

TIPS AND TOOLS

bicycle cart

by Brett Beasley

If you have ever participated in a local farmer's market or art sale, you may have had trouble parking at the event to unload your stock and supplies. Don't fret, build a bicycle cart.

During the summer of 2015, I participated in a local farmer's market called the Umbrella Market in Greenville, North Carolina. Though it was quite fun and festive, the hiccup in my weekly vendor display was the travel, primarily dealing with parking. I would bicycle home from the studio to get my truck, drive to the studio, load everything (pottery in bins, table and table cloth, bags, packing materials, business cards, cash box, etc.) onto my truck, drive to the market, unload, park my vehicle and then repeat these steps in reverse order at the end of the market. This felt like an overwhelming hassle for a three-hour market, especially because my studio was only a quarter mile away. My solution to this problem was to create a cart that I could pull with my bicycle and eliminate the drive/parking hassle.

I purchased a bicycle trailer intended for two small children for about \$80. This one happened to be a Robin In-Step 2-Seater Trailer. I removed the canvas from the cart and installed a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch sheet of plywood over the bottom of the frame, which I coated with three layers of polyurethane for waterproofing (\$15). I secured the plywood platform by drilling holes through the plywood and trailer frame then attaching them together using stainless-steel hardware (to avoid rust) (\$12). An important safety feature for any cyclist is visibility. I installed a very bright bike light on the back of the cart to help alert motorists of my presence (\$15). The trailer also happened to come with a safety flag. The last thing I built was a kick stand made of scrap wood, which comes in handy when loading and unloading the cart. Once the cart is loaded, everything is secured with bungee cords.



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Aside from the convenience of this bicycle trailer, this is a great way to reduce your carbon footprint, exercise, and participate in the community. I enjoy the portability of ceramics and I feel this cart makes my pottery more accessible and approachable. This is also a great way to have the conversation about handmade ceramic durability. I mean, I'm literally pedaling my wares around downtown over potholes!

the author Brett Beasley earned his MFA from East Carolina University and is currently a full-time artist living and working in Ames, Iowa. Learn more at www.beasleyceramics.com and on Instagram @BeasleyCeramics.



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1 Brett Beasley's converted bicycle trailer empty and ready to load up with supplies and stock to bring to the local farmer's market sale. 2 Beasley riding his fully loaded bicycle cart to the market. 3 Beasley's set up at the farmer's market sale and his converted bicycle cart.