



Black Widow Motorcycle Carrier

OUR DEFAULT MODE here at *Rider* is to ride motorcycles, but every now and then we have no choice but to haul them. Whether we're dropping off a motorcycle at Jett Tuning for repairs or dyno testing, or schlepping a dirtbike to a riding area, we need a way to carry it. A pickup truck with a ramp and some tie-downs

is the easiest method, but I own a Toyota 4Runner SUV with no bed.

Since my 4Runner has a hitch receiver, I ordered Black Widow's hitch-mount motorcycle carrier, which is compatible with Class III or IV 2-inch receivers. Black Widow offers a range of carriers — singles and doubles for dirtbikes,

ones that fold up out of the way, and both standard and heavy-duty versions. I opted for the Heavy Duty Motorcycle Carrier with Aluminum Track, which has a maximum capacity of 600 pounds and retails for \$369.99 with free shipping.

The carrier itself weighs 100 pounds, and since my 4Runner has a maximum tongue weight of 500 pounds, I'm limited to carrying motorcycles that weigh 400 pounds or less. I tested the carrier with a 2021 Honda CRF450RL dual-sport, which has a curb weight of 286 pounds. Depending on your vehicle, you may need heavier springs, airbags, or other suspension modifications to accommodate the full weight of the carrier and your motorcycle. Black Widow says its carriers are not recommended for use with hitch adapters or extensions.

The carrier arrived in a long, heavy cardboard box, and it included all of the hardware and instructions for easy assembly. Picking up the 100-pound carrier and sliding it into the hitch receiver requires some care, as does removing it and carrying it into my garage, where it's stored leaned up against the wall when not in use. To secure the carrier to the vehicle, Black Widow provides an anti-tilt bracket that can be used with either a hitch pin or pinch bolt (both are provided).

Most of the carrier is made of steel, but the track (8 x 78 ¾ inches) is made of aluminum. The motorcycle is loaded by pushing it up a steel ramp (72 x 7 ½ inches) and rolling it along the track until the front wheel is secured in the adjustable wheel chock. Depending on the height of your hitch receiver, the track may be high, so it's helpful to have a spotter while loading. The carrier has crossbars with eye bolts for securing tie-downs to four corners, and during transport, the ramp secures to the crossbars with a pair of wingnuts.

The nearly 400-pound weight of the carrier and CRF450RL caused the rear of the 4Runner to sag somewhat. The added weight was noticeable, so I drove more cautiously, but the bike and carrier remained secure on steep hills and over uneven terrain.

—GREG DREVENSTEDT

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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BLACKWIDOWPRO.COM