



First look
A nippy city bike with a quick fold, some clever features and punchy acceleration



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Electric folders

High-quality e-folders are expensive but they can transform urban and inter-urban journeys. **Richard Peace** tests a Gocycle G4 and a Tern Vektron Q9

The Gocycle G4 and Tern Vektron Q9 are premium-quality electric folders with distinct differences. Neither fits the ultra-portable category populated by 16-inch wheelers like the Brompton Electric and the Flit. Their 20-inch wheels are the basis for exhilarating, speedy riding (in the case of the Gocycle) or workhorse cargo-carrying capability (the Tern).

The fact that they fold is useful nevertheless. They can be stored in a studio flat or easily transported by train. And, of course, compared to an unpowered folder, they'll take you further and with less effort over more demanding terrain.

Both are quite expensive if you consider the purchase price alone but, as with any e-bike, running costs are minimal. Long term, they're much, much cheaper than a car. The Gocycle is an excellent commuter, while the Tern could be a car replacement like an e-cargo bike.

Frame and fold

The Gocycle uses three main frame materials: a weight-saving carbon fibre mid-frame; a hydroformed aluminium front frame; and a magnesium Cleandrive transmission casing. It also has a carbon fibre single-sided 'fork'. The Tern is more conventional in using

hydroformed aluminium throughout: 7005 alloy for the distinctive frame and 6061 for the fork.

The Gocycle's design prioritises low weight and a sporty ride, whereas the Tern emphasises strength and carrying capacity – its extended rear end accommodates a stretched out rear rack, and it has sturdy-looking frame joints and hinges. As a result the Tern weighs 27% more than the Gocycle, at 23kg versus 18.1kg on my scales.

The Gocycle's height-adjustable seatpost is made to fit riders from 5ft 1in to 6ft 6in, although there's a compact option that drops that range to 4ft 10in to 5ft 9in. Tern says that the Q9 resizes in seconds to fit riders from 4ft 10in to 6ft 5in. This is thanks to a telescopic seatpost and the fore and aft adjustment of the bike's Andros stem.

Both bikes fold in half rather than tucking the rear wheel underneath like a Brompton or Birdy. I found the Gocycle quicker and easier to fold, and the resulting package is lighter and more compact, making it easier to lift on and off trains. The Tern's fold is straightforward and easy