

Volt Infinity

£2999.00

by Stu Kerton Apr 2 2023

0 comments



Verdict: A solid performer for the money and the hub gear system and automatic shifting are a real bonus

Volt's Infinity is based around Shimano's STEPS motor system which makes it easy and efficient to ride in all kinds of environments, and thanks to a huge range you won't spend your whole-time riding with one eye on the screen. With guards and lights you aren't just limited to sunny dry rides either. In fact, the only thing I'd change is the saddle for better comfort.

The ride

Over the few months that I had the Infinity I was impressed with just how versatile a bike it is, and thanks

Overview

Overall ★★★★★

Build quality ★★★★★

Performance ★★★★★

Value for money ★★★★★

+ STEPS system provides smooth assistance

+ Great battery range

to the huge range offered by the Shimano STEPS system it's not just a machine for a short commute or popping to the shops.

The design of the frame, and position of the contact points may make the Volt look very urbanised, but thanks to the addition of a suspension fork and seatpost it's comfortable for long distance rides too, if you get on with the saddle – I didn't, but more about that in a bit.

+ +
Plenty of accessories

- -
Saddle is very firm

- -
Front mudguard is quite short

Buy if: You want an easy and efficient ride in all sorts of environments



My commute is a 36-mile round trip, well within the range of the Volt's fully charged battery even on its highest assistance mode, and with a route taking in some town centres, canal path and country lanes, I found the Infinity to be very capable.

It's an easy bike to ride. The steering tracks nicely whether you are carving your way through the rush hour traffic or cruising through the country lanes, so I definitely found it to be a bike that allowed me to take in the scenery, especially with the STEPS system taking care of the gear changes through its 'auto shift' feature.



I'm not going to lie and say that I got on with the STEPS and Alfine hub gear setup famously from the start - although that was largely my fault rather than that of the geared hub. I spend the majority of my time riding road and gravel bikes, so a lot of hard efforts on the pedals, especially when pulling away from traffic lights with plenty of traffic around, which meant that the system kept putting me in too high a gear due to the readings from the torque sensors. The same happened in other places when I was a little aggressive on the pedals.

Once I learnt to ride more smoothly, letting the motor take the strain, the STEPS system made a lot of sense and worked really well indeed.



The way the assistance kicks in and out around the 15.5mph cut-off is also smooth, I didn't find it jerky any way when drifting over the limit and often I'd look at the screen and see that I was doing 17mph or 18mph without even noticing that the power had turned off.

The Alfine Di2 internal hub has eight ratios to choose from, and the Infinity effortlessly glides between them as your speed, and inputs change with the terrain.

The whole set up is very smooth indeed, even when the motor has cut out due to your speed being above the 15.5mph assistance limit.



When paired with the STEPS E6100 crank drive motor the gearing makes it relatively simple to ride on all kinds of routes. Even on the hills, the overall weight of 23.6kg doesn't feel a handful and should you live in lumpy terrain the Volt is still going to be a fun bike to ride.

In town, just like on the hills, the overall weight is negligible. It's a heavy bike with a tall front end, but I found that it changed direction quickly and it doesn't feel ponderous when mixing with city traffic.

The upright position achievable on the Volt also gives you a clear view for upcoming hazards and allows you to keep an eye on traffic flow ahead.

Frame and kit

The Infinity's frame is made from aluminium alloy tubing of 6061-T6 grade, and on the whole it's a good-looking bike. The welding is neat and tidy throughout while the matte silver paint job gives it a look in keeping with its price.

In relation to the other tubes, the down tube is massive to house the battery, but it doesn't look out of place thanks to the curved nature of the design as it leaves the tapered head tube.



Volt have done well to minimise any extra welds needed or gussets which gives a clean look, helped also by the internal cable routing.

Even the rear dropouts have been designed to look sleek with the curved tubing running smoothly from the chainstays through to the seatstays.

There are mounts for the rear rack, a rear wheel lock and mudguards, although it does lack mounts for a water bottle cage. Not a major concern on a bike of this style, but a set of blots on the down tube would be ideal for rides in warm weather.

The frame is only available in one size which Volt says is suitable for people of 5ft7in and above. They do have the frame dimensions on their website though should you fall below that and want to see if it would still fit. My wife is just shy of 5ft5in and rode the Infinity with no issues.



Attached to the frame is a Suntour NCX D-COIL LO fork which has 50mm of travel. It's a simple fork intended for touring and trekking, and it works well here. As I mentioned earlier it does a good job of taming the larger bumps, at least in the way I had it set up, and you can tweak the settings too.

You also get the Zoom suspension seatpost, and it's one that I got on with. There is a small amount of sag when you first sit down, but from then on in it doesn't give a bouncy ride in response to your pedalling motion. It was only on rough sections, riding through small potholes, or sections of the local bike bath which have been raised due to tree roots under the tarmac that it came into play.



The one thing I would change personally though is the saddle. It's quite firm, and neither my missus nor I got on with the shape at all. It was okay for four-or-five-mile stints across town, but any further and it became a chore.

Another neat touch is the adjustable stem. It helps you tweak your position based on your height and flexibility. Sometimes stems like these can have a bit of flex in them , but this one felt solid once tightened into position.

Other neat features are the included rack and straps, and the Abus rear wheel lock. It's not going to stop it getting nicked, but it will immobilise the Volt making it a heavy lump for someone to drag away while you are in the shops.



The mudguards offer decent coverage, although the front one could do with being longer if you want to use it in the rain, or on very wet roads. The lack of length at the rear of it, plus the fact that you don't get a mudflap means you'll definitely be getting wet shoes and feet in a short amount of time.

For the wheels Volt have gone for reliability with the double walled Alex Rims DP20. It's a solid set of wheels that will take plenty of abuse. The tyres also follow that mantra.



The Schwalbes roll reasonably well for a large, tough tyre and I had no issues with punctures throughout the test period - impressive considering that it has been hedge cutting season in the local lanes around here.

One of the highlights of the build is the Shimano computer attached to the handlebar. It shows all kinds of data like speed, distance, etc. along with battery life, what mode you are in and it allows you to turn the included lights on and off as well.



The motor modes are selected by way of the control panel near the handlebar grip, and you can also use that to change gear if you want to run things manually at the rear hub, rather than automatically.

There are three modes of assistance available from the STEPS 250W motor, ECO, Normal and High with the lowest offering well over 90 miles of range in ideal conditions thanks to the 26V 504Wh Panasonic battery. Switching around the modes I could easily get over 60 miles out of it on flatter routes which I think is impressive.

A full charge takes around four hours, and the battery is removable to make that easier.

Price

Volt have priced the Infinity at £2,999 for both this model and the low step (LS) design.

Specialized's Turbo Vado 3.0 IGH has a similar battery size, and uses an internal hub gear paired to a mid-motor system. It comes with all of the accessories you'd want too like mudguards and lights.

It's currently priced at £3,450, down from £4,350. We have a Turbo Vado heading in for review, so we'll be able to give a full comparison very soon. We also recently had a look at

its lighter sibling, the [Turbo Vado SL 4.0](#), which is available for £2,800 at the minute - however that lacks the hub gears.

A Bosch Active Line equipped bike that's possibly worth a look is the hub gear version of the Raleigh Motus Tour. That's £2,599, but with manual gears. We haven't actually had our hands on a Motus in a while though so we can't really vouch for it.

Conclusion

For the level of spec and the finished build quality, the Volt Infinity STEPS is a solid performer for the money. The hub gear system and automatic shifting is a real bonus to use if you want an easy ride experience, and you have the option to go manual should you wish.

voltbikes.co.uk

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