



Groundtrax sole offers great grip

6000 miles ON TEST

All-day comfy on/off the bike

TCX Climatrek Surround GTX £199.99

'My go-to boots'



Tested by Steve Herbert-Mattick for 22 months

I've always been a fan of slightly left-field stuff, and have never really been able to find a

traditional pair of boots that were great for walking around in, or for sitting in the pub.

So when TCX released these hiking boots on steroids, I was immediately interested. They feature a fully-synthetic, vegan-friendly construction, Gore-Tex, reinforced sole, heel and toe sections, Ortholite footbed for extra comfort and a Groundtrax sole for better grip – on the bike and off.

They are very comfortable 100% of the time and warm but breathable, so they work in all seasons. I rode to and spent all day on my feet at the NEC bike show last year and they never aggravated me anywhere.

They don't usually leak, but riding for three hours during one relentless downpour did see some moisture creep in. The laces provide a completely secure, easily adjustable fit and show no signs of wear. In fact, there's barely a sign of wear on them anywhere after just under two years of use.

They're excellent boots.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.nevis.uk.com

Waterproof and well vented too



Alpinestars Stella ST-7 £649.99/£529.99



'Too cool for school'

Tested by Emma Franklin for five months

Designed for female riders who want to the best comfort and protection in all weathers, Alpinestars' range-topping touring suit, the Stella ST-7, is constructed from Gore-Tex laminated textile, is AA rated for abrasion protection, and features soft, thin Level 2 armour at the elbows, shoulders, knees and hips.

Built using top-spec Gore-Tex 2L laminate (a two-layer sandwich of the face fabric with the Gore membrane bonded to it, then a non-laminated mesh lining behind that), the ST-7 feels sturdy, robust and well crafted. Even after all the rain we've had this year, it's remained 100% waterproof. Plus, the benefit of being laminate is that it doesn't get saturated, either, meaning you can literally shake it dry.

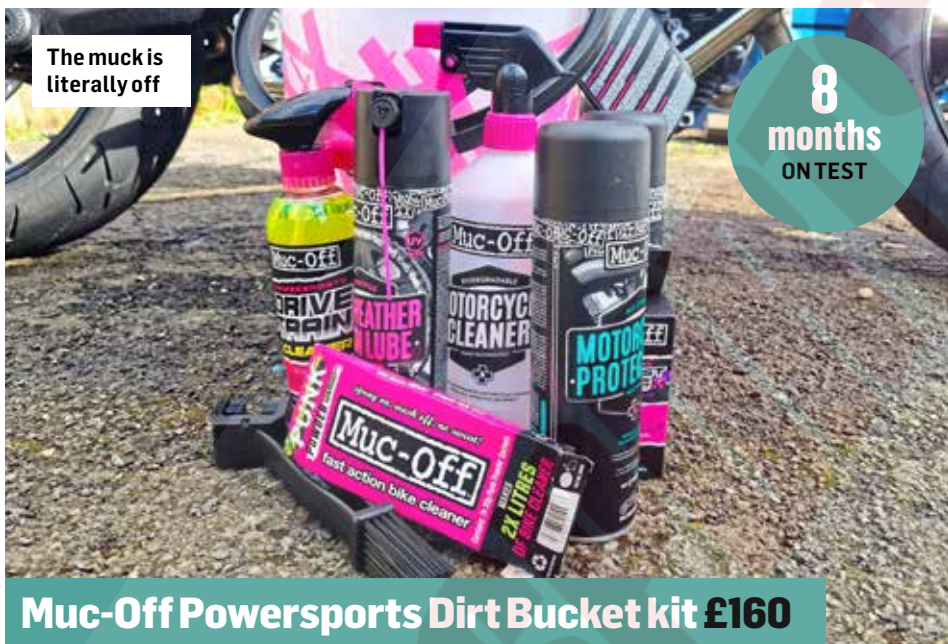
The Stella ST-7 also offers supreme ergonomic comfort. Judicious use of stretch panels allows the suit to mould to my riding position, regardless of whether I'm onboard a sportsbike or adventure machine. Velcro adjusters on the jacket's waist and arms help in getting a perfect fit – although I do find myself looking for slightly more adjustability on the waist to give myself a more cinched-in look during the times when I'm not wearing as many base and mid layers underneath.

Which brings me to my next point, warmth – the lack of which is my only real criticism of the Stella ST-7. By virtue of being single layer, laminate textiles are generally less warm than those with a separate drop liner beneath, but still – the ST-7 is one of the least cosy touring jackets I've worn. In temperatures around 10°C, I found that even when wearing a base layer and heavyweight mid layer, as well as the jacket's zip-in thermal layer, I still felt chilly. The ST-7's detachable thermal layer is very thin – a bit of a token gesture, really – and therefore body heat is easily lost.

The Stella ST-7 is a great touring suit for spring and summer use. The vents are plentiful and well thought out, and the Gore-Tex 2L laminate does a faultless job at keeping rain at bay, no matter how heavy the weather. It's well made, extremely comfortable, and looks fantastic. However, it's just not well enough insulated to be a true all-season jacket.

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

3500 miles ON TEST



The muck is literally off

8 months ON TEST

Muc-Off Powersports Dirt Bucket kit £160

'Stick this on your bucket list'



Tested by Saffron Wilson for eight months

If you're looking for a complete motorcycle cleaning set-up, don't look any further than Muc-Off's Dirt Bucket kit. The bundle features 10 items from Muc-Off's range, including brushes, care products and the bucket itself, and represents a £23 discount compared to buying the items individually.

For the most part I loved everything in the bucket – the products actually work, and it makes your clean so much easier. But if I had to pick out a niggle, I wasn't as blown away by

the 2-in-1 microfibre wash mitt. After you get it wet, it turns very heavy and I found myself gripping the inside of the mitt to keep it 'upright' as the weight became uneven. But the mitt itself worked wonders, and the bucket holds up to 13 litres of water and has a 'Filtch Filter' – a small grate at the bottom of the bucket so you can keep bigger grime particles away from your wash mitt. This kit has a chain cleaner, which I can't use because I have shaft/belt drive bikes, so it's worth weighing up if you'd be better off buying individually.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
muc-off.com



This is jolly good stuff

Bulldog DBX01 £12.99

'Bulldog lube does the job'



Tested by Gareth Evans for three months

Every once in a while, you stumble across a product that genuinely surprises you. This

Bulldog BDX lube is one of those products.

Not only does it offer an impressive level of lubrication (with an operating temperature range of between -40 to +280°C) but it's also an almighty penetrating agent. I've used it on some very old, rusty manifold bolts that were completely seized, and after five minutes of soaking and the gentlest of coaxing, they came free right away.

I'm even a fan of the bottle design – the two-stage mechanism prevents unintentional spraying and the rigid spout means you can apply with precision.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
lubricantsuppliers.com

3 months ON TEST