

Matt's Custom Hands-Free Drink System

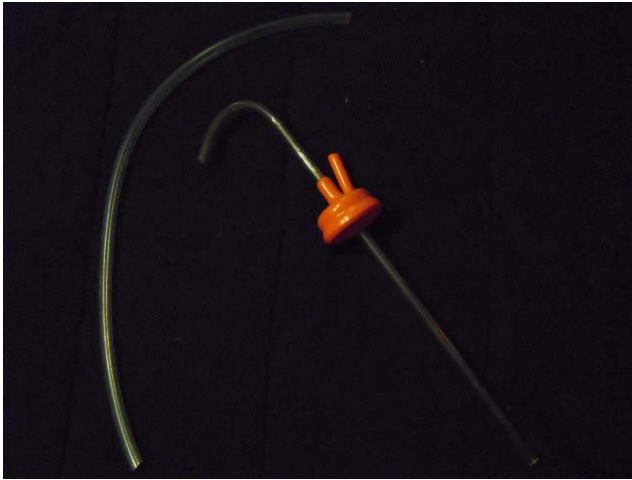


Things you will need:

- A side-entry bottle cage such as this one from Nashbar (about \$10):



- A racking wand and a couple feet of 3/8" (inner diameter) food-grade hose from the local beer & wine supply shop.



- A CamelBak bite valve, the bigger the better (about \$5)



- Some other stuff we'll get to later. Ready? Okay!

Assembly Instructions

Pull the orange rubber carboy gasket off the racking wand and chuck it in the local landfill – you won't be needing it. Now hold the naked racking wand up to your bike so the short end points toward the bottom of the bottle cage. The fore-aft position is critical, as it needs to line up with the spout of your water bottle – it may help to put the bottle in the cage to figure out exactly where the racking wand needs to be. Like so:



(Okay, this picture kinda sucks, but if you look carefully you can see I've got the wand positioned right where the water bottle spout would be)

Holding the wand in position, mark the other end a couple inches beyond the head tube and cut it off:



Save the cut piece, you'll need it.

Next take 6 inches or so of hose and fit it over the long end of the racking wand, then stuff the cut-off piece of wand into the other end. This will form the "bend" and the "straw" of the system.



Take another section of hose and cut it to about a foot. Attach it to the short end of the racking wand and hold it up to the bike again. Cut the tube so it just reaches the bottom of the bottle cage. Cut the tube at an angle to prevent the hose from suctioning itself to the bottom of the water bottle.



Now we need to prepare the water bottle - did I mention you need a water bottle? I thought that was obvious. You'll want one with this style of spout:



Use a utility knife to cut the spout off. You'll need to cut the inside of the lid, too, where it holds the spout in place. You want to end up with a lid that has a nice clean hole in the center, like this:



All that is left now is to attach the system to the bike. Personally, I use electrical tape to hold the racking wand to the top tube, then use zip ties to hold the straw portion to my aerobars. *Keep the zip ties loose*, otherwise they will inhibit your handlebars from turning freely. Stick the CamelBack bite valve onto the end of the straw and you're ready. Fill your bottle and slide it up onto the hose while simultaneously slipping it into the bottle cage. You'll figure it out.

(see photo, next page)



Notes on usage and cleaning:

For short rides I fill the bottle with water and away I go. For longer rides I carry my water in my aerobottle and use the hands-free bottle for Gatorade. I also have a larger bottle (24 oz) with the nozzle removed for use on very long rides.

Anytime I use the hands-free bottle for Gatorade I make sure to rinse thoroughly after riding in order to prevent mold growth in the tubes. I rinse it by cleaning the bottle out and filling it with warm water, then putting the bottle back in the cage and sucking some of the warm water through the system (and spitting it out, 'cuz warm water Gatorade flavored water is nasty).

After each use, regardless of what fluid was used, I pull the bite valve off and remove the bottle from the cage, allowing the hoses to dry as much and as quickly as possible. Eventually they do get pretty scummy, though, so you'll need to either disassemble everything and soak it in mild bleach water or run some water with baking soda through the hoses. Be sure to rinse with clean water again before drinking from it.