

*A sky full of Helium,
the entry to the U-Turn range*



EASYKITE : HELIUM

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Beginner series from U-Turn

In every good product range a kite for beginners is a must. This was what the creative heads in the U-Turn development team thought when they discussed the launch of the new brand. The result is the Helium in seven sizes, bringing visual distinctiveness to this class with its design. The characteristics of the Helium are shown in this test.

After the glamorous product launch of the intermediate Oxigen and the high-performance Nitro it was obvious: The Helium would not sink into the monotony of the cheap kite. The pricing is reasonable, but clearly above X-Trac, Buster and Beamer, especially as the kite is offered initially without lines and handles*. The price is related to the more laborious design with its red and yellow U-Turn "claw" on the top surface and the overall high-level of workmanship. Looking into the cells, you can see a lot of reinforcements and strapping, keeping the sail in shape and making sure of long-term robustness. Like the rest of the range the Helium has "dirt-outs" to help remove sand from the cells. Inexperienced pilots could also leave the dirt-outs open during a flight, allowing pressure to escape when the kite is crashed onto its leading

edge, further reducing the danger of damage. Looking at the sewn bridle it is clear that U-Turn sets the same quality standards with the Helium as their top of the range kites. The canopy material is the same as used for the Oxigen and the material for the bridle is Silverguard XT, which is robust and stretch resistant.



Fully in hand: the Helium is childsplay

For the test most of the sizes are available to us, arranged in the well-known U-Turn power steps of 25 %, beginning from 1.8 up to 6.8 square metres. First impressions are gathered in force 6 winds at the beach and little Helium rises up, delivering a lot of power right from the start. For a beginner kite, the Helium tears surprisingly strongly through the wind window. The pull is even, but clear, the Helium always stays well in control and even at the edge of window is very stable.



Brand image: The claw on the top

The uncomplicated flight characteristics continue when using the Helium in a buggy. The flight behaviour whilst underpowered is interesting, as beginner pilots usually like to take a smaller size. We use the 4.4 Helium, while other pilots fly along the beach with up to six square metres. The underpowered Helium gathers momentum, not only on cross wind or down wind, but also into wind the Helium accelerates without complaining and runs surprisingly well. A bit of kite movement and some brake contribute to the driving, but are not absolutely necessary. Once set into the driving direction, the Helium pulls cleanly along the way, making life easier for beginner buggy drivers or all terrain boarders.



The Helium has enough power for tricks with the buggy or ATB

On an inland field we use the bigger sizes with 4.4, 5.5 and 6.8 square metres. Even the gusting wind does not bother the Helium. If the wind decreases, lines with a length of 25 metres or more are a good choice. With short lines the Helium likes to be kept moving, not so easy for inexperienced pilots. This more demanding handling in return rewards the pilot with good performance while driving a buggy. Even the Helium 6.8 is convincing while flying inland, during gusts the kite does not turn into a monster, and when the wind is light, you can stay in motion by moving the kite, even running against the wind.



The dirt-outs in the Helium

Conclusion:

In the entry-level area the Helium is a good representative of the U-Turn product range. With its fine balance of power and non-problematic handling the Helium should find a lot of friends, especially inland, regardless of which purpose it is used for, buggy, ATB or whatever. Pilots who already own lines and handles, or those who want to choose their lines and handles individually, should think about spending a little more to buy this high-quality beginner-kite. It will reward them with years of faithful service.



Also in the buggy everything is simple

*U-Turn kites are also available complete with lines, handles and backpack.