

CRATEWORKS PRO XL-C (\$169)



Thanks to a corrugated plastic shell, the Crateworks Pro XL-C is the lightest box in the bunch. At 22 pounds, the box is your surest bet for not getting charged an overweight fee with the airlines. Pluses include the manageable price, the weight and the fact that the box collapses to a flat pancake when not in use—handy for storage either when on your trip or at home. The box comes with three separator plates and five pieces of foam to help keep your wheels from scratching your frame, and a series of Velcro and woven quick-release straps hold your bike down within. An Anti-Drift H-strap also helps to keep the contents of the box from shifting while in transit. Fits bikes up to 62cm. Exterior dimensions are 45.5"L x 11"W x 30"H (ships UPS Oversize 2); interior is 44.75"L x 11"W x 29.5"H. (crateworks.com)

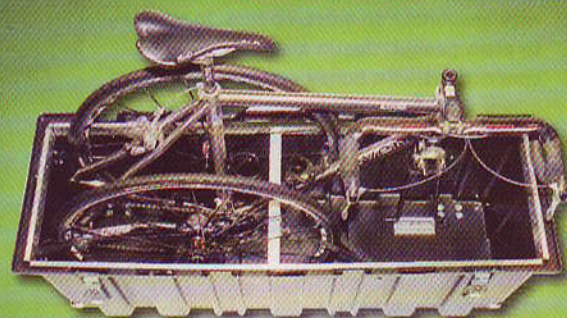
SCI-CON AERO-TECH (\$730)



Italian company Sci-Con has been making bike boxes since 1980 and its 30-pound Aero-Tech is prevalent in Europe. It's made of ABS plastic that's been thermo-molded with cutouts for a bike's frame and wheels. To pack your bike in this case, take off your wheels (but leave in the skewers/hub block; they fit into wheel slots), twist your handlebars, remove your saddle and fasten it to the frame with the Velcro strap that comes with the box. The box has foam padding and five locks in total (two of them combination) to keep the case closed and secure. Wheels and handles with an anatomical grip help in transit and fold away when not in use for easy storage. Fits any size frame. External dimensions are 48"L x 41"W x 15"H (ships UPS Oversize 3); interior is 44.5" x 37"W x 14"H. (sciconbags.com)

## Bike Boxes Unpacked

TRIAL3 VELO SAFE PRO SERIES CUSTOM ROAD (\$480)



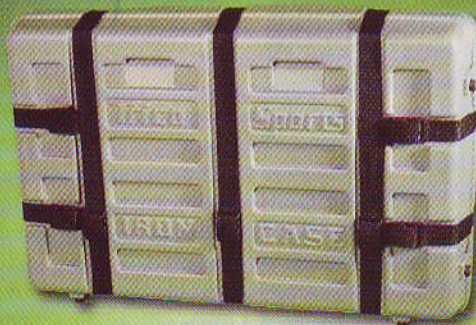
At 35 pounds and 51 inches, the Custom Road is the biggest box in the group, but size is what makes it so convenient: All you have to do is take off the wheels and turn your handlebars and you still have room inside for clothes, wetsuit, etc. Some airlines may nab you on their weight limit—50 pounds for some, 70 pounds for others—and charge you extra, but you don't have to disconnect any cables or remove stems, bars or pedals. The front fork attaches to a fork mount, the bottom bracket sits on a foam pedestal and the chain stays are secured with Velcro straps. Your bike's wheels stay put with more Velcro straps; an exterior strap and wheels are good for hauling. Fits bikes up to 60cm. Exterior dimensions are 50"L x 18"W x 32"H (ships UPS Oversize 3); interior is 47"L x 15"W x 30"H. (trial3sports.com)

PERFORMANCE XPORT CARGO CASE (\$290)



» The combination of a hard shell and compact design is a plus for transporting while traveling, and the case is easier to fit in a cab or rental car than a bigger box; the downside is it requires more bike disassembly. Fitting your bike means removing the wheels, loosening and twisting the handlebars (or removing them) and removing the seat post/saddle. But once it's in, your bike's well-protected by a durable polyethylene exterior, a 1.5-inch foam pad and four steel tie-down points. The box closes with four industrial-strength clasps that can be locked with standard padlocks (not included) and a reinforced four-strap retention system. A built-in handle and wheels help with transport. At 30 pounds, the box fits bikes up to 61cm. Exterior dimensions are 47.5"L x 31.5" W x 11.5"H (ships UPS Oversize 3); interior is 47.5"L x 30.5"W x 10.5"H. (performancebike.com)

TRICO IRON CASE (\$310)



» This 31-pound hard case, made of triconium plastic, comes with three layers of plush foam and heavy-duty straps to protect your bike against the rigors of traveling. Depending on the size of your bike's frame, you may only have to remove wheels and twist the handlebars to make the thing fit. Larger bikes may require you to remove the handlebars, pedals and seat-post/saddle. (Be sure to mark or take note of its position before removing.) Layers of foam separate your wheels from your frame to avoid scratches, and there is some room left for clothes, shoes and a helmet. A pull strap, hand grips molded into the plastic and wheels help with airport maneuvering. Fits bikes up to 68cm. Exterior dimensions are 47"L x 10.5"W x 30.5"H (ships UPS Oversize 3); interior is 46.75"L x 10.25"W x 30.25"H. (tricosports.com)