key language

- a. A demonym is a word that describes a person who comes from a city, country, place or region, e.g. *Sydneysiders* (a person who comes from Sydney, Australia). Complete the endings for the demonyms.

-ites

-ers

-ians

Group 1:

1. Mancun_____ (Manchester, England)
2. Melburn_____ (Melbourne, Australia)
3. Paris_____ (Paris, France)
4. Boston_____ (Boston, USA)

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Group 2:

5. London_____ (London, England)
6. New York_____ (New York, USA)
7. Berlin_____ (Berlin, Germany)
8. Auckland_____ (Auckland, New Zealand)

Group 3:

9. Muscov_____ (Moscow, Russia)
10. Tokyo_____ (Tokyo, Japan)

b. Work in pairs to add any other demonyms you know with the same endings to each group.

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these questions.

- What are the good and bad points of using cargo ebikes instead of cars?
- Would cargo ebikes work in your town or city? Why or why not?

6 In your own words

a. You are going to prepare arguments for or against the following issue: 'Cars should be banned from city centres and councils should encourage people to use bikes, ebikes and public transport.'

Write a short essay for or against this statement. Include a short introduction that describes what you want to discuss. Then give your arguments for or against. Try to add examples to each argument. Finish with short conclusions.

(For) You may like to consider:

- how it benefits the environment
- how it can make health and safety better
- quality of life in city centres
- successful examples from other cities

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- why it is good for the local economy (tourism, local businesses)

(Against) You may like to consider:

- problems with access for some people (elderly, disabled, families)
- how it can make deliveries difficult
- public transport limitations
- individual freedom and choice
- costs and difficulties of doing this

b. Exchange your essay with a classmate. If you disagreed: did they convince you? If you agreed, did you use the same arguments?