eBike Buyers Guide

Your Guide to the Perfect Ride

GAZELLE

Love to Move Life

Gazelle loves to move generations, since 1892. With designs that inspire movement on every journey, big or small. We're here to help you find comfort in motion and joy in every moment of life.

“I bought a Gazelle ebike from my local bike shop and it is a joy. I gave up biking due to spinal issues and after traveling in Europe and seeing so many ebikes, I had to get on board. I tried several brands and styles and couldn't be happier with my Gazelle. My ebike feels zippy, light, and all-around fun. It makes me happy to run errands and is the cutest bike ever!”

Betsy L.

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1. What type of ebike do I want?
2. What features do I need?
3. How much do I want to spend?
4. Where do I want to buy?

“It has given me an extra 10 years or more of enjoying riding bikes!”

Ria P.

Choosing an ebike is an exciting step toward freedom, convenience, and fun. Do a web search for “electric bike” and you’ll receive a huge range of results and an equally extensive range of prices.

What is the difference between a $799 ebike online and a $3799 ebike at my local bike shop? How much should you have to pay to expect a certain level of comfort, power, performance, range, and product lifetime? With so many options on the market, it’s common to get tempted by lower-priced ebikes, but is cheaper really better?

This guide aims to help you understand the key differences between various ebike options, so you can make an informed decision that best suits your needs and preferences.

eBike Classification

In the United States, electric bicycles are classified by their top speed and by pedal or throttle assistance:

Class 1

Provide motor support only when you pedal, and can reach up to 20 mph.

Class 2

Include throttle assistance and can also go up to 20 mph.

Class 3

Pedal-assist with a top speed of 28 mph. They generally have higher capacity batteries and more powerful motors, making them suitable for longer rides and tougher terrain.

Class 3 ebikes are often more expensive and heavily regulated. New ebike legislation is now being implemented, mainly affecting Class 2 ebikes.

Regulations do vary by location, so it is important to know the specific rules where you live. Generally, these new regulations include requirements on where you can ride, minimum age of the rider, maximum speeds, equipment usage (like helmets), licensing, and insurance. In most of the US, riders must be at least 18 years old and wear a helmet.

Learn more

	1	2	3
Pedal Assist	✓	✓	✓
Throttle	✗	✓	✗
Max Assisted Speed	20 MPH	20 MPH	28 MPH

Motors and Motor Placement

eBike motors can be placed on the rear or front wheel (hub drive motors), or mounted in the middle of the frame (mid drive motors). There are pros and cons to both types of placement in terms of price, efficiency, comfort, and control. Here's an overview:

Feature	Hub Drive	Mid Drive
Power Delivery	✗ Direct to the wheel, feels more mechanical	✓ Feels natural and balanced, uses gears for efficient power transfer
Climbing Performance	✗ Struggles on steep or extended inclines, limited torque	✓ Excels on inclines, because the motor senses it needs to support with more power
Weight Distribution	✗ Heavier rear or front wheel based on motor placement affects balance of bike	✓ Low, central placement improves balance and handling
Battery Efficiency	✗ Drains faster due to less efficient power use	✓ Optimized for longer range with efficient power output
Maintenance	✓ Easier to maintain due to fewer moving parts	✗ Requires more care due to integration with drivetrain
Price	✓ Lower than $2500	✗ More than $2500
Durability	✗ More wear on rear/front hub and components	✓ Extremely durable, built for long-term use and performance
Noise Level	✗ Generally quiet, but loud under load and at the highest support levels	✓ Typically silent at lower power settings, and minimal noise at high support levels

Assistance Types

Pedal-assist requires the rider to pedal to activate the motor assistance. The motor provides support only when you are actively pedaling. These ebikes are often equipped with mid drive motors.

Throttle-assist ebikes have a mechanism that propels the ebike without any pedaling effort from the rider, activated by pushing or twisting the throttle. These ebikes typically feature hub drive motors. Throttle-assists are primarily used for extra help or quick acceleration. They can also be used for extended cruising, but this will drain the battery more quickly.

Which assistance type is right for you? The best way to answer that question is with some test rides, however here are some key things to keep in mind:

Benefits of Pedal-Assist versus Throttle-Assist

Higher Quality: Throttle-assist ebikes often use hub drive motors, which are generally of lower quality compared to the mid drive motors found in pedal-assist ebikes. Mid drive systems offer better performance and durability and have less wear and tear on the components.

Extended Range
Longer battery life and superior range due to rider contribution. Lighter weight enhances battery efficiency.

Health and Exercise
Provides moderate to intense exercise, improving cardiovascular health, muscle strength, core engagement, and overall fitness.

Enhanced Safety
Smoother, more predictable riding experience. Keeps you engaged, in control, and ready to respond to changes in your environment.

Legal & Regulatory
Fewer restrictions and often classified as bicycles, allowing use on bike paths and in areas with stricter regulations on throttle-assist ebikes.

Improved Comfort
Pedal-assist ebikes provide a more natural riding experience, enhancing overall comfort. The even distribution of power makes rides smoother and reduces fatigue, allowing for longer and more enjoyable cycling.

Batteries

There are many key considerations related to batteries that can help make the ebike purchase that is right for you.

Battery Capacity: The battery's capacity directly correlates to the length of the ride you can expect, determining the distance you can travel on a single charge. Measured in watt-hours (Wh), most ebike batteries range from 400 Wh - 800 Wh.

Maximize Your Range: Many factors affect an ebike's range, including the bike's weight, rider and cargo weight, motor type and placement, gear choices, terrain, and temperature.

Safety First: Ride comfort and ensure your ebike battery is built with top safety standards. Certified systems like Bosch, tested by independent labs such as Intertek, meet UL 2849 and UL 2271 safety standards to minimize risks. eBike battery regulations are increasing due to safety and fire concerns, largely related to batteries that are not certified.

Battery Placement Types

Rack-Mounted Battery
- least expensive
- can affect the bike's balance and rear rack capacity

Frame-Mounted Battery
- more affordable
- offers a lower center of gravity and does not limit weight capacity on a rear rack
- less aesthetically pleasing

Frame-Integrated Battery
- typically the most expensive option
- offers the sleekest look and best weight distribution

eBike Key Features

Components

The components on an ebike significantly impact the ride experience, durability, and cost. The components make up the typical “bike” portions of an ebike, making it essential to prioritize their quality. Opting for high-caliber, non-proprietary components ensures better performance, endurance, and ease of maintenance and repair.

Frame

The foundation of the bike, affecting stability, comfort, and longevity. Most frames are made from strong, durable aluminum. Look for high-quality welds, as each weld is a potential weak point. Smooth joins indicate better craftsmanship.

Wheels and Tires

What keeps you rolling! Smaller wheels provide stability and comfort for riders of smaller stature but are less efficient. Wider tires offer more comfort but increase rolling resistance, also reducing efficiency. Make your selection based on your need for traction versus efficiency.

Brakes

Brakes are critical for safety on an ebike, where effective stopping is just as important as forward motion, especially with the extra weight. Rim brakes offer simplicity and affordability, but tend to underperform in wet conditions. In contrast, disc brakes — especially hydraulic ones — provide reliable stopping power in any weather, though they come with higher costs and greater maintenance requirements.

eBike Key Features

Shifting System

There are two shifting options: an internal (enclosed) hub, or an external derailleur. An internal hub is protected, and therefore requires less maintenance, however this system is generally a bit heavier, adding more overall weight to the bike. An external derailleur offers a more lightweight and traditional approach to shifting, which may appeal to experienced riders.

A shifting system is controlled by either a chain or belt drive. Chains are less expensive, but require more maintenance and regular lubrication over a belt drive and generally wear out more quickly. Belt-driven systems are great options for more casual riders who don't want to worry about excessive cleaning or maintenance and who enjoy a more relaxed shifting and ride experience.

Handlebars

are the essential steering component. The height and angle of the handlebars have a significant impact on the ride experience. More upright, angled-back handlebars provide a more comfortable and relaxed albeit less aerodynamic ride, whereas a flatter, lower bar set up will give a more aggressive, sporty, and efficient feel.

Suspension

is frequently used on bikes to smooth imperfect road surfaces and provide additional comfort to the rider. Suspension is commonly integrated into the fork over the front wheel and/or underneath the saddle.

Accessories

In addition to an ebike's core components, small parts or accessories can have a big impact on rider safety and comfort. When shopping for an ebike, take note of what accessories are included with the bike versus what needs to be purchased separately, as this will increase the total cost of your bike.

Key things to look for: lighting, lock, rack, kickstand, fenders, and chain or belt guard.

What Does an eBike Cost?

Several factors contribute to the overall cost of an ebike. It is important to take into account the total cost of ownership including the purchase price as well as the service and maintenance costs over the years when determining your budget.

Purchase Price
The initial cost of buying an ebike including accessories.

Warranty
Coverage details and which parts are covered for how long.

Service & Maintenance
High-quality ebikes with name-brand parts have significantly fewer service and maintenance costs due to the durability and longevity of the parts.

Utility Charges
Plugging in to charge an ebike typically costs about $0.05 - $0.20 per charge, depending on local energy rates and charger amperes.

How Much to Spend
There is a huge range of pricing when it comes to ebikes. Here's what you can generally expect at every price point:

Feature	Below $1K	$1K - $2K	$2K - $3K	Above $3K
Display	✗	Basic	Standard	Advanced & Connected
Motor	Hub Drive	Hub Drive	Mid Drive	Advanced & Connected
Battery Capacity	Limited	Limited	Higher	High
Battery Placement	On frame	On frame	On frame or integrated	Integrated
Suspension	✗	✗	Integrated	Integrated
Accessories	✗	✗	✓	✓
Certification	Non-certified	Non-certified	(UL) Certified	(UL) Certified
Component	Proprietary	Proprietary	Name-brand, non-proprietary	Name-brand, non-proprietary
Brakes	Mechanical	Mechanical	Hydraulic	Hydraulic
Warranty	None/Limited	Limited	Full	Full
Service	✗	✗	✓	✓

Where and How to Buy

Though buying online or from a big box retailer could initially cost less, shopping at local bike shops provides the luxury of personalized service and timely support. The decision on where to purchase an ebike depends on your budget, needs, and preference for convenience or hands-on assistance. Regardless of your choice, always take three things into consideration:

Test Ride Ability | Quality & Support Levels | Parts & Service Accessibility

Local Bike Shop Benefits

Test Ride
Essential for ensuring comfort and performance.

Quality Build
Professionally assembled for safety and optimal performance.

Immediate Support
Comfortable access to service, repairs, and warranty assistance. Personalized recommendations and adjustments.

Community and Connectedness
Bikeshops often host group rides and other events to support riders and build community.

Online Purchase Pros and Cons

Convenience and Price
May offer lower prices and home delivery, but limited ability to assess and test ride the bike before purchase.

Service Challenges
Finding local shops to repair proprietary parts can be difficult.

Assembly Issues
Self-assembly may compromise safety and/or performance if not done correctly.

Support Limitations
Typically, online purchases offer less immediate, in-person support and might require you to ship your bike for service.

Key Consideration: Brand Reputation

Why Brand Reputation Matters When Buying an Ebike

Longevity and sSability

Established brands provide reliable warranties and ongoing support. Many new brands that emerged post-COVID have already gone bankrupt, leaving customers without assistance.

Service and Repairs

Reputable brands use non-proprietary parts, available for long periods of time, making it easier to access repairs and maintenance through local bike shops. Lesser-known brands with proprietary components can lead to costly and difficult maintenance.

Quality Assurance

Trusted brands ensure high-quality components and rigorous testing for better performance, durability and safety.

Customer Support and Warranty

Established brands offer robust warranties and reliable customer service, ensuring peace of mind if issues arise.

Gazelle eBikes; Only the Best

I research everything before I buy. I spent about a year researching electric bikes. The Gazelle brand came out on top of all the other brands in my opinion. From the fit & finish, appearance, functionality, options, ruggedness, longevity of ownership, customer service and serviceability. If you want a ebike that is going to last you for the long haul, this is it. No need to look any further.

Bike Category Name Brands

Schwalbe, Gates, Shimano, Enviolo, Continental, Bosch, Tektro, Magura, Suntour, Scalato Mondano, Herrmans, Selle Royale

The World of Gazelle

History, Heritage, Facts and figures

- Established in 1892
- First production ebike made 1937
- Bikes are built in the Netherlands
- Over 250,000 ebikes produced annually
- Trusted by more than 2 million ebike riders worldwide
- 10 year warranty on frame
- The only Royal bike brand

Quality & Craftsmanship

Take a look
behind the scenes of
our factory.

Gazelle Ride Philosophy

Comfort-oriented Design

This principle is at the core of all Gazelle bikes. This is exhibited in a number of ways in our models, but the most iconic may be in our frame geometries that enable an upright riding posture. Riding in an upright position shifts weight from the wrists onto the legs and hips, reducing pressure on the neck, back, and wrists. The spine sits in a more even alignment. Even the eyeline is more relaxed as sitting upright extends the line of sight naturally, so the rider doesn't need to crane their neck as much to get a full view of the road ahead.

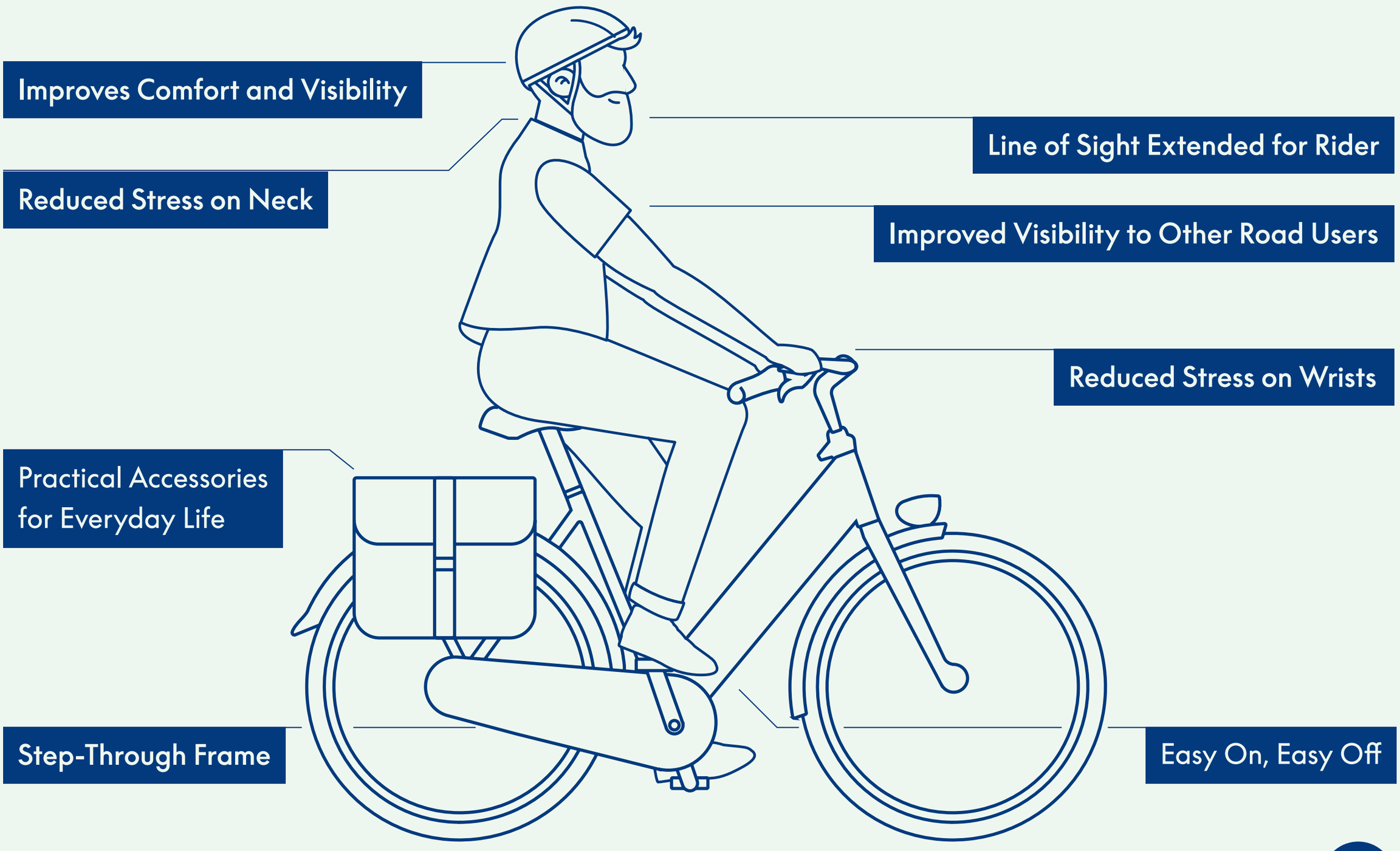
Gazelle: a eBike Built for Comfort and Durability

I've been riding a Gazelle bike for over five days now, and I can honestly say that it's the best bike I've ever owned. It's comfortable, durable, and stylish, and it's always a pleasure to ride.

I especially appreciate the Gazelle's upright riding position, which makes it so comfortable to ride for long distances. The seat is also very comfortable, and the suspension system does a great job of absorbing bumps and jolts.

Trustpilot

Why Ride Upright?



"As a longtime cyclist, I've spent years testing e-bikes from dozens of manufacturers, including the ones on this list. The best electric bikes -including our top pick, the Gazelle Eclipse T11+ -can't be beat when it comes to versatility, utility, and, of course, sheer fun."

Rob Annis, National Geographic

As Seen in

Best electric bike overall: Gazelle Eclipse T11 - National Geographic

Best long range commute ebike: Gazelle Eclipse T11+ - Esquire

Best new commuter ebike: Gazelle Medeo T9 City - Bicycling

Best high end commuter ebike: Gazelle Ultimate C380 - Time

Best commuter ebike: Gazelle Medeo T10+ - Men's Journal

Best electric bike overall: Gazelle Arroyo C8 - Popular Mechanics

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Esquire

Bicycling

MEN'S JOURNAL

TIME

POPULAR MECHANICS

Gazelle Fleet Overview

Gazelle's ebike fleet is comprised of bike families categorized using three riding styles and postures: Comfort, Active, or Sportive. Within each family, models offer different features and functions, battery capacity, motor power, and price. Here's an overview of the fleet at a glance by posture and price:

Gazelle G lossary

C represents a bike specified with an internal shifting hub. This system is often paired with a belt drive. T represents a bike specified with an external derailleur. This system is always paired with a chain drive. The number following a C or T refers to the number of gears on the bike. So **T10** means a bike with an **external derailleur and 10 gears** or speeds, whereas a **C8** refers to an **internal hub bike with 8 gears**. **380** is unique in that the 380 refers to the ratio range, not gears. This is only for our Enviolo CVT hub models.

*This indicates a newer version of the model with the Bosch Smart System.

	Comfort	Active	City
$ $ $ $		Eclipse C380+	
		Eclipse T11+	
	Avignon C380	Ultimate C380	
$ $ $ $	Arroyo C380 Elite	Ultimate T10	
	Arroyo C5 Elite	Ultimate C8	
		Ultimate C380+	
	Arroyo C8 Elite	Ultimate T10+	
			Medeo T10+
$ $ $ $	Arroyo C7 Elite		Medeo T10
	Easyflow C7		Medeo T9
			Medeo T9 City

Gazelle Positioning: Comfort

If you want a relaxed riding experience, take a look at our comfort category bikes. A super upright posture ensures great visibility and comfort. A low-step frame enables accessibility and stress-free mounting/dismounting. Suspension components and ergonomic features further enhance comfort. Comfort bikes are optimal for running errands, carrying kids or a heavier load, or simply more casual riding.

See more

Gazelle Positioning: Active

For a slightly more dynamic riding experience, ideal for commuting and longer trips, consider the models in our Active category. These bikes feature a more forward-leaning posture, a range of frame styles, a front suspension fork, comfort-oriented grips, and powerful motors, making them well-suited for more serious time in the saddle.

See more

Gazelle Positioning: City

Bikes in our City category have our most forward posture to inspire more sporty and adventurous riding. Higher gear ranges with external derailleurs complement more challenging routes. Stiffer frames offer a responsive road feel. With some Class 3 (28 mph) bikes in this mix, these bikes typically feature front suspension forks and powerful brakes.

See more

GAZELLE

Love Your Ride