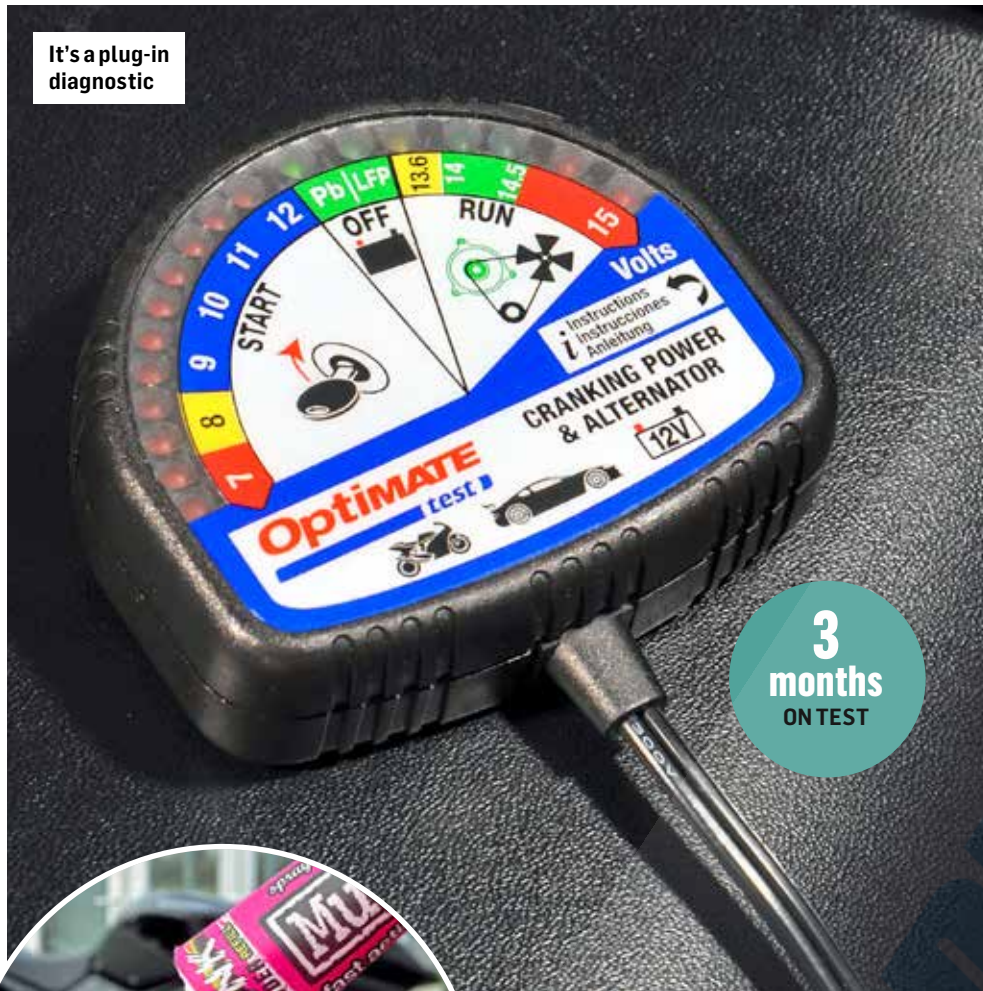


It's a plug-in diagnostic



3 months ON TEST

Optimate Cranking & Alternator tool £46.90

'Take guesswork out of feeling flat'



Tested by Richard Newland for three months

A superbly simple little tool that takes the guesswork out of a battery, cranking or charging issue. I use Optimate chargers for a number of my vehicles, and this plugs straight into the SAE connector used by the charger (or you can connect via the supplied crocodile clips). Once plugged in, you'll get a health reading for your battery's charge, then hit the starter and the unit records the lowest start voltage (the corresponding light stays on for 20secs). Then with the bike running, the unit takes a reading for the charge being returned to the battery.

If your battery is showing as weak before you try starting your bike, you can give it a proper charge and see if the issue repeats itself. If you hit the red or yellow markers in the 'Start' section, then you know the battery isn't providing strong power on cranking, and if it's reading below 14 volts, or above 15 volts when the engine is running, then you know that either your alternator isn't working, or your regulator/rectifier is toast.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.optimate.co.uk



Oxford Q4R tank bag £109.99

'Practical, stable, and durable'



Tested by Dan Sutherland for one year

I've shied away from motorcycle luggage for years, sacrificing practicality in order to maintain the look of my bikes. However, this Q4R four-litre tank bag from Oxford has well and truly turned my head.

It's well made, feels robust, is stable at speed, and you can grab whatever you need without getting off the bike. As such, I've left it in place for thousands of miles aboard my Suzuki GSX-8S. It was particularly handy on a week-long tour to the 2023 Isle of Man TT races.

With space to store your essentials, as well as things like passports and breathalysers on a longer foreign tour, I'd happily recommend it to anyone – performing well on my daily commute and staying solid during a 125mph blast across the TT's one-way mountain section.

Although I wouldn't trust it to be 100% waterproof, it does feature water-resistant zips, with a main cubbyhole, key compartment, and an upper pouch with a clear screen and sun visor – a perfect place for a phone or satnav.

There's also a small gap for you to route a cable out the front of the pack, allowing me to plug a charging lead into a USB-C port mounted on the bike.

A headstock strap, complete with a helmet-style Double D-ring fastener helps keep the bag securely in place. Although easy to fasten, it does dangle annoyingly when off the bike – meaning I'll often tie it in a knot to stop it dragging.

This is paired with a fixed, bike-specific metal plate (costing an extra £19.99) that attaches around the rim of the petrol tank – allowing you to click the bag in place both quickly and securely.

Disconnected with a chunky red lever on the right, it can sometimes be a struggle to match the base plate to the gaps in the bottom of the tank bag when fitting. Some won't like the look of the mounting metalwork when then luggage isn't attached. A magnetic base is available as an alternative.

After plenty of use, some of the blue material is beginning to show a few splodges of staining from road muck, but besides that it still looks and performs as good as new – with the chunky carry handle providing additional practicality off of the bike.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com

2000 miles ON TEST



Flexible and waterproof

Kriega Rollpack 40 £159

'Roll up, roll up'



Tested by Alison Silcox for three months

I can't speak highly enough of this 40-litre, fully waterproof roll bag from luggage experts Kriega. As I've come to expect from this brand, it's pricey but you do get what you pay for. It's made from Cordura and, unlike other roll bags I've used, it benefits from openings at both ends, which makes it easy to pack and locate gear. The size of the bag is easy to adjust, and the roll top closures are easy to use.

It secures to the bike using webbing straps and can sit on a pillion pad or luggage rack. I've used the bag for both a week away and weekend trips and it rolls down to half the size, without compromising how it fits to the bike.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.kriega.com

2500 miles ON TEST



Just add luke warm water

It all goes into an aluminium spray bottle

1200 miles ON TEST

Muc-Off Bottle For Life Bundle £45

'Less plastic, more fantastic'



Tested by Justin Hayzelden for three months

When I think of the amount of plastic I've discarded from various cleaning solutions over the years it makes me shudder, so when I discovered Muc-Off's Bottle For Life bundle it really struck a chord.

Muc-Off's biodegradable Nanotech liquid has been my go-to for years, but this bundle comes with four sachets of Punk Powder – essentially the same product but in granulated form. Each sachet makes up a litre of cleaner when mixed with water and Muc-Off say that

this reduces packaging by a massive 92%.

The bright pink bottle is recyclable aluminium and feels suitably durable to give a long service life, along with its soft and sturdy silicone base. Lukewarm water works best for making up the solution and it's proved every bit as effective at shifting dirt and grime as the old ready-mix, leaving a streak-free surface after rinsing. The combo of bottle and sachet takes up much less shed space, too, which is a win even if the eco-friendly aspect isn't high on your list of priorities.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
muc-off.com