

## CYCLE CARRIERS

This leaflet is prepared by The Caravan Club as part of its service to members. The contents are believed to be correct at the time of publication, but the current position may be checked with The Club's Information Office. The Club does not endorse the listed products and you should satisfy yourself as to their suitability. As always check that the installation of an after-market accessory does not invalidate your Warranty.

October 2010

For caravanners who like to explore their surroundings at a leisurely pace, cycling is an ideal hobby, but what is the best way to transport the cycles?

Traditional roof rack mounting is now being steadily replaced by carriers mounted on the back of the car, directly or via a towing bracket. The latter is usually accomplished by the addition of a plate between the towball and facing plate, held in place by the two original bolts or longer, stronger ones.

### The Good News

Towing bracket mounted carriers are usually quite light, in the 3 to 5kg range for the caravan alone, and by tucking in behind the car do not appreciably increase wind resistance or raise the car's centre of gravity.

### The Bad News

If towing, the weight of two (or more) cycles carried via the towbar adds a not insignificant sum to the caravan noseweight supported by the rear of the car and the towing bracket. For example, a typical caravan noseweight of 75kg plus two cycles and carrier at, say, 35kg gives a total of 110kg. If you intend to carry cycles and tow at the same time, ask yourself three questions:

Is this within the car manufacturer's permitted noseweight figure (probably not, unless it is a 4x4)?

Is this within the maximum plated weight of the towing bracket?

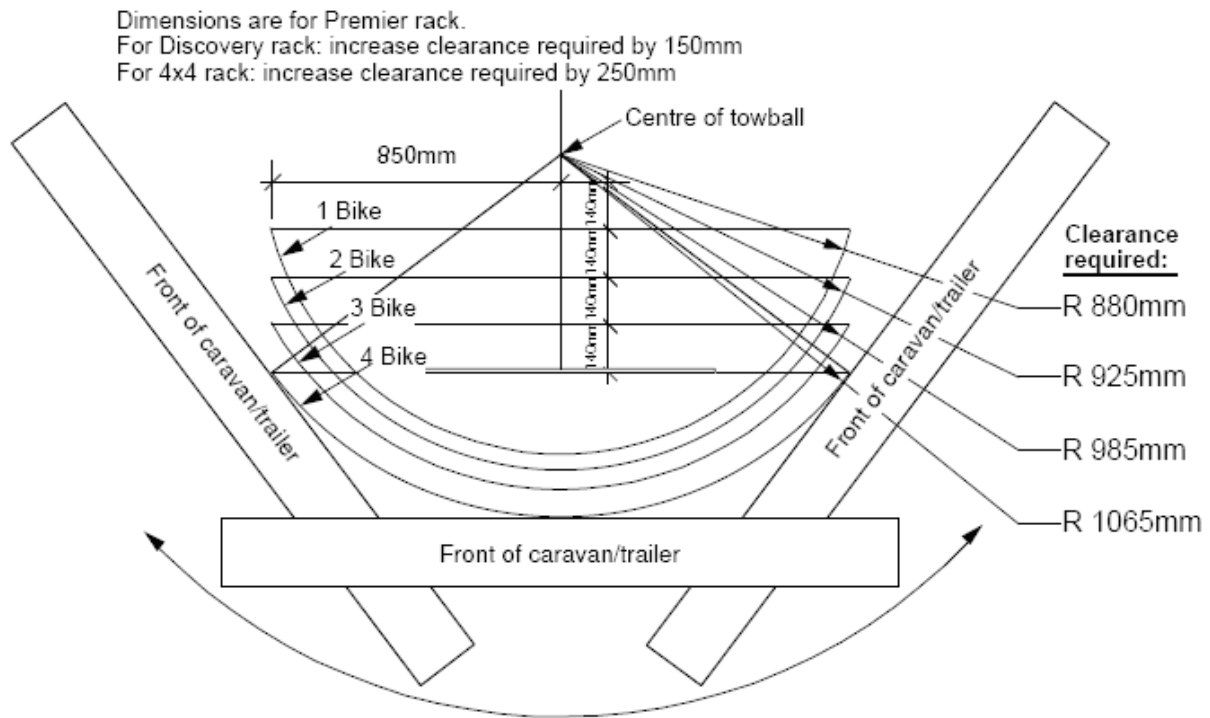
Is there enough clearance for the cycles in relation to the caravan hitch?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'no', then an alternative arrangement should be found. It is not advisable to reduce the caravan noseweight to compensate, as this may create instability (an ideal caravan noseweight is generally around 7% of its actual laden weight).

If you have an S Plate (from 1 August 1998) or later car you must by law have an EC 94/20 Directive type approved towing bracket fitted. Be cautious of fitting a cycle carrier to the bracket if this is the case, as you may invalidate the type approval of the towing bracket, particularly if used in combination with other accessories, e.g. a stabiliser. It is therefore most important that you seek advice from the towing bracket manufacturer before fitting any accessory of this nature which results in the towball being offset from its normal position. A combination cycle carrier/stabiliser bracket may help avoid this.

If you have any of the above problems, it may be necessary to consider a roof mounted cycle carrier, or a boot or tail gate mounted model.

Bear in mind there must be sufficient room between the cycles and caravan to allow turning. An example from MAXXRAXX shows the clearance required for turning;



The MAXXRAXX tow and carry measurement chart is meant as a guide only, due to the great range of variables in vehicles, tow bars, and caravans. Each individual circumstance should be investigated thoroughly.

## The Law

Requires your number plate and rear lights to be clearly visible. Therefore, when solo, in practically every case a lighting board will be required, which plugs into your 12N roadlight socket. (note that reflective red triangles are only for use on a trailer, so your board should not have these, but it still needs reflectors). Please see back page for a list of lighting board manufacturers.



Lighting board available from MAXXRAXX.

## Motor Caravans

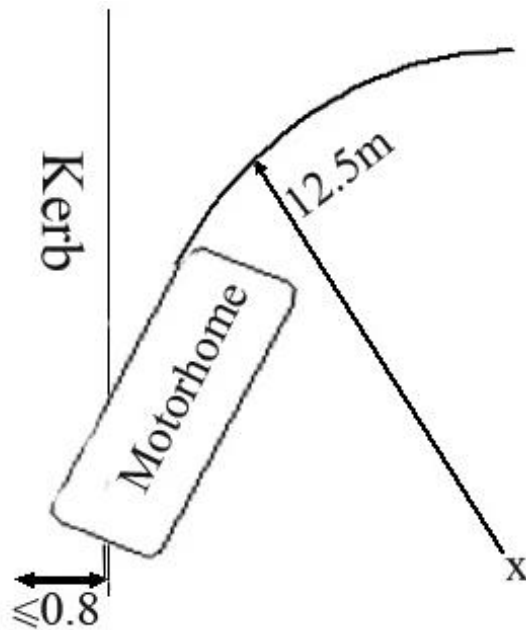
For motor caravan owners, quite a number of racks are available for carrying cycles on the back. If fixing to a coachbuilt body, ensure the rack securing bolts will be driven into a solid framework, and not just the sandwich panel – or make sure that a suitable load-spreading plate is used inside the body.

## Wheelbase and Rear Overhang

The wheelbase is the distance between the centre of the front wheel to the centre of the rear wheel. Rear overhang is the distance from the centre of the rear wheel to the rear of the motor caravan. *NOTE: this will also include a cycle carrier and cycles.* The maximum limit for the overhang is 60% of the wheelbase, or alternatively the maximum distance the rear of the vehicle may swing out when pulling away from a stationary position on a 12.5m radius is 0.8m.



## Wheelbase and Rear Overhang\*



\* Please note this is not to scale

### Caravans

While it is technically feasible on some models to mount a cycle carrier on the back of the caravan, this is not recommended, as weight mounted this far back on a caravan is more likely to adversely affect stability than weight carried further forward.

### Abroad

For most EU countries you need to ensure that your number plate, lights and indicators are not obscured and your cycle rack is in good condition, fixed securely and fit for purpose.

Spain and Italy have an extra requirement to display a red and white marker board if you have an overhanging load such as a cycle/motorcycle rack. Marker boards are manufactured by Fiamma ([www.fiamma.com](http://www.fiamma.com)) in plastic and aluminium, and are available from caravan dealers or accessory shops. In Spain you can use either, but in Italy the marker board must be aluminium. In any event, the use of a marker board indicating an overhanging load is a sensible option in any country.

Portugal has a rule that overhanging loads must not protrude beyond the width of a vehicle, so in practical terms this means that cycles can only be carried on the back of a caravan or motorhome – they cannot be carried at the rear of a car. If you wish to carry cycles on a car, they must be carried on the roof, providing the combined height is not over 4m.

For more detailed information on a particular country please see our Caravan Europe Sites Guide & Touring Handbook available from the Club's website [www.caravanclub.co.uk/caravaneurope](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk/caravaneurope) or call 01342 327410.

MANUFACTURER	MODEL	FIXING	N° Cycles	PRICE(£) Approx	SUITABLE FOR
Easylifter Systems Ltd 01509 268400 <a href="http://www.easylifter.co.uk">www.easylifter.co.uk</a>	Easy Lifter Non Lift system	Towbar mounted		365.00 plus VAT	Car, Motor Caravan
	Hydraulic Scooter and Bike Rack	Towbar mounted		575.00 plus VAT	Car, Motor Caravan
	Hydra Trail	Towbar mounted		895.00 inc VAT	Car, Motor Caravan
Fiamma <a href="http://www.fiamma.com">www.fiamma.com</a>	Wide selection of Carry – Bike products		2-4		Car, Caravan, Motor Caravan
Griston Engineering 01953 881845 <a href="http://www.carabike.com">www.carabike.com</a>	Carabike Stand	Free standing	2	38.95	Car, Caravan Motor Caravan
Halfords 08457 626625 <a href="http://www.halfords.com">www.halfords.com</a>	Halfords High Mounted Cycle Carrier	Rear Mounted	3	99.99	Car, Motor Caravan
	Halfords 2 Roof Mount	Roof Mounted	2	79.99	Car
MAXXRAXX Ltd 0845 2303 744 <a href="http://www.maxxraxx.co.uk">www.maxxraxx.co.uk</a>	Fixed Towball carriers;				
	Premier	Towbar Mounted	2-5	127.00 - 177.00	Car
	4X4		2-5	150.00 - 200.00 140.00 - 190.00	Car
	Discovery		2-5		Car
	SwanNeck towball carriers;				
	Premier	Towbar Mounted	2-5	207.00 - 257.00	Car
4X4	2-5		230.00 - 280.00 220.00 - 270.00	Car	
Discovery	2-5			Car	

MANUFACTURER	MODEL	FIXING	N° Cycles	PRICE (£) Approx	SUITABLE FOR
Maypole Ltd 0121 423 3011 <a href="http://www.maypole.ltd.uk">www.maypole.ltd.uk</a>	Three Cycle Carrier	Rear Mounted	3	49.99	Car, Motor Caravan
Montblanc UK 01525 850800 <a href="http://www.montblancuk.co.uk">www.montblancuk.co.uk</a>	Wide selection of carriers – contact manufacturer	Rear Mounted, Roof Mounted, Towball Mounted	1-3		Car, Motor Caravan
Pendle Engineering Ltd 01282 699555 <a href="http://www.pendle-bike.co.uk">www.pendle-bike.co.uk</a>	Wide selection of carriers – contact manufacturer	Behind towball mounted, Towball and Roof mounted	2-4		Car, Motor Caravan, Caravan
PWS 01202 746851 <a href="http://www.pwsacc.co.uk">www.pwsacc.co.uk</a>	Selection of chassis mounted carriers for Motor Caravans – contact manufacturer	Bolts onto Chassis			Motor Caravan
Pyramid Products 01623 754567 <a href="http://www.pyramid-products.co.uk">www.pyramid-products.co.uk</a>	Cycle Porter	Towball Mounted	2-3	39.95	Car
Thule 01275 340404 <a href="http://www.thule.co.uk">www.thule.co.uk</a>	ProRide	Roof Mounting	1	95.00	Car
	FreeRide		1	52.00	Car
	EuroPower	Towball Mounted	2	345.00	Car
	EuroRide		2-3	250.00 - 310.00	Car

MANUFACTURER	MODEL	FIXING	N° Cycles	PRICE (£) Approx	SUITABLE FOR
Thule 01275 340404 <a href="http://www.thule.co.uk">www.thule.co.uk</a>	ClipOn High	Rear Mounted	2	126.00	Car
	FreeWay		3	65.00	Car
Towsure Products Ltd 0114 250 3000 <a href="http://www.towsure.co.uk">www.towsure.co.uk</a>	Wide selection of carriers – contact manufacturer	Roof Mounted, Tow ball Mounted			Car, Caravan, Motor Caravan
Westfalia UK Ltd 01785 226888 <a href="http://www.westfalia-portilo.com">www.westfalia-portilo.com</a>	Portilio	Towball Mounted	2-3	316.91	Car, Motor Caravan
Witter Towbars 01244 284500 <a href="http://www.witter-towbars.co.uk">www.witter-towbars.co.uk</a>	Cycle Carrier	Towball Mounted	3-4	85.78	Car
	Cycle Carrier More carriers available – vehicle specific		3	95.76	Car
Zyro Ltd <a href="http://www.zyro.co.uk">www.zyro.co.uk</a> (trade only)	Minoura Vergo Excel	Floor Mounted	2	99.99	Caravan, Motor Caravan
	Minoura Vergo Excel Single	Floor Mounted	1	59.99	

## **LIGHTING BOARDS**

MANUFACTURER	MODEL	PRICE (£) Approx
Halfords	Halfords Cycle Carrier Lighting Board	19.99
Maypole	Wide selection of lighting boards – contact manufacturer	
Pendle Engineering Ltd	Tubular Lighting Unit	39.50
	Budget Lighting Unit	16.00
Thule	Lightboard 976	
Towsure	3ft Trailer Lighting Board	13.25
Witter Towbars	Lighting Board and fitting kit	45.83