



An Extended Guide · No. 2024

E-Bike Displays & Apps — Assist Levels, Range & Lock Features

Reading the screen, pairing the app, and setting assist for comfort

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! Read this first — lithium batteries deserve respect

E-bikes, scooters, and powered chairs run on big lithium-ion batteries. Treated well they are safe; abused or damaged they can overheat and catch fire fast. Charge only with the charger that came with your device, on a hard surface like concrete or tile — never on a bed, couch, or carpet — and not right in a doorway or stairwell that is your way out in a hurry. Don't leave a battery charging unattended or overnight, and unplug it once it's full. Stop using any battery that is swollen, very hot, hissing, leaking, or giving off a strange smell, and keep it away from anything that burns. If a battery is smoking or on fire, get everyone out and call 911 — these fires are hard to put out. Your display is also your battery gauge — learning to read it is how you avoid getting caught far from home with a flat battery.

Let's make friends with your display and app

The little screen on your handlebars can feel like a puzzle, and the phone app even more so. But once you understand a few basics, they become genuinely useful — showing your battery, setting how much help you get, and even locking the bike. This guide demystifies both.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. Helping folks get comfortable with screens and apps is my bread and butter, and an e-bike's display is friendlier than most once someone walks you through it.

Every brand's display and app look a little different, so I'll teach you the ideas that apply to all of them rather than one brand's buttons. Learn the concepts and you can find your way around any e-bike's screen.

★ Stuck on your display or app?

This is exactly the kind of thing I love helping with, in person or right on your screen. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll sort it out together.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, your display and app will serve you well.

- ❑ The display shows your battery level, assist level, and usually your speed — learn those three first.
- ❑ Higher assist uses more battery and gives less range; lower assist stretches your range.
- ❑ Watch the battery gauge and turn back with charge to spare.
- ❑ The app, if you use one, adds extras — settings, maps, and sometimes a lock — but you can ride happily without it.
- ❑ A digital lock or alarm can deter theft but is not a substitute for a good physical lock.
- ❑ You don't have to master every feature — the basics are all most riders ever need.

✓ The idea to hold onto

Three numbers run your ride: battery, assist, and speed. Get comfortable reading those and everything else on the screen is a bonus you can learn at your leisure.

Reading the display, piece by piece

Displays vary, but nearly all show the same handful of things. Here's what you're looking at.

- **Battery level:** usually a row of bars or a percentage. Your most important number — it tells you how much ride you have left.
- **Assist level:** often numbers (1, 2, 3...) or words (Eco, Normal, Turbo). How much help the motor is giving.
- **Speed:** how fast you're going, in miles per hour. Required on Class 3 bikes and common on others.
- **Distance:** a trip odometer and often a total odometer — handy for tracking rides and maintenance.
- **Sometimes more:** estimated range, a clock, lights on/off, or an error code if something needs attention.

✓ Start by finding three things

On your very first look, just locate the battery level, the assist level, and the speed. Once you can find those three at a glance, you're ready to ride — the rest can wait.

The handlebar buttons

Most e-bikes have a small control pad near one grip. A few buttons do nearly everything.

Typically you'll find a plus and minus (or up and down) to raise and lower the assist level, a power button to turn the system on and off, and often a button for the lights. Some pads have a button to switch what the display shows — trip distance, total distance, range, and so on — usually with a quick press.

Holding a button often does something different from a quick tap — holding the power button turns the system on or off, while holding plus-and-minus together may open a settings menu. Your manual shows the exact presses for your bike, but a gentle bit of exploring while parked is a fine way to learn.

★ Let me label your buttons

If the buttons are a mystery, I can go through them with you and even make a simple cheat sheet for your fridge. Little things like that take the worry out of it. Call (330) 200-8042.

Understanding assist levels

The assist level is the heart of the e-bike experience — it sets how much the motor helps you.

Think of assist levels like gentle, medium, and strong help. A low level (often called Eco) gives a small push and sips battery, so you get the most range. A high level (often Turbo or Boost) gives a strong shove, wonderful on a steep hill or into a headwind, but it drinks battery faster, so your range shrinks.

You change levels on the fly with the plus and minus buttons as the ride demands — low on the flats, higher on the hills. There's no right answer; it's about matching the help to the moment and keeping an eye on your battery.

✓ Low assist is your range-stretcher

When you want to go farther on a charge, ride in a lower assist level and pedal a bit more. When you want an easy time on a hill, bump it up. You're the one in charge of the trade.

Making sense of the range estimate

Many displays show an estimated range — how far you can go on the charge left. It's helpful, with a grain of salt.

The range number is the bike's best guess based on recent riding. It shifts as you change assist levels, climb hills, or face the wind — bump up the assist and watch the estimated miles drop. So treat it as a living guide, not a promise, and give yourself a comfortable margin.

The surest habit is to watch the battery level itself and plan round-trips you know you can finish. As our over-60 guide notes, if the battery does run out, an e-bike is still a bicycle you can pedal home — but it's nicer to turn back with charge to spare.

! Don't trust the range number blindly

The estimate can look generous on flat ground and then plunge on a hill or a higher assist level. Watch the battery gauge too, and turn for home while you still have a cushion.

Do you even need the phone app?

Here's a reassuring truth: for most riders, the app is optional. You can ride a happy, full life off the handlebar display alone.

The phone app that pairs with many e-bikes adds extras — fine-tuning settings, maps and ride tracking, firmware updates, and sometimes lock or location features. They're nice, but none of them are needed to ride. If apps aren't your thing, you can skip it entirely and lose nothing essential.

If you do want the app, it's usually a free download from your phone's app store, matched to your bike's brand. Setting it up once is the main hurdle; after that it mostly runs quietly in the background.

✓ Skip the app if it's not for you

Don't feel you must use the app. Plenty of riders never open it and love their bikes. If you'd like the extras, great; if not, the display has you covered.

Pairing the app, step by step

If you want the app, here's the general path. Your brand's steps vary, but the shape is the same.

- ❑ Find your bike brand's official app in your phone's app store and install it.
- ❑ Turn on the bike and turn on Bluetooth on your phone.
- ❑ Open the app and look for 'add bike,' 'pair,' or 'connect.'
- ❑ Follow the prompts — it may ask you to confirm a code or press a button on the bike.
- ❑ Create an account if asked, and jot the login where you keep your passwords.
- ❑ Once paired, explore gently — settings, battery info, and any lock feature.

★ Pairing giving you trouble?

App pairing is fiddly the first time — Bluetooth, accounts, codes. It's a five-minute job for me and I'm glad to do it with you on a visit or over the screen. Call (330) 200-8042.

Digital locks, alarms, and tracking

Many newer e-bikes offer electronic security features. They're a nice extra layer — with an important limit.

Depending on the bike, the app or a code on the display may let you 'lock' the motor so the bike won't assist if someone tries to ride off, sound an alarm if it's moved, or show the bike's last location. These can deter a casual thief and help you find a stolen bike.

But a digital lock does not physically stop someone from carrying the bike away or loading it into a truck. It's a helpful layer on top of — never instead of — a good physical lock. Our locks-and-trackers guide covers physical security in depth.

! A digital lock is not a real lock

An electronic motor-lock or alarm is a deterrent, not a chain. A determined thief can still lift the bike. Always use a sturdy physical lock too — the two together are far stronger than either alone.

Two kinds of riders, two sets of needs

How much you lean on the display and app depends on the rider you are. Two pictures help you see what you need.

If you like things simple

You just want to get on and ride. Screens and apps aren't your idea of fun, and that's completely fine.

- Learn three things on the display: battery, assist, speed.
- Set a comfortable default assist and mostly leave it there.
- Skip the app entirely — you lose nothing essential.
- Use a cheat sheet on the fridge if the buttons slip your mind.

If you enjoy the extras

You like features and don't mind a bit of setup. The app's maps, settings, and security features appeal to you.

- Pair the app to fine-tune assist and see detailed battery info.
- Use ride tracking and maps to plan and log your outings.
- Try the digital lock, alarm, or location features as an extra layer.
- Keep the app updated so features and security stay current.

★ Not sure how much you need?

Tell me how you like to ride and I'll help you set up just enough — no more, no less — so the technology helps rather than nags. Call (330) 200-8042.

Setting the bike up for your comfort

A few settings, done once, make every ride more pleasant. Here's where to look.

Many bikes let you set which assist level the bike starts in — handy to default to a gentle level so there's never a surprise lurch when you set off. Some let you adjust how strongly each level pushes, or set the display's brightness and units. If there's a walk-assist mode, it gently powers the bike while you walk it, a help on a ramp or up a slope.

You don't have to touch any of this to ride, but a short setup session — ideally with someone to help the first time — tailors the bike to you. After that, you rarely think about settings again.

★ Let me dial it in for you

On a visit I can set a gentle starting assist, adjust the display to your eyes, and turn on helpful modes like walk-assist. Small tweaks that make a big difference. Call (330) 200-8042.

When the display shows an error code

Now and then a display flashes a code or a warning symbol. Don't panic — it's the bike telling you something, and often it's simple.

An error code is the bike's way of flagging a problem — a loose connection, a sensor acting up, a battery issue, or sometimes just that something needs attention. Your manual lists what each code means. Many are harmless or clear on their own; some mean a trip to the shop.

A good first move is to turn the system fully off and on again, make sure the battery is seated properly, and check that no cable has come loose. If the code returns or the bike won't run right, note the exact code and look it up or take it in.

✓ Write down the exact code

If a code appears, jot down exactly what it says before it clears. That little note is gold for the shop — or for me — in figuring out what's going on without guesswork.

Software and firmware updates

Like a phone, some e-bikes get occasional software updates through the app. Here's how to think about them.

An update (sometimes called firmware) can fix bugs, improve how the motor feels, or add features. When the app offers one, it's generally wise to install it — but do it with the bike on its stand, the battery well-charged, and the phone close by, and don't interrupt it partway.

Updates are usually straightforward, but if one worries you or seems to go wrong, that's a fine time to ask for help rather than force it. A half-finished update can leave a bike confused until it's completed properly.

★ I'll handle updates with you

If an update pops up and you're unsure, let me walk through it with you so it goes smoothly and nothing gets interrupted. Call or text (330) 200-8042.

App accounts and passwords, kept simple

If you use the app, it'll likely want an account. A little care here saves headaches later.

When you create an app account, use an email you check and a password you can find again — write it in the same place you keep your other logins, or use a password manager if you have one. If the app offers to remember you on your own phone, that's fine and saves re-typing.

Be a little wary of emails claiming to be from the bike brand asking you to 'verify' your account or click a link — that's a common scam shape. When in doubt, open the app directly rather than following a link in a message.

✓ Keep the login where you'll find it

The most common app headache isn't the bike — it's a forgotten password. Write it down somewhere safe the day you create it, and future-you will be grateful.

What the app can tell you about battery health

One genuinely useful thing some apps offer is a look at your battery's condition over time.

Certain apps show a battery's health or its charge cycles — a rough sense of how much life it has left. That's handy for spotting a battery that's aging and planning ahead for a replacement, as our battery-replacement guide discusses. It won't be exact, but a clear downward trend over a long time is worth noting.

If your app doesn't offer this, don't worry — the plain signs of a tired battery (shrinking range, needing charges more often) tell the same story. The app just puts a number on it.

✓ Watch the trend, not one reading

A single battery-health number means little; the trend over months is what matters. If it's slowly sliding and your range is shrinking, start planning for a replacement rather than being caught out.

A word on privacy and location features

Location and tracking features are handy, but it's worth understanding what you're sharing.

If your bike or app tracks location — to help find it if stolen, or to log rides — that information lives with the app maker. That's usually fine and useful, but if privacy matters to you, have a look at the app's settings for what's shared and with whom, and turn off anything you don't want.

There's no need to be fearful here; these features exist to help. Just know they're there so you can choose what suits you, the same as you would with any app on your phone.

★ I can review the app's settings with you

If you'd like to understand what your bike's app is sharing and tidy up the settings to your comfort, that's a quick, worthwhile thing we can do together. Call (330) 200-8042.

When the display or app misbehaves

Screens and apps hiccup sometimes. A few calm first steps fix most problems.

- **Turn it off and on.** Powering the bike system fully off and back on clears many glitches.
- **Check the battery is seated** and charged — a loose or low battery causes odd behavior.
- **Look for loose cables** where the display connects, if they're visible.
- **For the app:** close and reopen it, check Bluetooth is on, or re-pair the bike.
- **Note any error code** exactly before it clears.
- **Still stuck?** It's time for the shop or a call to me — don't force anything.

✓ Off-and-on fixes more than you'd think

Before worrying, try the oldest trick there is: turn the system fully off, wait a moment, and turn it back on. It clears a surprising number of display and app gremlins.

Making your own cheat sheet

The single best thing you can do with your display is write your own little reference. Here's what to put on it.

On a card for your fridge or garage wall, note: how to turn the bike on and off, how to raise and lower the assist, how to turn the lights on, how to read the battery, and your comfortable default assist level. Add the app login if you use one, and any error code you've looked up so you remember what it meant.

A cheat sheet in your own words, in big clear letters, beats any manual when you just need a quick reminder. It turns the display from something to puzzle over into something you own.

★ I'll make the cheat sheet with you

One of my favorite little services is sitting down and writing a plain, big-print cheat sheet for your exact bike. It's a small thing that makes every ride easier. Call (330) 200-8042.

Remember: you're in charge, not the gadget

It's easy to feel like the technology is the boss. It isn't — you are, and the display and app exist to serve you.

Use the parts that help you and ignore the parts that don't. If the display's battery and assist readout are all you ever use, that's a complete and happy way to ride. If you enjoy the app's extras, wonderful. There's no test, and no wrong way to use your own bike.

The whole point of all this technology is a better, easier ride. If it's ever making things harder instead, that's a sign to simplify — or to call for a hand.

✓ Use what helps, ignore the rest

You don't owe the gadget anything. Keep the features that make riding nicer, skip the ones that don't, and never feel you have to master it all. The bike works for you.

Keeping things current, without the stress

A light touch on updates keeps your bike running well without turning into a chore.

Install app and firmware updates when they're offered and convenient, with the bike charged and on its stand. Keep your phone's own software reasonably current so the app keeps working. And every so often, glance at the app's security and location settings to make sure they still suit you.

That's really all the maintenance the digital side asks for. The mechanical care — tires, brakes, chain — lives in our upkeep guide; the screen and app just want the occasional update and a seated, charged battery.

★ A yearly tech check-in

If you'd like, I can do a yearly check of your bike's app, updates, and settings alongside the mechanical once-over, so the whole bike stays happy. Call (330) 200-8042.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most about e-bike displays and apps, answered plainly.

Q: Do I have to use the phone app?

No. For most riders the app is optional. The handlebar display shows your battery, assist, and speed — everything you need to ride. Use the app only if you want the extras like maps, settings, or a digital lock.

Q: Which assist level should I use?

Match it to the moment: a low level (Eco) on the flats to stretch your range, a higher level on hills or into the wind for an easy time. Higher assist uses more battery, so keep an eye on the gauge.

Q: Can I trust the range number on the display?

Treat it as a living estimate, not a promise — it changes with assist level, hills, and wind. Watch the battery gauge too and turn back with charge to spare.

Q: Is the app's digital lock enough to stop theft?

No. A digital lock or alarm is a helpful deterrent, but it won't stop someone carrying the bike off. Always use a sturdy physical lock as well — see our locks-and-trackers guide.

★ Display or app driving you batty?

Screens and apps are exactly what I'm here for. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll make your bike's technology work for you, not against you.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made your e-bike's display and app feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I'm a tech helper through and through — screens, apps, and settings are exactly my line, and for anything mechanical I'll point you to a good bike shop.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

What the Display Shows

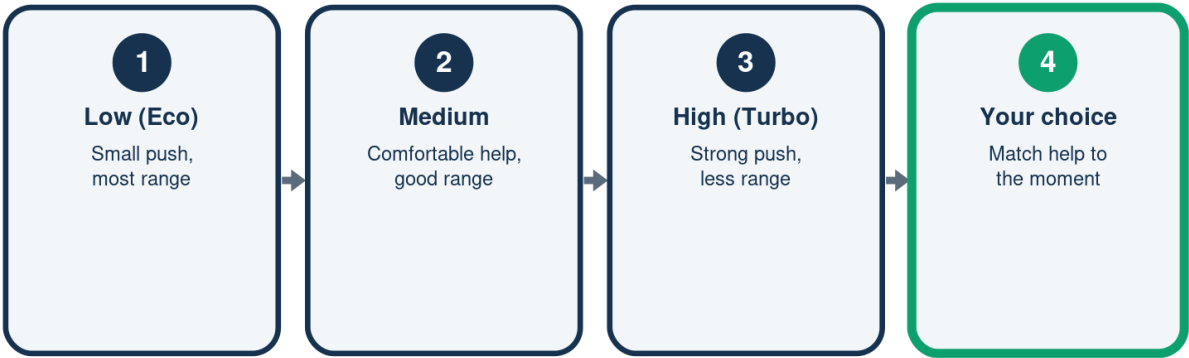
Learn these three first, the rest is a bonus

	On the screen	What it tells you
Battery level	Bars or percent	How much ride is left
Assist level	Eco to Turbo	How much motor help
Speed	Miles per hour	How fast you're going
Distance	Trip and total	For rides and service

Find battery, assist, and speed, and you're ready to ride.

Assist Level and Range

You control the trade every ride



Lower assist stretches your miles; higher eases the hills.

Do You Need the App?

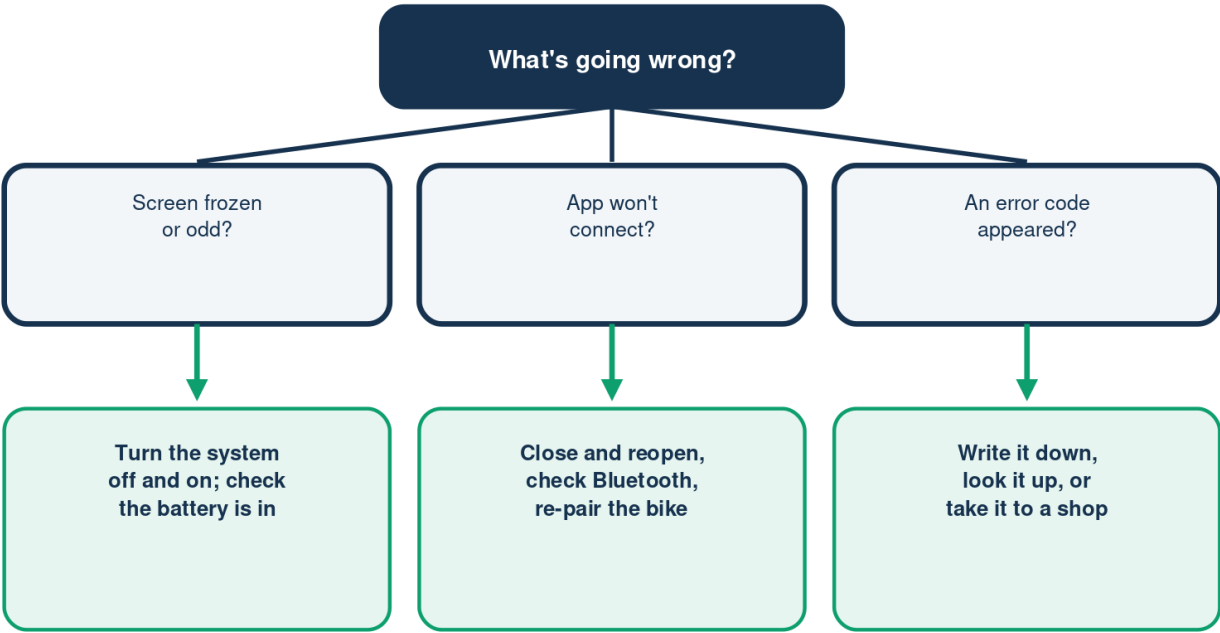
The display alone is plenty for most

	Display only	Add the app for
Battery & assist	Yes, on screen	More detail
Speed & distance	Yes, on screen	Ride logs
Settings	Basic on screen	Fine-tuning
Security	Physical lock	Digital lock, alarm

Ride happily on the display alone, or add the app for extras.

Display or App Acting Up?

Calm first steps fix most hiccups



Off-and-on clears a surprising number of display and app gremlins.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



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A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



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