

# Road Bike Vs. Commuter Bikes - 7 Key Differences

Despite the similarities that all bikes have, there are some differences between **road bikes versus commuter bikes** that make them stand out in their league.

Buying your first bike can be a dilemma if you're unsure what the differences are and which of the two you should get.

If this is a problem you're facing, fret not; I'm here to help!

In this article, I will discuss the differences between **road bikes versus city bikes** (as they call them these days), the features that make them stand out, and more importantly, what to look out for when you're looking to get your own.

Road bikes are built with speed and are often used for racing. They're also beneficial if you need to ride long distances or if you need to head to a location quicker than you usually would (like work!).

On the other hand, commuter bikes are tailored more to comfort with wider saddles, making them perfect for long rides. They are best used to commute in the city and as a fitness tool and for casual rides in the park.

Now that we know the primary purpose of **commuter bikes versus road bikes**, it's time to explore their differences!

## Best Road Bikes

- [Canyon Ultimate CF SL8 Disc Aero](#)
- [Boardman SLR 8.9](#)
- [Van Rysel EDR CF Ultegra Disc](#)
- [Canyon Aeroad CFR](#)
- [Cannondale Synapse 1](#)

## Best Commuter Bikes

- [Brompton C Line Explore](#)
- [Vitus Mach 3 VRS](#)
- [Tern GSD S10](#)
- [Specialized Sirrus X 3.0](#)
- [Kona Dew Deluxe Urban Bike](#)

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## 7 Differences Between Road Bikes Vs. Commuter Bikes

No.	Road Bikes	Commuter Bikes
1	Drop Handlebars	Straight and flat handlebars
2	No suspension	Comes with suspension
3	Lightweight	Wider and more comfortable
4	Aerodynamic	Upright sitting position
5	Fast	Speed is not the main priority
6	Large wheels	Heavy and wide tires
7	Not suitable for heavy loading	Suitable for heavy loading

### Road Bikes

Road bikes are designed with speed and built to thrust you forward with every pedal stroke that you take.

They are typically very lightweight and have up to **27** gears to tackle any kind of incline or decline.

The goal with each road bike is to push you to the farthest distance efficiently.

The wheels are narrow and usually have less tread to improve speed, whereas the curved handlebars are designed to keep you leaning forward and enhance your aerodynamics to help you go faster.

Due to their construction, road bikes are not capable of taking on heavy loads as it will reduce the efficiency of the bike and slow you down.

## **Commuter Bikes**

A commuter bike on the other hand, is designed to last a long time for comfort - perfect for daily commutes or just for riding around town.

The handlebars are straight, and their saddles are wider, helping you stay upright and comfortable for long hours.

Commuter bikes are not built to be taken on rugged trails or uneven roads. They're constructed ergonomically - meant for taking you wherever you want to go comfortably and safely.

These bikes typically use a suspension system, instead of a fork and frame to dampen the bumps and vibrations when you ride your bike.

Compared to road bikes, commuter bikes are more flexible and can take on heavy loads without compromising your comfort on your rides. This is perfect for commuting in town or getting groceries - without having to compromise comfort!

## **How To Choose The Right Bike For You?**

Think about why you wanted the bike in the first place. You need to consider where you live and the core qualities of a bike that are important to you when choosing a **commuter bike versus city bike**.

Road bikes can cover longer distances fast on the way to work, but this does not need to be your goal.

A road bike is also great for those more serious about including fitness/endurance training in their routine whether it's a fast commute, conditioning workout, or even just for a break. All these are great reasons to get a road bike for yourself.

If you find yourself drawn toward bikes that are a little cheaper and a little more comfortable, a commuter bike might be the one for you. There are different types of bikes in this category to suit every kind of commuter.

Commuter bikes are meant to do precisely that: commuting. There is no expectation that you will be exercising, but biking is all about exercise; it is just a question of degrees and the intensity you choose to use it for.

For many people who live in cities, cycling is just as much of a financial decision as everything else so the lower costs may be a good enough reason to get a bike.

Some **cheap commuter bikes** are meant for working people but also for people conscious of their economic priorities and surroundings.

The terrain is a significant factor, too, as routes to work or school may be very different. Living somewhere with more outdoor conditions may help you gravitate more towards the hybrid due to its receptiveness to rugged terrain.

# Advantages and Disadvantages Of A Road Bike

## Advantages Of A Road Bike

- Lightweight
- More aerodynamic
- Offers multiple hand positions
- Better suited for climbing hills
- Very energy efficient
- Requires maintenance less frequently
- Offers great speed
- A classic and iconic look
- Can pass narrow gaps more easily
- Great for exercising
- More accessible
- Can cover more distance

## Disadvantages Of A Road Bike

- Limited to riding on paved roads and solid surfaces
- Offers less traction
- Less durable
- Rougher rides
- More expensive
- Less comfortable ride position
- Less versatile
- Harder to maneuver
- Potentially more dangerous

- It can be challenging to get certain bicycle parts
- Technical skills can be harder to learn
- Not ideal for beginners and kids
- Limited maximum tire width

## **Advantages and Disadvantages Of A Commuter Bike**

### **Advantages Of A Commuter Bike**

- Comfortable
- Lasts long
- Have wider saddles
- Straight handlebars help maintain correct posture
- Ergonomic
- Safe and easy to handle
- Uses suspension to soften bumps
- Wider tires
- Great for beginners
- Great for commuting
- Can take on heavy loads
- Suitable for long ride hours

### **Disadvantages Of A Commuter Bike**

- Not built for speed
- Better suited to city riding

- Heavy tires
- It can be pretty bulky
- Heavy
- Not suitable for off-road cycling
- Multi-purpose

## 5 Best Road Bikes

### 1. [Canyon Ultimate CF SL8 Disc Aero](#)

#### Specifications:

**Frame:** CF SL Disc carbon

**Groupset:** Shimano Ultegra Di2 12-speed w/ 4iiii power meter

**Brakes:** Hydraulic disc

**Weight:** 7.3 kg

**Sizes:** 2XS - 2XL

#### Why I like this road bike:

- It comes with aero wheels
- 12-speed shifting
- Great specs

#### Why I didn't:

- Direct sale so you won't be able to try before you buy

Fitted with Shimano's latest **12-speed** Ultegra Di2 groupset, [Ultimate](#) is a great versatile, light-performance Canyon bike. The bike's frame is aerodynamic but not as all-out aero as Canyon's Aeroad.

The riding position is tuned to provide comfort throughout the day during longer rides, yet it is still aggressive enough to be used for races by WorldTour pros.

Canyon bikes typically come with excellent specifications for the price.

Some of the highlights here include Canyons integrated carbon-fiber [CP10 Aerocockpit CF bars](#) and stem for stability, and the Selle Italia SLR Boost Superflow S saddle for maximum comfort.

This specification is also equipped with DT Swiss ARC 1400 Dicut DB 50mm deep aero wheels, along with Continental Grand Prix 5000 **28mm** tires.

Again, these high-end options often exceed what you would typically find on road bikes at this price range.

## 2. [Boardman SLR 8.9](#)

### **Specifications:**

**Frame:** C7 Carbon

**Groupset:** Shimano 105 mechanical

**Brakes:** Rim

**Weight:** 8.9kg

**Sizes:** SM - XL

### Why I like this road bike:

- It comes with aero tube profiles
- Carbon frameset

### Why I didn't:

- Only available in the UK
- You can only use rim brakes

At a price point where alloy frames and Shimano Tiagra are the norm, [Boardman](#) has somehow managed to get you a carbon frame, complete with Shimano **105**, which is quite a steal.

Although it is a rim-brake version, you can switch the calipers to Tektro instead of the disc.

The frame also comes in aero tube profiles that helps you glide with the wind, and features like dropped seat stays and an offset seat post clamp for stable seating on your bike - making it one of the **best value road bikes** you can find.

Boardman also gives you tubeless-ready wheels, though you will have to switch out your **25mm** tires for that benefit, but it also allows you to run **28mm** rubber simultaneously, taking advantage of frame clearance.

### **3. Van Rysel EDR CF Ultegra Disc**

#### **Specifications:**

**Frame:** EDR carbon

**Groupset:** Shimano Ultegra 11-speed

**Brakes:** Hydraulic disc

**Weight:** 7.7kg

**Sizes:** XS-XL

#### **Why we like this road bike:**

- Good specs
- Fulcrum alloy wheelset
- Comes with full Ultegra hydraulic groupset

#### **Why we didn't:**

- Low availability

As with all of Decathlon's bikes, you get the high specification for the price as well, with the mechanical Shimano Ultegra R8000 groupset featuring **52/36t** intermediate chainsets and **11-28t** cassettes.

At a claimed weight of **7.7kg**, this is a light bike that doesn't break the bank.

This bike comes with in-series Ultegra hydro disc brakes, a Deda cockpit, and a Fizik Antares saddle to match the quality specification for a comfy and sturdy ride.

In addition to this, the [EDR CF](#) also comes equipped with quality Fulcrum Racing 3 DB alloy wheels and the Hutchinson Fusion 5 **25mm**, tubeless tires for smooth riding on various types of surfaces.

#### 4. [Canyon Aeroad CFR](#)

##### **Specifications:**

**Frame:** Aeroad CFR Disc

**Groupset:** SRAM Red eTap AXS 12-speed

**Brakes:** Hydraulic disc

**Weight:** 7.3kg

**Sizes:** 2XS - 2XL

##### **Why we like this road bike:**

- Comfortable
- The width can be adjusted on bars
- Lightweight

##### **Why we didn't:**

- A little jittery on roads

The frame build of the [Canyon Aeroad](#) includes Toray M40X carbon fiber, ensuring a stiff, light construction, but this bike is surprisingly comfortable despite that.

It is also reasonably priced for a professional-level bike, so if you're looking for quality at an affordable price, this is the bike for you!

There is an array of Canyon-specific parts, including the adjustable-width CP0018 Aerocockpit, which lets you change the width of your bars by **20mm** and height by **15mm**, without any cutting required.

It is also convenient for touring since you can take the bar apart.

The wheels are DT Swiss ARC **1100** Dicut and are fitted with a Continental Grand Prix 5000 TL **25mm** front tire and a **28mm** at the back for excellent cushioning and comfort on this road bike.

## 5. [Cannondale Synapse 1](#)

### **Specifications:**

**Frame:** Smart Form C2 Alloy

**Groupset:** Shimano Tiagra 10-speed

**Brakes:** Hydraulic disc

**Weight:** N/A

**Sizes:** 48 - 61cm

### **Why we like this road bike:**

- Alloy frame for smooth riding
- Shimano Tiagra groupset
- Carbon fork

### **Why we didn't:**

- Wheels need to be upgraded.

Cannondale brings their aluminum experience to [Synapse](#) by including the SAVE micro-suspension in the bike's chainstays to dampen vibrations and their lightweight full-carbon fork to provide a comfortable experience on longer rides.

The Synapse **1** is equipped with a Shimano Tiagra **10**-speed groupset, and it has FSA Omega ME **50/34** chainset and an **11-34**-tooth cassette that will get the job done on hill climbs.

It comes complete with hydraulic disc brakes in various sizes, ensuring constant stopping power regardless of conditions.

## 5 Best Commuter Bikes

### 1. [Brompton C Line Explore](#)

#### **Specifications:**

**Gears:** 1 x 6

**Weight:** 14.5 kg

**Sizes:** One size fits all

#### **Why we like this commuter bike:**

- Compact when folded

- Lightweight
- Has vibration dampening qualities
- Removable battery

#### **Why we didn't:**

- No standard luggage rack
- The front-wheel drive system can be hard to control

[Brompton bikes](#) were the gold standard of folding bikes for a long time. Their reputation for reliability, handling, and just how compact they are once folded is unmatched.

This electric version takes everything we know and love about these quaint little bikes, adds a 250-watt motor powered by the front hub and wheels, and comes with a removable 300-watt battery.

Even at the claimed lower weight of 14.5kg, the range does not suffer. Depending on how you drive and which level of assistance is selected, you can expect to go up to 80km. When not riding, the battery is easily carried in an included pouch and even has USB charging for phones and tablets when moving from riding to transporting and back.

## **2. [Vitus Mach 3 VRS](#)**

#### **Specifications:**

**Gears:** 2 x 9

**Weight:** 11.24 kg

**Sizes:** XS - XXL

**Why we like this commuter bike:**

- 6061 alloy frame
- Good handling
- Decent weight
- Shimano Sora groupset

**Why we didn't:**

- Slightly unconventional look

The [Mach 3 VRS](#) has dropped chainstays and rolls on a set of Vee G-Sport **38mm** slick wall tires, resulting in a comfortable ride, even over open roads.

The **6061** aluminum ATC frame is also highly hydroformed, which allows for smooth handling and efficient pedaling.

There is internal cable routing, which means the cables are located inside the bicycle casing, in addition to a ton of mounting points for mudguards, racks, and water bottles.

That emphasis on efficient pedaling continues to pay dividends, even with the full array of mounting points being taken advantage of on this commuter bike.

### 3. [Tern GSD S10](#)

**Specifications:**

**Gears:** 1 x 10

**Weight:** 27.06 kg

**Sizes:** One size

**Why we like this commuter bike:**

- Four-piston brakes
- Folded handlebar
- **200kg** load capacity
- Bosch cargo Line motor

**Why we didn't:**

- Slightly heavy
- It comes in one size only

While Tern is known more for its folding bikes, the [GSD S10](#) does not fold flat. Instead, the bars fold down, making it slightly smaller to store.

It also uses the Bosch Cargo Line motor, which has **400** percent assisted power, which turns it into a pedal-assist pickup to assist with more efficient cadence.

With a maximum load of **200kg**, the aluminum-framed, low-slung chassis can carry kids, groceries, cases of beer, and anything else you might need, all without compromising stability.

The included 400Wh battery is said to provide a **50-110km** range depending on how much you are carrying, and it is possible to upgrade it to a **900Wh** pack for more coverage.

This bike will get you rolling on **20**-inch wheels, with a frame that uses chunky tubes and increased hub spacing.

Between a Shimano Deore **1x10** drivetrain and **85Nm** of torque offered by a Bosch drivetrain, you should be able to get the GSD over just about any hill despite being fully loaded.

#### 4. [Specialized Sirrus X 3.0](#)

##### **Specifications:**

**Gears:** 1 x 9

**Weight:** 11.4 kg

**Sizes:** XXS - XL

##### **Why we like this commuter bike:**

- Hydraulic disc brakes
- Gravel-capable - 700x42mm tires
- Aluminum frame

##### **Why we didn't:**

- Frames are not stiff
- Clunky gear shifts

Built from custom-made, top-end **A1** aluminum, the [Sirrus X](#) is a light, capable, hybrid bike, borrowing plenty of tech from its performance-oriented family members.

Built on an upright geometry, its dropped chainstays, **27.2mm** Seatpost, and **42mm** tires are all geared to absorbing impacts.

Its body-geometry contact points are specifically designed for maximum comfort.

The Sirrus X features the **1x9** MicroShift Advent drivetrain, with a clutch-type rear derailleur that keeps the chain tight, even on the roughest road surfaces so you know you'll be safe.

With a cassette that runs **11-42t** in the back, a 40t narrow-wide chainring helps to climb any gradient and keeps the chain from falling out safely when riding your bike.

## 5. [Kona Dew Deluxe Urban Bike](#)

### **Specifications:**

**Gears:** 1 x 11

**Weight:** N/A

**Sizes:** S - XL

### **Why we like this commuter bike:**

- Comes with mudguards
- Kickstand available
- Mounts galore
- Road plus 650b wheels and tires

## Why we didn't:

- Not many options for colors

The [Kona Dew Deluxe City Bike](#) is incredibly versatile and practical for those who want to do most of their travel with two wheels.

It comes complete with mudguards, and sports WTB Horizon Comp **47mm** tires on **650b** wheels, providing comfortable, flowing rides, even over some of the more rugged roads found around towns and cities.

It comes equipped with a Shimano Deore **1x11** drivetrain, inclusive of a massive **11-51t** cassette coupled to a **38t** chainring at the front, making for some incredibly twisty gears to take you up big hills.

Hydraulic Tektro disc brakes deliver plenty of stopping power, and the **6061** aluminum frame has plenty of mounting points for racks, bottle cages, and even a bag on the top tube.

Meanwhile, at the back, you will find a kickstand, making the Kona Dew Deluxe the go-to option if you plan on loading up with groceries or have a large amount of things to haul to and from work.

## FAQ

## **Is A Road Bike OK For Commuting?**

Yes. If you're looking to travel long distances, road bikes work great as a commuter. As they are built for tarmac use, the best road bikes are meant for fast long-distance rides. It is also helpful if you have a long commute and need to cover distance fast as they can reach high speeds and cover more ground faster than a commuter bike.

## **What Is The Difference Between A Commuter And A Road Bike?**

To explain briefly, road bikes are like race cars; they're fast, but their structure can sometimes be bare. Commuter bikes, however, are like your old, reliable car; easy to use, comfortable, and don't require much maintenance but will not be able to break any race records.

## **Are Commuter Bikes Good For Long Distance?**

Even though commuter bikes were designed with comfort in mind, it does not prioritize long-distance comfort. Notably, a comfortable bike with a wider saddle may cause more chafing on a long ride compared to a road saddle which is supposedly narrower and less comfortable.

## **Can A Commuter Bike Be Used On Trails?**

Yes, but they are known as flat-bar road or [performance hybrid bikes](#). Most commuter bikes have wider tires, making them suitable for unpaved trails. They are also usually able to mount cargo racks and fenders, which warrants excellent commuter bikes.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, depending on what your preference and needs are for a bike, both are suitable for everyday use. However, keep in mind that as a beginner, learning on a road bike may be more difficult than on commuter bikes.

If speed is something you're looking for, then go for the road bike but if its comfort and versatility is what you need, then a commuter bike may be the better choice.

We hope this article has helped you understand the difference between [road bikes](#) [versus commuter bikes](#), and find what would be best suited for you. There are so many options in the market, we're sure you'll find that suits you best.

Good luck!