



Timbuk2 Classic Messenger Bag

50L

Price: £77.99 (Large – XL actually tested)

From: timbuk2@platts.ch
www.timbuk2.com

Right swing

Timbuk2 were among the first messenger bag companies and as such have a reputation to live up to. The Classic is a recreation of their popular mid-90's messenger bag and still made in San Francisco. The outer is durable Cordura with a vinyl lining and it has all the features you'd expect of a pro's bag. There's a shoulder strap with QR buckle and strap-tidy, a cross strap, LED tab, reflective tails, a Velcro and buckle closure on the lid (and T2 logo)

Inside, there's room for pens, cards, a key clip and a fleecy lined phone pocket. There's no laptop sleeve, but Timbuk2 make separate ones if you want.

The XL size we tested is body-huggingly huge and bigger than most folk would need, yet still hung well when empty or full. The Cordura outer feels worn in very quickly and the bag will hold whatever you ask of it, as long as you can still lift it.

Overall: It's easy to see why this is still the benchmark messenger bag.



Timbuk2 Pro Series Messenger Bag

68L

Price: £99.99 (XXL – tested)

From: timbuk2@platts.ch
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Right swing

It's the hugest bag we've ever seen. The Pro Series messenger bag comes in Medium, Large and XXL and all sizes feature a new, shiny, waterproof outer called x-Pac VX21 and an enormous centre reflective section that runs the whole height of the bag and lid. There are also reflective tails – there's no way you won't be seen at night. The cross strap is swappable, but the QR strap buckle makes it right swing only really.

The outside face of the bag has a zippered pocket and an LED tab. Inside the bag is a panel of pockets for pens, cards, loseables, and a padded phone pocket. The rest of the inside is just a cavernous vinyl empty space.

Fill this bag at your peril. You'd never lift it... With moderate loads in, though, it handles well, though the lid is too tall to see over if you're trying to load it while wearing it.

Overall: A huge, super visible bag for messengers who can't say 'No'.

Conclusion:

Most of the bags here will happily take clothes, lunch, a lock and an assortment of odds and ends. How suitable each one is to you depends on your needs. Do you need a laptop sleeve? Are you constantly adjusting your strap length while riding? Are you really a professional bike messenger?

If you're carrying a laptop everywhere, then the Pakuma Choroka K2 would be my choice (with a wet-weather caveat). If you're a full-time messenger, want to pretend to be, or you ride everywhere on your bike, then you're well served for bags. Any of the US, Canadian (or Hungarian) bags will work for you. My personal favourites are the Baileyworks or the wonderfully unjustifiably complex and overbuilt Pac Designs. In the real world, the Timbuk2 Classic is a classic for a reason (get Large, not XL though) but for hard wearing, general use, the Bagaboo has to take the crown, with the Pedro's winning the value for money prize.

Finally, though, remember that any good messenger bag isn't going to wear in for at least a year of hard use and just about all of these bags look like they'll go the distance.

Bagaboo



Pakuma Choroka K2



Pedro's

