



Cruz Tools DMX Fender mount toolkit £152.53

'A must for off-road riders'

Tested by Simon Relph for one year



I always put together a small-but-comprehensive toolkit to cover most roadside emergencies, it's a little get-out-of-jail-free card to get you back on your way. Cruz have taken the pain out

by supplying a ready-made mudguard mounted, kit (you can stick it in a backpack if you prefer). The kit includes: 10 and 12mm ring/open end spanners, an 8in adjustable spanner, T-bar handle which can be changed into L-shape by sliding the top 'T' part across for more leverage, the T-bar has seven attachments, 8, 10, 12, 13mm sockets as well as 4, 5, and 6mm hex bits which cover most bikes' needs. Even the screwdriver is compact but is a 4-in-1 with two sizes of flat head and two sizes of Phillips. There's also a spark plug socket, which again is double ended so it fits both 5/8in and 13/16in. For those little fixes, there are a selection of cable ties, which you can top up, some wire and a roll of electrical tape to aid getting out of trouble when stuck in the middle of nowhere. And there is more! Two 240mm tyre levers, which are more than man enough for most tyres, a tyre pressure gauge, a handy little cloth, Mole grip-style locking pliers and finally, a rain cover to keep the worst of the wet and muck off... And all of this is neatly fitted into a very strong and durable case. Fabulous.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.venhill.co.uk

12 MONTHS

Who needs the RAC when you have tools to get you back on the road again?



TCX Dartwood Gore-Tex boots £199.99

'Yeah, I'm cool now'

Tested by Mike Armitage for three months / 1000 miles



Being grumpy and obstinate means that I have a natural leaning towards traditional clobber. With boots this means tall, enclosed and clumpy. Who'd want to wear trainers on a motorbike? Er, I would. My son Ed started riding

just over a year ago and being an image-conscious teenager wanted kit that he could swan around college in without anyone spotting it was bike gear. When he ordered some lace-up TCX fashion booties I grumbled about how his socks would get wet, there wouldn't be proper protection and they'd fall apart. Then they arrived and disproved everything I thought I knew. Quality and protection were high, they shrugged off winter weather, and though he's literally worn them every day (even when not using his bike) they've been faultless.

And so I've got myself something similar. These are TCX's Dartwood Gore-Tex, which obviously means a fancy membrane that beats the weather and allows breathability. Proper CE protection includes full-grain leather, a shank in the sole to give torsional rigidity, and clever D30 armour – this has 'free flow' molecules that look together to absorb impacts but otherwise are soft and flexible, meaning comfort on and off the bike. You get posh-sounding insoles, lining and 'Groundtrax' soles too. I like the subtle reinforced areas for the gearshift and brake pedal, too.

Stiff when new, the Dartwood have broken in a treat and have become my go-to riding treads. This is partly because they look cool with riding jeans and a leather jacket (as if I know what 'cool' looks like), and partly because they feel like I can genuine trust them should I run out of riding talent. But the main reason is that the laces, side zips and short rise make them a doddle to sling on and off, and they're comfortable to wear all day – so there's no need to clamber out of riding gear when you reach the office, and you don't feel conspicuous paddling around the beer garden. Two-hundred quid isn't peanuts, of course. But value and cheap are not the same thing.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
uk.tcxboots.com

1000 MILES



TWO MONTHS

Spirit Motors Ladies Mary Taillight Boots £79.99

'A great addition to my riding wardrobe'

Tested by Ali Silcox for two months/1000 miles



Made from black microfibre and CE level 2-approved, these stylish boots will also resist a light shower. Fit is good but I

found on first wear, the right boot caused a small blister. This was from walking in them, rather than riding and they have been fine now they have broken in a bit. Better still, they look great when paired up with riding leggings and a casual riding jacket.

They are lace-up with 16 eyelets and tough laces which haven't started to show

any signs of wear. The tongue is extra-long, which ensures there's no rubbing or chaffing from the laces. Plus, to make it easier to pull them on, there's a little loop at the back, which is attached to a reflective panel. The rubber sole is non slip.

They have a small element of protection with inserts at the ankle but it's a shame there is no gearchange pad. These are a great addition to my riding wardrobe but I'll need to switch back to my more traditional riding boots once the weather turns.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.sportsbikeshop.co.uk



Tucano Urbano MRK2 gloves £62.99

'I wear them a lot!'

Tested by Michael Neeves for one year/4000 miles



Made from vented fabric and an Alcantara-type material, shortie summer gloves like these aren't designed to be waterproof, or

offer the last word in high-speed protection. But they're CE certified, have an armoured knuckle with a leather surround, a plastic palm protector, an extra layer of padding around the bottom of the fingers where you hold the handlebar and rubbery strips on the fingers to grip levers. I've been wearing them way more than I expected: on two UK riding holidays and general tearing about when the weather's nice. The best thing is how comfortable they are – cool in hot weather, but thin enough to feel the full effect of heated grips in a chill. Best of all they're affordable and have stood up to the miles perfectly with no signs of wear to the seams or structure.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.tucanourbano.co.uk