

Alpinestars Nucleon KR-2 back protector £99.99



Tester Michael Neeves
Time used Four months/3000 miles
What's good? This is Alpinestars' top of the range, Level 2 CE-certified back protector, designed for adventure touring. I use the Italian firm's full race Nucleon KR-R back protector under leathers, but for the rest of the time – for commuting and touring – I've been using this KR-2 version, as it's lightweight and heavily vented, making it cooler and comfier to wear on long journeys. The energy-absorbing articulated back section snugly follows the contour of your spine and it fits securely and reassuringly, with its vented waist strap and removable shoulder straps. Like Alpinestars claim, it's so comfy you forget you're wearing it after a while. Build quality is top notch, too.
What's not? When wearing it with shoulder straps the lower spine section can sometimes push your pants down, especially when wearing zip-together riding kit like two-piece leathers or adventure-style gore-tex. In those cases I remove the straps and let the back protector hang lower. But it's not a problem when wearing jeans and jacket.

Contact www.alpinestars.com
Quality ★★★★★
Value ★★★★★



FOUR MONTHS
 Nucleon KR-2 will keep you cool, calm and protected on your tour

Ultimate Ear custom filtered earplugs £80



Tester James Archibald
Time tested Three months/8000 miles
What's good? As they've been moulded to the shape of my ear, these custom earplugs are a secure fit and very comfortable. The filtered plugs allow some sound through so I don't feel deaf to all that's going on around me, which is great for normal road speeds and talking to the petrol attendant with my lid on. For track riding and racing I am told the unfiltered plugs (£65) offer more protection from wind noise. Overall, they are a great product and I highly recommend them.

What's not? The initial outlay is a lot more than your average off-the-shelf plugs but bear in mind that these are a fully personalised product. They also take a little getting used to; it took me a couple of weeks before I got the hang of putting them in but since then it has been a doddle. Factor in time and potentially money to get the impressions done too, I had mine done at the MCN London Motorcycle Show but you can also get them done at your local audiologist or Specsavers.

Contact www.ultimateear.com
Quality ★★★★★
Value ★★★★★



8000 MILES

Custom earplugs provide personalised protection

Bull'It Roadster hoodie, £169.99



Tester Emma Franklin
Time tested Three months/2000 miles
What's good? This is the first urban-styled, textile riding kit I've worn that actually feels really protective. The exterior is made from 12oz denim coated with a water-repellent finish, and features a detachable grey cotton hoodie. On the inside there's a Covec abrasion-resistant material covering 60% of the entire jacket and concentrated in key impact zones, there's CE-approved soft armour in the elbows and shoulders, a CE-approved back pad, triple-stitched main seams, and belt loops to allow connection to your jeans. It fits really well so I'm confident that it wouldn't move out of place in the event of an accident. It's comfortable, confidence-inspiring and looks really distinctive. Available in sizes XS to XXL.

What's not? The pop studs that fix the hood to the collar always detach when I pick the jacket up, and they're tricky to pop back into place. Also, the two metal toggles flail about in the windblast and tap against my lid.

Contact www.bull-it.com
Quality ★★★★★ **Value** ★★★★★



2000 MILES

Looks like a fashion jacket, but is protective

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 Valvoline SYN POWER 4T 5W-40



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- > For O-ring and X-ring chains
- > Excellent bonding characteristics



MOTORCYCLE CARE PRODUCTS

- > Cleaning
- > Maintenance
- > Appearance



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