
Bike Parking Guide

Not all bike parking is created equal. Bad bike parking happens. Sometimes it's an accident or a mistake. But with a little planning and consideration, bike parking can be easy. At Dero, we like to see good bike parking. We also don't like to see money wasted on solutions that don't work. What follows are a few basic guidelines to help make your bike parking project a success.

Enter your email address to get the Bike Parking Guide and start receiving our monthly newsletter. We will not share your information, and you may unsubscribe from the newsletter at any time.

Choosing a Site

Identify Current Problems

When no parking infrastructure is provided, bicyclists improvise and lock their bikes to anything that seems secure. This can result in damage to fixtures such as light posts and railings, as well as causing hazards to pedestrians. Most importantly, improvised solutions do not guarantee secure parking for riders.





Make it Visible and Prominent

If bicyclists can't find your bike rack, they won't use it. We recommend placing a bike rack within 50 ft of an entrance or at least as close as the nearest car parking stall. Have the bike rack painted bright colors and use signage to direct bicyclists to the area you designate for bike parking.

Racks placed behind buildings or in other out-of-sight locations give thieves more time to work unnoticed.



Space Use

Demand

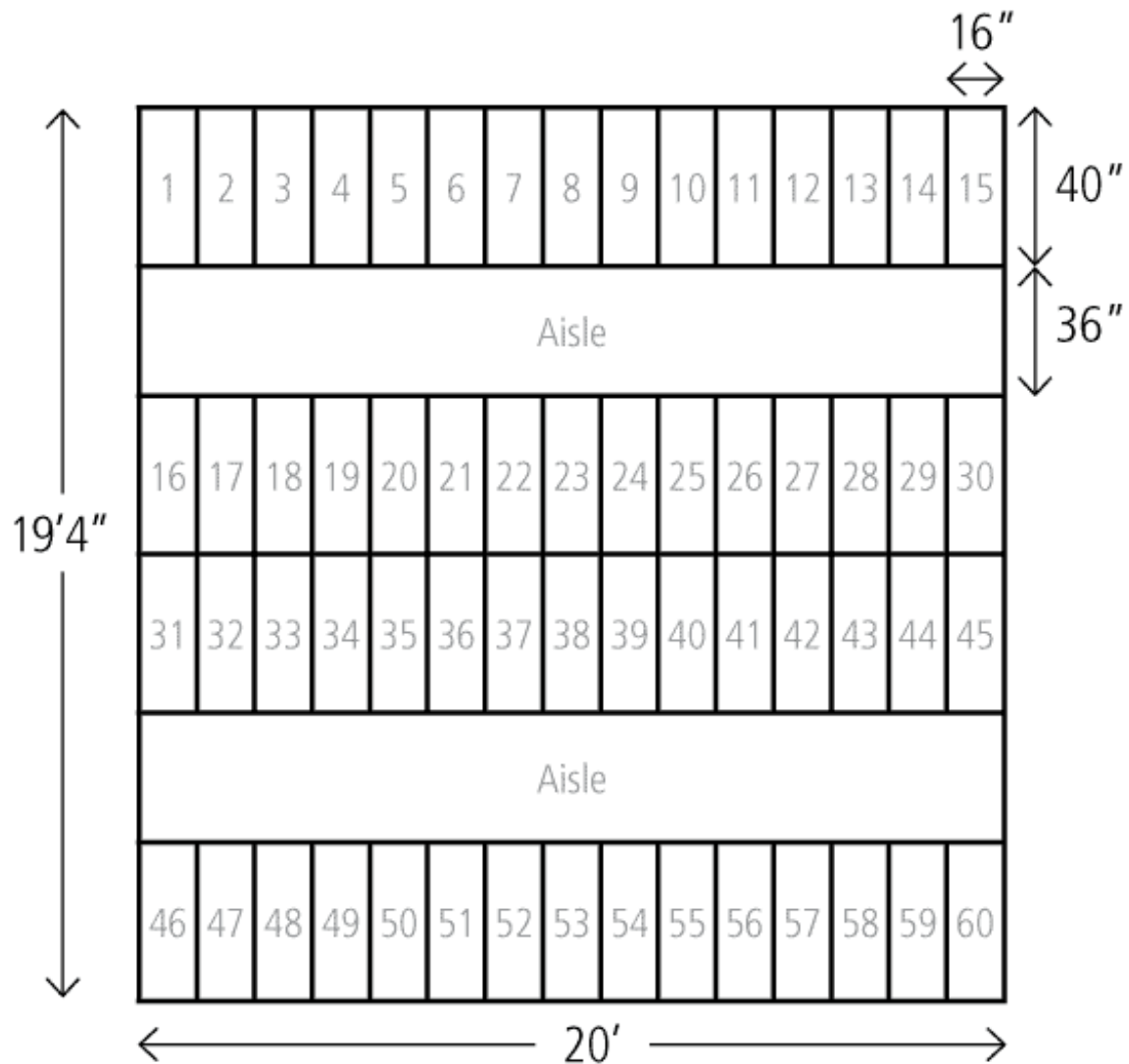
How many bikes do you need to park at your business, office, or residential building? The easiest baseline way to answer this question is to contact your city or town government and confirm any minimum ordinances or mandates applicable.

Capacity and Space Use

Once the amount of parking has been determined, you will naturally need to ensure that adequate space is provided. Below there are several diagrams to show you how different bike parking systems fill a particular space with optimal spacing and setbacks.

For parking systems which park bikes vertically, the diagram below offers an approximate calculation for the space needed to park bikes.

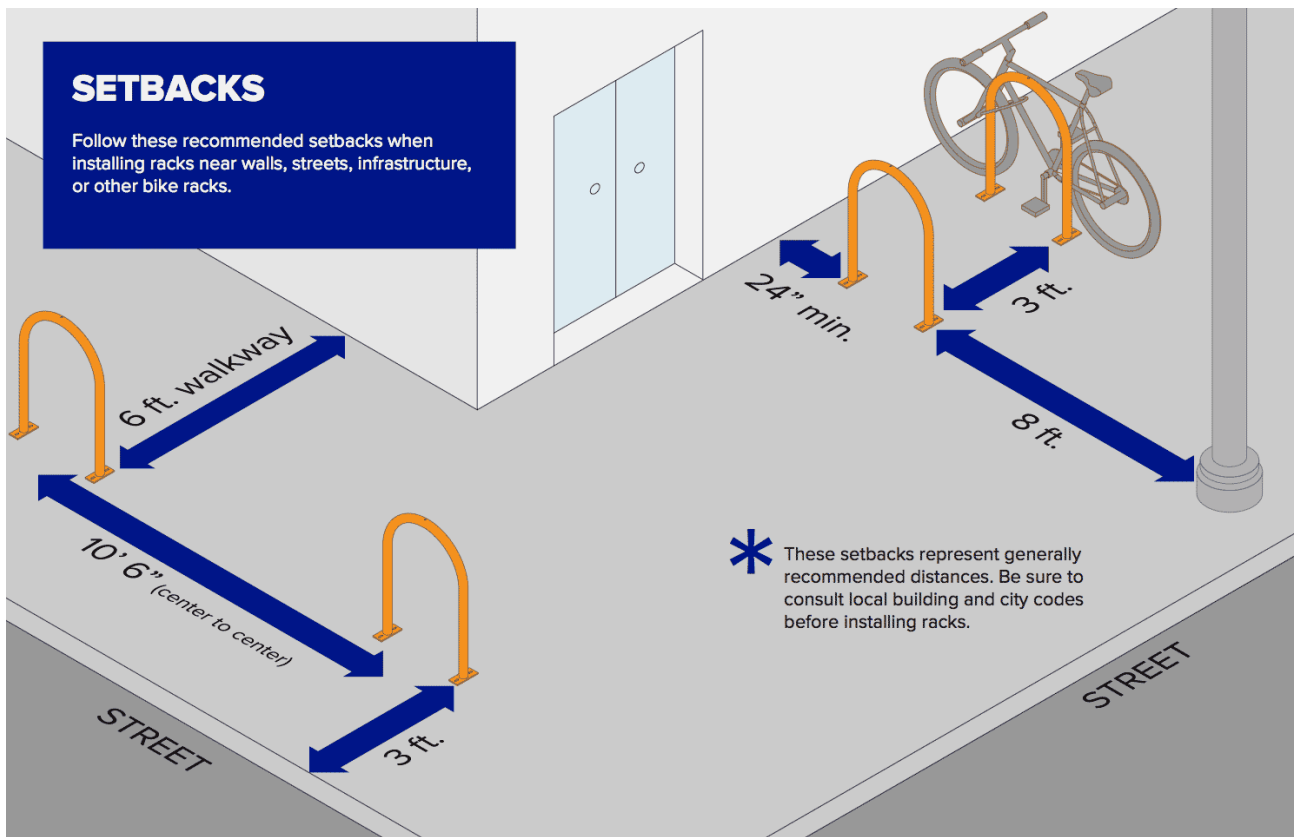
A 20'x20' area should be able to park about 60 bikes.



Setbacks

Of course, a bike rack can only park the maximum number of bikes if it has proper setbacks from obstructions. Also, a bike rack shouldn't obstruct other objects such as street furniture, access doors, or right of way.

Below are some general guidelines for setbacks. This illustration is based on recommendations by the District of Columbia Department of Transportation and the City of Minneapolis Department of Public Works.



Installation Surfaces

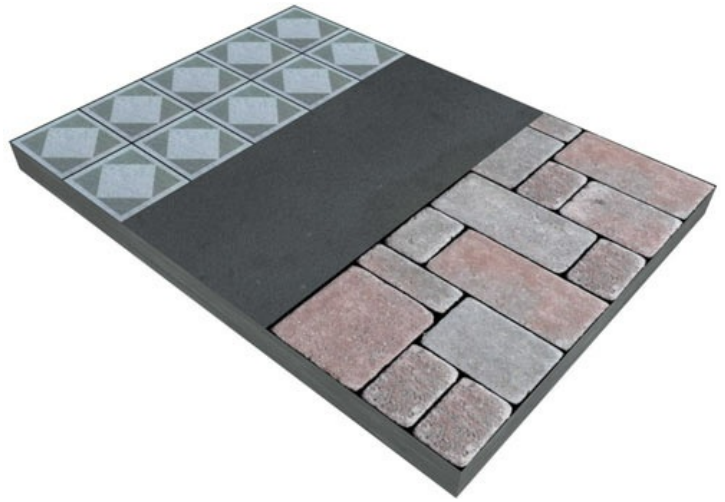
Concrete is the best and least expensive surface material for a variety of rack types and installation methods. Both in-ground and surface mounts work well on concrete and are easy to install.

Other hard surfaces such as **asphalt, pavers or tile** may or may not be suitable for a surface-mounted option. Factors affecting the suitability of these materials include the thickness of the surface material, the makeup of the below-grade material, and climate.

Freestanding racks are recommended for these surface types.

For organic materials such as **mulch, dirt and grass**, you will need a bike rack with a freestanding option, or you may pour concrete footings to anchor the rack down.



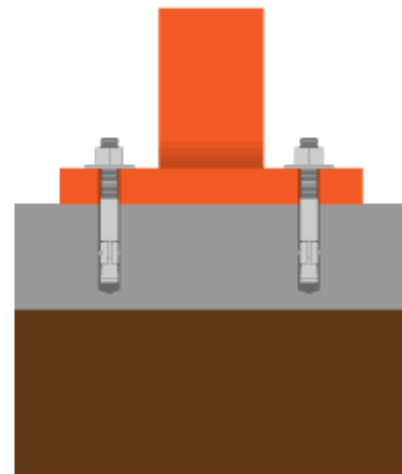


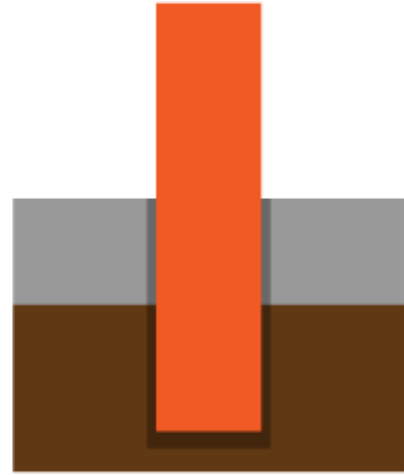
Mounting Options

Surface Mount: Metal flange anchors to the ground with included wedge anchors. Other special anchors such as tamperproof nuts are also available.

In-ground Mount: Rack is embedded into concrete surface

Rail Mount: Racks are bolted to rails which may be anchored to surface or left free-standing





Let Your City Be Your Guide

Many cities and communities already have bike parking guidelines, ordinances, and even bike rack cost share programs. You can find answers to questions concerning required bike parking capacity, placement, and right-of-way. Check with your community's website. Usually, bike parking information may be found within a city's public works or parks and recreation department. Here are some city resources we have found.

[Boston, MA](#) [Los Angeles, CA](#)

[New York, NY](#) [Pittsburgh, PA](#)

[Portland, OR](#) [San Francisco, CA](#) [St. Paul, MN](#)

Or go straight to the bicycle advocacy organizations who are on their bikes every day, and who know from first hand experience which areas could be more bicycle friendly. They can also give advice on their preferred style of bicycle rack. Below are websites of several city and state bicycling organizations in the United States.

ATLANTA [Atlanta Bicycle Coalition](#)

BOSTON [LivableStreets Alliance](#)

CHICAGO [Active Transportation Alliance](#)

CLEVELAND [Bike Cleveland](#)

HAWAII [Hawaii Bicycling League](#)

INDIANAPOLIS [INDYCOG](#)

KANSAS CITY, MO [BikeWalkKC](#)

LOS ANGELES [Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition](#)

MINNEAPOLIS [Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition](#)

MINNESOTA [Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota](#)

NEW ORLEANS [Bike Easy](#)

NEW YORK CITY [Transportation Alternatives](#)

PHILADELPHIA [Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia](#)

PITTSBURGH [BikePGH](#)

PORTLAND, OR [The Street Trust](#)

SAN DIEGO [BikeSD](#)

SAN FRANCISCO [San Francisco Bicycle Coalition](#)

SEATTLE [Cascade Bicycle Club](#)

TEXAS [BikeTexas](#)

TOLEDO [We Are Traffic](#)

VERMONT [Local Motion](#)

WASHINGTON, DC [Washington Area Bicyclist Association](#)

WISCONSIN [Wisconsin Bicycle Federation](#)

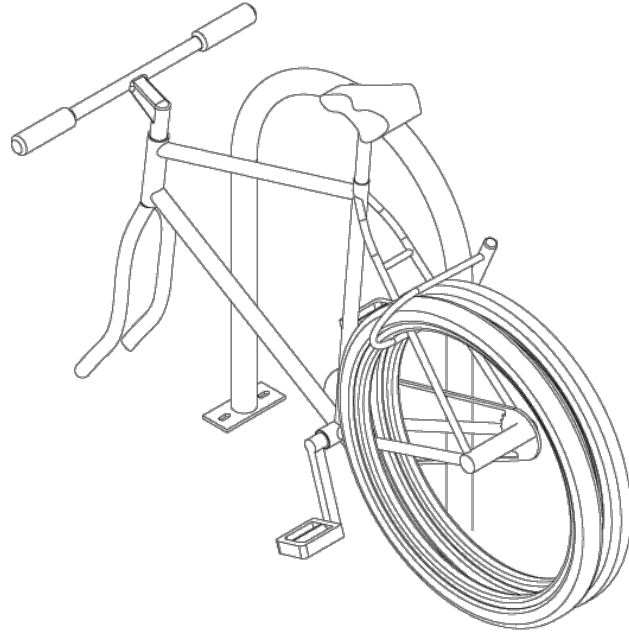
Choosing Your Racks

Security

With well over a million bicycles stolen every year in the United States and the increasing sophistication of today's bikes, security is by far the most important issue for bicyclists. Some bikes can cost several thousand dollars, so people want to be sure that when they lock their bike up it will still be there when they return.

We highly recommend that people use u-style locks to secure both the wheels and frame of their bike, since cable locks are flimsy and easy to cut. Be sure the rack you chose is u-lock compatible if there is open access to the bikes.

Of course, knowing how to lock your bike properly is just as important as the lock you choose. Remember to securely fasten wheels (especially if you have quick-releases) as well as the frame.



Good Bike Frame Support



Good support

If you are looking to encourage bicyclists, racks that support the frame in at least two places are ideal.

[Browse Products](#)



...and not so good

Many standard “grid-style” racks support only the wheel, leaving the bicycle vulnerable to damage – hence the nickname “wheel bender.” Also, bicyclists often drape their bikes over the top bar to allow locking with a u-lock.



Wave Style Racks

Wave style racks are U-lock compatible and cost effective, but are not optimal for bicyclists because they do not provide two points of contact with the frame. Bicycles often end up tipping over and are packed too tightly together.

Consider Unique and Creative Solutions



Bike Shelters

Many communities and campuses are finding that covered bike parking encourages people to travel by bike. Shelters offer outdoor bicycles more protection from the elements than uncovered racks. A shelter's canopy keeps rain, snow, and sun off of bikes and their riders. Shelters also help with LEED certification.

[Browse Bike Shelters](#)



Bike Rooms

Bike rooms provide a great opportunity for high security, long-term bike parking when there is not place outside to put shelters or lockers. Dedicated indoor bike storage rooms are praised by cyclists for residential and commercial use.

[View Bike Room Design Guide](#)



Bike Corrals

Several communities have begun implementing on-street solutions for bike parking. New York City, Portland, OR, Santa Barbara, CA and Minneapolis, MN have all removed car parking spaces to provide additional bike parking. This solution is ideal in high density areas with small sidewalks and moderate pedestrian traffic. Portland's program has been so successful that businesses have begun requesting removal of car parking in favor of bike parking in front of their stores and offices.

[Browse On-Street Bike Parking](#)



Temporary Parking

Often overlooked, event parking is a critical building block for bicycle friendly communities. State fairs, music festivals, and sporting events draw hundreds or thousands of attendees. Yet, many organizers often forget the bike parking altogether, leaving cyclists stranded and area parking lots overcrowded. Some cities, such as San Francisco, have passed mandatory minimums for valet bike parking at events. Successful bike parking at events also contributes

to a venue's overall green image.

[Browse Temporary Bike Parking](#)

Aesthetics

Who said bicycle racks had to be ugly? Several bike rack manufacturers are producing racks that could easily qualify as street art. A well-designed bike rack enhances the visual appeal of the area in which it is placed. Though custom racks cost more than a standard bike rack, the returns on your investment include heightened visibility and improved public perception of your organization's values.

[Browse Custom Bike Racks](#)



Additional Resource:

The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) has its comprehensive "Bicycle Parking Guidelines" available for purchase [here](#).