

Outdoor Gear Lab

September 2017

The Best Bike Racks for Hitches, Cars, and SUVs

Featuring: Dr.Tray and HoldUp

Monthly Traffic: 2,100,000

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/OutdoorGearLab-Yakima-0917>

The Best Bike Racks for Hitches, Cars, and SUVs

Top Pick For Versatility and Capacity

Yakima Dr. Tray



Top Pick

\$454.76 at Amazon

See It

- ⊕ Innovative tray mount design
- ⊕ Easily increase capacity with the EZ+1 adaptor
- ⊕ Tool free tray adjustment
- ⊕ Lighter than the competition
- ⊕ Tool Free attachment and removal
- ⊖ Expensive
- ⊖ Tilt release handle is challenging to use
- ⊖ Poorly designed cable lock system

The much anticipated **Yakima Dr. Tray** is the latest and greatest hitch mount tray rack from the well-known brand. Make no mistake; this is not a new version of the Yakima Hold Up. The Dr. Tray is an entirely new design with some innovative features that we love. The trays attach to the main body of the rack with tool-free clamps and can be adjusted fore and aft as well as laterally in seconds to eliminate bike-to-bike contact. In addition to the incredible versatility, the Dr. Tray is also one of the lightest racks in its class. We also love the recently released EZ+1 accessory that increases the capacity of the Dr. Tray to three bikes. The Dr. Tray narrowly missed out on our Editors' Choice award due to the sticky and hard-to-pull tilt release, and a cable locking system that could use a redesign. Despite these issues, the Dr. Tray was a favorite among our testers for its light weight and ease of adjustability.

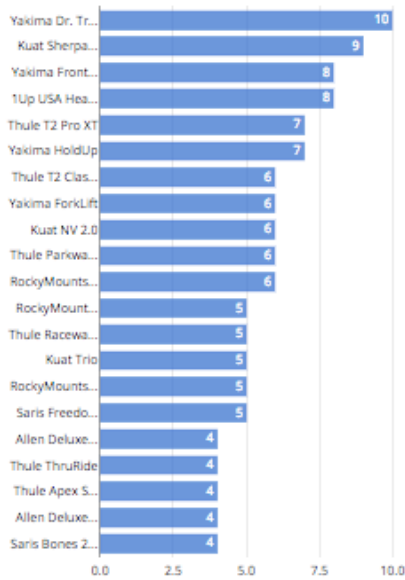
Read full review: [Yakima Dr. Tray](#)

| Test Results and Ratings | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Displaying 1 - 5 of 21 | | | | | |
| Rank | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 |
| Product | Thule T2 Pro XT Read the Review | Yakima Dr. Tray Read the Review | Kuat Sherpa 2.0 Read the Review | Kuat NV 2.0 Read the Review | Yakima HoldUp Read the Review |
| Awards | Editors' Choice | Top Pick | | | |
| Price | \$579.95 at REI Compare at 3 sellers | \$454.76 at Amazon | \$489.00 at REI Compare at 3 sellers | \$629.00 at REI Compare at 3 sellers | \$343.18 at Amazon Compare at 3 sellers |
| Overall Score - | 80 | 75 | 73 | 77 | 76 |
| Star Rating | ★★★★★ | ★★★★☆ | ★★★★☆ | ★★★★★ | ★★★★☆ |
| Pros | Easy tilt release function, durable, fat bike compatible, tool free installation | Low loading height, easy tray adjustment, lightweight, tool free removal | Lightweight, simple, foot pedal tilt mechanism | Durable, versatile, integrated work stand | Durable, versatile |
| Cons | Hefty, Pricy | High price, sticky tilt release handle, cable locks are difficult to use | Lacks versatility, expensive | Heavy, expensive | Lacks refinement |
| Ratings by Category | Thule T2 Pro XT | Yakima Dr. Tray | Kuat Sherpa 2.0 | Kuat NV 2.0 | Yakima HoldUp |
| Ease Of EveryDay Use - 20% | 9 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Ease Of Removal And Storage - 20% | 7 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 7 |
| Versatility - 20% | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Ease Of Assembly - 10% | 7 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 7 |
| Security - 20% | 7 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Durability - 10% | 9 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 7 |
| Specs | Thule T2 Pro XT | Yakima Dr. Tray | Kuat Sherpa 2.0 | Kuat NV 2.0 | Yakima HoldUp |
| Style | Hitch (tray) | Hitch (tray) | Hitch (tray) | Hitch (tray) | Hitch (tray) |
| Bike Capacity | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Other Sizes Available? | Yes, 1.25" receiver and rack add-on for 2 additional bikes | Yes, 1.25" receiver and rack add-on for 1 additional bike | Yes, 1.25" receiver | Yes, 1.25" receiver and rack add-on for 2 additional bikes | Yes, 1.25" receiver and rack add-on for 2 additional bikes |

Expand to show full specification table | Hide details



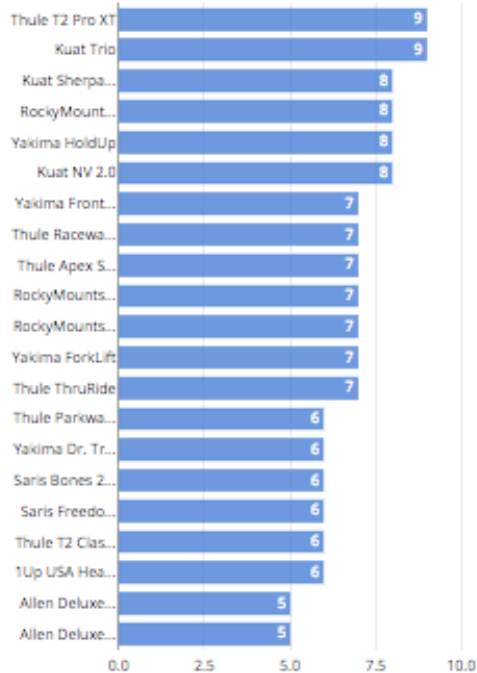
Ease Of Removal And Storage



The **Yakima Dr. Tray** is the highest scoring hitch rack we tested, and the only rack we tested that earned a perfect 10. At 34 pounds it is half the weight of the **RockyMounts BackStage**; most of our testers were able to carry it with one hand. Attachment to the vehicle is simple thanks to the SpeedKnob locking system that removes wobblers and locks the rack to the vehicle. The **Kuat Sherpa** also scored well, with an impressively light weight of 32 pounds. It also uses a knob and cam system that removes wobble, but a hitch pin is required to lock the rack to your vehicle. For the rack that takes up the least space when not in use, check out the **1 Up USA Heavy Duty Quick Rack**. It is the only rack we tested that features folding bike trays for storage. If you need a hitch rack that you can pull off and fit in the trunk the **1 UP** is worth a look.

When it comes to roof racks, manufacturers assume that you will not be removing them on a daily basis, they are more of a set-it-and-forget-it item that most people choose to just leave on the roof after the initial installation. As a result, most of them take a fair bit of effort to remove. Of all the contenders we tested, the easiest to take on and off the car was the **Yakima Front Loader**.

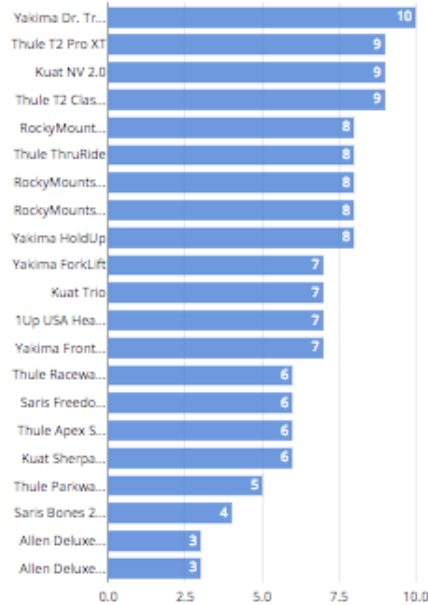
Ease Of Everyday Use



Versatility

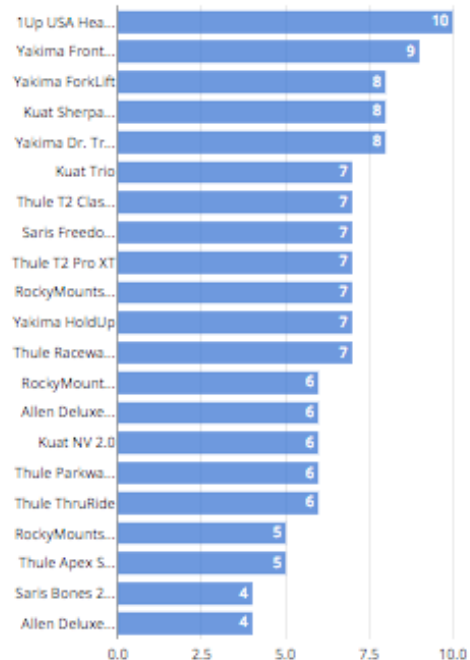
Versatility is a measure of the ability to carry multiple different types of bikes. Any rack that uses the bicycle frame as the primary point of attachment will suffer in overall versatility due to the multitude of frame shapes on the market. The **Yakima Dr. Tray** scored highest due to its massive range of tray adjustments, and the ability to carry bikes with tires up to five inches.

Versatility



Kuat Trio can only hold one bike, but the ability to put multiple units on the roof makes for a high capacity option. The **Yakima Front Loader** was another standout for versatility with its capacity to carry bikes differing axle standards by clamping the front tire rather than making contact at the fork or front axle.

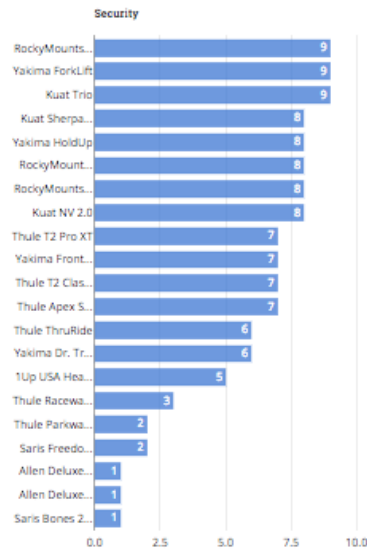
Ease Of Assembly





Security

Given the right tools and enough time, a determined thief can compromise even the most secure bike rack.



Roof Mount Racks:

The **Yakima Front Loader** is the highest scoring roof rack we tested. It comes out of the box fully assembled and ready to mount on any cross bar available. Other roof racks we tested required tools to assemble before mounting.



The Yakima Front Loader comes fully assembled.