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5/3/00: THE BAGS VERSUS BOXES DEBATE

 [Are you a bagger or a boxer?](#) Ethan Gelber 05/02/00

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Date: May 02, 2000 06:17 PM

Author: Ethan Gelber (ethang@gorp.com)

Subject: Are you a bagger or a boxer?

I recently responded to a question about [traveling with a bike](#). In my answer, I asserted my opinion in what has been called the Great Bags versus Boxes Debate: Which is better for cargoing your bike, a bike bag or a box? Here, once again, is my take on it all:

* When traveling on any mode of transport that will require you to schlepp your bike over any distance and then stash it somewhere not too far beyond your reach, use a bike bag and don't worry about the bubble wrap. Carrying a packed bike is MUCH easier in a bag than in a box. Plus, when stowing a bike in a bus or on a train, you can take the necessary care to make sure that it isn't improperly handled.

* If you are ever required to hand your bike over to a service that handles all luggage and is not equipped to recognize a bike as worthy of special handling (e.g. airlines, Amtrak, UPS), pad it and box it or use a special bike luggage. A well-padded bike can also be transported in a bag but won't weather abuse as well. And even if you are going to box your bike, pad it. Baggage handlers do not seem to differentiate bike boxes from other big stuff and are more likely to throw it around (since it will need extra heft to move it) than to caress it.

* If you are lucky enough to be working with a baggage service that acknowledges the unique handling needs of bikes (as is the case with some airlines, most European railroads, and some bus lines), remove everything that could fall off the bike (water bottles, pumps, etc.) and send it on as is.

What are your thoughts?

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