



The Shark didn't suit Saffron's head shape

Micrometric strap is easy

Shark Evo GT N Com £599.99

'Not worth the headache'



Tested by Saffron Wilson for five months

I really wanted to like this helmet. I've enjoyed wearing Shark helmets in the past and thought this flip-up would be more of the same. However, as my first impression of this lid was four days of discomfort through the Scottish Highlands due to a pressure point, I'm left with a bit of a sore head. Top that with the fact that the flip up broke on the second day of use I can't call it value for money, even if you do go online and find the forum fix as I did. But equally, the helmet comes with a five-year warranty, so if you are still keen to give it a go (which may be worth it as I haven't seen any other reviews that had the same discomfort as I did) you can relax knowing that if it does break as mine did, you can at least get it fixed. Plus, I must say that the integrated intercom and sound system works really well, too.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
shark-helmets.com

1411 miles ON TEST



DXR Code Evo Boots £75.99

'Sporty bargains'



Tested by Dan Sutherland for four months

French brand DXR's wide range of value-friendly riding kit is gathering pace in the UK – available to purchase through Sportbikeshop's network of gear stores.

I've put more than 3000 miles of testing through these Code Evo waterproof sports boots this year – using them for commuting, weekend rides, a short tour, and more than the occasional summer downpour.

At a penny shy of £76, they offer a spec sheet far greater than their price would suggest – featuring double stitching in vulnerable areas, grippy rubber soles, toe sliders, external shift pads, and hard plastic armour over the shin and ankle areas.

Finished in red and black, they look decent too – sporting a style reminiscent of some sports touring designs and showing no signs of premature wear after substantial daily use. There's still plenty of meat left in the soles, and the YKK zip closer has never snagged. Both Velcro pull tabs on the closures also remain in place.

Initially a little stiff to wear, once broken in the DXRs have come to be very comfortable, with a wide opening to slip your feet in with ease, and a narrow enough shin area to tuck beneath your riding jeans or textile trousers. I have noticed some of the top stitching on the flap behind the zip closer coming apart though, which is something I've experienced with many boots of this type of design.

Another minor issue to look out for is that as soon as you begin to wear through the toe sliders, the head of the bolts grind away making it difficult to unscrew them for a replacement set.

Outside of that, they've done a good job of keeping my feet cool enough on warmer days and yet remain genuinely waterproof. I've experienced some heavy summer downpours in these, and my feet have stayed dry. For a pair of boots under eighty quid they are decent performers.

Being sold at this price point, the synthetic leather outer construction does lack the supple quality feel of more premium footwear on the market, but this goes unnoticed once you're out riding. If you're on a budget and want something with a bit of sporty flair, these could be a great shout.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.sportbikeshop.co.uk

3000 miles ON TEST



Carry case is pretty handy

Pinlock Earplugs £20

'Not so loud, but very clear'



Tested by Justin Hayzelden for three months

Manufactured from soft, medical grade TPE, these Pinlock Earplugs slip into the ear canal easily and, providing you get them seated properly to begin with, will stay in place all day. Two sizes are included and I've worn the larger ones for hours on end without any issue at all. Removal is a simple case of pulling on the tab.

They're rated to SNR24, which in practice means a dramatic reduction in wind roar, but thanks to the removable red plastic filter, both

music and speech from my Cardo comms system comes through clearly. Traffic and other ambient sounds are easy to discern too.

The filter is removable, allowing you to wash the plugs to keep them fresh, and Pinlock provide a carry case that has space for a credit card and key. There's been no sign of a drop off in fit or performance as yet, so for £20 they offer great value for money – as well as being more eco-friendly than disposables.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
pinlock.com

2800 miles ON TEST



Alpinestars GP Pro Knee Sliders £50

'A perfect feeling'



Tested by Carl Stevens for six months

I'm pretty particular about my kit. Everything must feel perfect for me to be comfortable on track, and an important part of that comes from a knee slider. It may seem like an afterthought, but for me they play a huge part in confidence – being the only contact between rider and tarmac. I've tried a lot of sliders in my time but the GP Pros from Alpinestars are my favourite, thanks to the perfect level of grip and feeling on offer. They offer bundles of feedback yet they don't grip tarmac too aggressively and are shaped well, which is everything I look for in a slider. Although they are costly, thanks to the polymer construction and their size they do last longer than some of the cheaper sliders on the market.

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

250 miles ON TEST