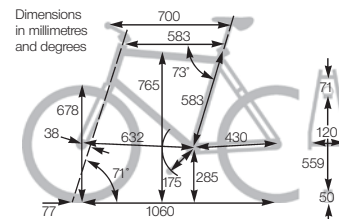




VITUS VEE-1

**VITUS VEE-1****Price:** £249.99**Weight:** 11.3kg complete**Sizes:** 16in, 19in (tested)

**Frame and fork:** Aluminium with 120mm over-locknuts track dropouts, fittings for mudguard, rack, and one bottle. Steel fork with fittings for mudguard.

**Wheels:** 50-559 Kenda K-935 trekking tyres; HJC DA16 aluminium rims; 36 2.0mm pg spokes, ×3 rear, radial front; solid-axle Joytech hubs

**Transmission:** Xerama platform pedals (not SPDs shown); Vitus 175mm aluminium crankset, Isis Drive, 42T chainring (4-arm, 104mm PCD); Truvativ Isis Drive bottom bracket; 1/8in KMC Z chain; 18T freewheel. Singlespeed, 62in.

**Braking:** Aluminium V-brakes

**Steering and seating:** Unbranded grips. 685 × 25.4mm aluminium riser bar, 100mm × 10° aluminium stem; 1 1/8in threadless headset; 27.2mm × 350mm aluminium seatpost; unbranded saddle

**Accessories:** none

**Contact:** vitusbikes.com, chainreactioncycles.com

**CITY BIKE**

# Vitus Vee-1

Editor **Dan Joyce** reviews a singlespeed urban mountain bike that's suited to mean streets and smoother trails

» **THESE DAYS** the 26-inch wheel urban mountain bike has almost disappeared. But only almost. Vitus have done a roaring trade with their Vee-1: a spartan aluminium singlespeed with a rigid steel fork, a wide riser handlebar, bolt-on wheels, and V-brakes.

I'd guess it's selling well because it's inexpensive and because there's still a demand for the simple, sturdy, fat-tyred hack bike. This isn't just a big boy's BMX; it has the rack and mudguard mounts necessary to turn it into a practical utility bike.

Vitus call the Vee-1 an 'urban attack machine'. I didn't attack any urban with it, not fancying my chances at the concrete skate park. I did ride it around town on journeys up to about six miles. The budget semi-slick tyres roll okay so long as you're not trying to force the pace, and with a single 62in gear and an arms-akimbo handlebar you're unlikely to do so. Comfort is good, as those two-inch tyres are untroubled by bumps and potholes.

For town use, the lack of quick releases is a bonus: you don't have to worry that your wheels or seatpost will go walkabout. I didn't miss multiple gears, even on Scarborough's sharp hills. If you would, there's a 27-speed version of the same bike due imminently. It will be £329.99.

**Off-road options**

If you're happy with a single gear but want something very different from 42/18, it's an easy switch: the removable-chainring crankset has the standard MTB middle/outer bolt pattern, so rings from 32 to 48 will fit.

The Vee-1 is strong, light, and manoeuvrable enough for proper mountain biking. For use off-road, I'd recommend a 32 or 34 instead of that 42. Just be aware that the frame is a bit tight in the chain-stays, so you can't cushion the rear end with a 2.3in tyre. Even a 2.2in tyre is doubtful. If it's a bargain off-road singlespeed you're after, consider the forthcoming 29er version instead (£279.99), as the bigger



Eyelets for mudguards and a rear pannier rack are practical touches. The rear spacing is 120mm

wheels will provide a more forgiving ride. For shorter, less rocky rides, the Vee-1 will be okay, given off-road tyres.

Where it really scores is as the simple, sturdy city bike it sets out to be. It's fun to ride on bad roads, there's scarcely anything to go wrong with it, and at this price it's not a tragedy if it gets stolen. I liked it a lot. Note that this is the 2011 version: the 2012 version is identical apart from the graphics.

**Also consider**

**1) Revolution Courier Single '11**  
£229.99 (RRP £279.99)

Edinburgh Bicycle's singlespeed is a bargain while 2011 stocks remain. [edinburghbicycle.com](http://edinburghbicycle.com)

**2) Saracen Urban Rush** £479.99

An extra £200 gets you Saracen's 2011 Urban Rush, with Shimano Nexus 3-speed hub, cable discs and 700C wheels. [saracen.co.uk](http://saracen.co.uk)