



## Osprey Radial 34 Review



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The market for commuter backpacks is saturated to say the least, but few companies have dedicated as much energy and effort to the almighty backpack as Osprey. [Founded in 1974](#), Osprey has built their reputation by making premium backpacks for serious backpackers. Initially, every pack was sewn by owner and founder Mike Pfotenhauer. Eventually he moved to Colorado and expanded his fledgeling business by hiring local women from a nearby Navajo reservation (one of whom now oversees all Osprey repairs, some 20 years later). When outsourcing became inevitable, Mike moved his family to Vietnam and stayed for four years, overseeing the overseas operation that [Osprey is unabashedly proud of](#).

I've been using an Osprey Talon backpack for a number of years, and I'm confident in their product's materials, design and durability. I've yet to find a need for their All Mighty Guarantee, which seems to be one of the best in the outdoor industry, but it's refreshing to know that my pack is covered for life.

In recent years Osprey has ventured further into the bike market, and the Radial series represents their take on the ultimate commuter backpack. It offers 30+ liters of cargo capacity (including a padded laptop compartment), an incredible array of organizational capabilities, and a number of features that are seldom seen all in one pack. One thing many companies try to accomplish but fall just short of is creating a backpack that allows air to pass between you and your pack. Osprey's [AirSpeed](#) backpanel does this better than any pack that I've ever used. It uses a combination of stretched mesh which rests against your back and a curved, rigid panel with contoured padding to hold the pack away from your back. The pack's main straps are also made with mesh and perforated foam to increase ventilation without sacrificing comfort.

I was pleasantly surprised by Osprey's unique LidLock helmet holder. When you're off the bike, you can use this elastic mounted plastic clip to securely hold your helmet to the outside of the pack. It's incredibly simple, and undeniably effective. The Radial 34 features an exterior lock pocket which I found incredibly handy. I also like the zippered side pockets, which are great for items that you take on and off such as gloves, arm warmers and sunglasses. Rather than attempt to build a waterproof backpack, which typically compromises the pack's accessibility and aesthetics, Osprey opted to include a retractable rain cover.

The size M/L Radial 34 measures 22" x 15" x 12" and weighs just under 3 lbs. With such a lightweight design you might suspect its durability, but as I said earlier, Osprey packs are built to last. My Talon pack has been ridden hard and put away wet for years, seen its share of brambles and tumbles, and save for a smattering of mud stains, it's still every bit as good as the first time I put it on my back. I have no reason to expect anything less from the Radial 34.

The Radial 34 is available in S/M or M/L and comes in black or green. There's also a smaller Radial 26. The Radial 34 retails for \$169. Check out [www.ospreypacks.com](http://www.ospreypacks.com)

