

# Electric Bike Review

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## eFlow E3 Flight Review

[Home](#) › [Electric Bike Reviews](#) › [eFlow Reviews](#)



### Category:

Electric Road Bike Reviews

### Summary:

- A less expensive, slightly stripped down, version of the eFlow E3 Nitro costs \$500 less
- 500 Watt gearless rear hub motor with regenerative braking, strong 36 volt 11 amp hour battery
- Only offers 10 speeds, no headset shock absorber, thinner road style tires are efficient but less forgiving

### Stats:

- Price: \$3,000 USD MSRP
- Range: 20 to 35 miles (32 – 56 km) depending on hills, assist or throttle mode, wind and rider weight
- Top Speed: 20 miles per hour electronically limited
- Gearing: 10 speed SRAM APEX rear derailleur with SL700 trigger shifters on left and right side of handle bar
- Weight: 50 pounds with battery
- Battery: 36 volt 11 amp hour Lithium ion by Samsung, built into the seat tube, easily removable, can charge on or off the bike
- Charge Time: ~4 to 6 hours
- Ride Time: ~1.5 hours, 25 mile range throttle only, nearly double with pedal assist
- Charge Cycles: ~700 before capacity decrease begins
- Motor: 500 watt DC direct drive motor with cassette free hub and Coombs quick release system
- Other: Tektro AURIGA E-SUB hydraulic disc brakes with large 180/160mm Rotors, removable LCD display unit, regenerative braking activates with brakes, high-step frame sizes in S (18", 46cm), M (20", 51cm), L (21.5", 54.5cm) and low-step frame sizes in LS-S (18" 46cm), LS-M (20", 51cm).

### Video Interview:



### Written Review:

The eFlow series of electric bikes offer high performance, upgraded technology and balanced frame design. The E3 Flight is a less expensive version of the [E3 Nitro](#) and cuts cost (and weight) by removing the headset shock absorber, decreasing the size of the battery pack and removing one of the front chain rings. The end result is a bike that's designed for urban riding, built like a road bike, but doesn't offer quite as many pedal cadence choices. That said, with the twist throttle and pedal assist modes to help you out, it might be worth saving \$500 over the upgraded E3 Nitro model.



Driving this bike is a strong, silent and sophisticated 500 watt gearless hub motor. It's capable of moving larger riders, scaling moderate hills and it even offers regenerative braking to extend range. I'm a big fan of gearless hubs and appreciate the fact that eFlow integrated regenerative braking because it saves your brake pads! The truth is, it doesn't offer a lot of actual "regeneration" but if you have a long hill, it's nice to recoup some while reducing the heat and wear on your discs.



Speaking of stopping power, this bike has disc brakes front and rear, though not hydraulic. The overall weight of ~50lbs (depending on frame size) is decent but not as light as I would have liked for a road style city bike. I do like the fact that they offer three frame sizes in the high-step and two in the low-step because it means you can actually enjoy riding this bike vs.

just zipping around. This truly is a “riding” bike and the time I spent on it was mostly with pedal assist mode. Still, it’s nice to have a twist throttle sometimes when coasting around. The computer display ties the two modes together well and is easy enough to figure out though not quite as intuitive as some of those by [Easy Motion](#) or [BionX](#). I like that you can twist it off for safe keeping and that this disables the bike for security.

The battery pack powering the E3 Flight is a standard 36 volt 11 amp hour Lithium-ion configuration. The design is what really stands out (and sets this bike apart). It’s built right into the seat post tube, which is oversized. This configuration helps to balance weight evenly from front to rear on the bike but doesn’t keep it especially low to the ground. In my opinion it’s a step up from a rear-battery design but a step down from a downtube or bottom bracket design. Overall, it works well enough and can be charged on or off the bike... It also means you’re less likely to get your seat stolen! I like that there’s a spring-loaded plastic piece that covers the seatpost tube when the battery is off because that ensures water and debris stay out.



It’s nice to see a true “bicycling” type of ebike that’s enjoyable to pedal and really designed around pedal assist. The sophisticated LCD, regenerative braking, smooth torque sensor and overall balanced design work well together. If you plan on using this bike for commuting, eFlow offers a “city kit” with fenders, lights and a rear rack all designed to work perfectly with the bike (or the upgraded E3 Nitro). For me, 10 speeds is enough and the rigid fork design is pretty standard for city bikes. This would be a good choice for someone who wants to get around town with a bit of boost and perhaps take on longer rides and commutes that an ebike could enable.

### Pros:

- Rigid, road bike style frame is great for pedaling fast
- Uses a torque sensor at rear dropouts for pedal assist vs. less responsive pedelec sensor
- Removable battery + seat is a unique design that makes protecting the expensive parts easy
- Removable computer is a welcomed feature, great that it disables the bike when off for security purposes
- Regenerative braking reduces wear on disc brakes and extends ride
- No jittering or rattling sounds when riding compared with many other ebikes
- When battery post is out, a built in plastic cover protects the seatpost tube
- Easy to lift and mount on racks, especially without the battery pack on
- Rapid fire shifters work well, 10 gears is okay
- Twist throttle is a great feature in addition to pedal assist, especially at stop signs and lights
- Built in eyelets for racks and fenders (optional city kit upgrades)
- The quick release lever on the seat features a bottle opener for fun
- Cables integrated into downtube for clean aesthetic
- The LCD control unit offers speed, battery capacity and other info
- The main battery pack can be charged on or off the bike
- Motor is offered in either a “high speed” or “high torque” configuration to suit your riding style
- Includes water bottle mounting eyelets on high-step design frame

### Cons:

- No shock absorbers and thinner tires mean this bike feels stiffer and bumpier than some others
- Designed for road style riding but only offers 10 gears (have to upgrade to the eFlow E3 Nitro for 20 speeds)
- A bit heavy for a road style electric bike, especially considering the medium sized battery
- Seat post design looks a little awkward, positions battery weight higher than downtube designs
- Higher price point for the extra features like regenerative braking, not fully utilized. Wish it had a “regen mode” setting
- Bumpier ride than cruiser style bikes due to thinner road-style tires, seat type and forward position with flat handle bars
- LCD computer, while functionally cool, is fairly large and awkward at times
- LCD computer unit is not rechargeable, it uses flat round wafer style batteries that to me seem archaic

- Wheelset is 26" instead of 700c (29") to account for the shock and make climbing easier, won't roll as fast on city streets as traditional road style tires
- Bike is 50lbs with battery in, that's a little bit heavier than I would have liked for a road style bike
- No negative/regen modes available for going down hills, you just have to squeeze the brake lever
- Standard cable style brakes vs. hydraulic brakes on the E3 Nitro

## Rating:

eFlow E3 Flight, Rated 4.5 out of 5

Updated October 15, 2013 by Court Rye

## Resources:

- Official Site: [www.eflowebike.com](http://www.eflowebike.com)
- More Pictures: [plus.google.com](http://plus.google.com)

## Community:

Discuss the eFlow E3 Flight and other eFlow products in the [eFlow Forums](#). I'm there daily along with other ebike enthusiasts to help you out! Also check out the [ebike deals](#), [Q&A](#) and [comparison](#) sections.