



Airbag kit is the way forward

A tiny bit of stitching required attention

10,100 miles ON TEST

Dainese Smart Jacket £599.99

'A smart choice'



Tested by Emma Franklin for four years

In four years of almost daily use, my Smart Jacket electronically activated airbag has served me well. Out of all the standalone airbag vests I've tried, it's been the most reliable (I've had three false deployments from two other manufacturers' products) and easiest to use. It charges via USB (in about four hours from low-charge warning light) and provides 24 hours of riding time. Although it's quite a sizeable initial outlay (it is possible to find them from £400 online) and is designed only for road use, there's no monthly subscription fee and a free service is thrown in every three years. Mine's recently had its first service and all I needed to do was return it to a Dainese dealer who then sent it to the UK importers to be checked. They even repaired some loose superficial stitching where a section of trim had come away (a £20 additional cost). With a fresh bill of health, I've got even more confidence in the system, which promises to provide impact protection to the back and chest that far exceeds the performance of any passive armour.

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



Joe keeps his cool off road

RST Ranger Textiles £399.99 + £299.99

'A suit for all seasons'



Tested by Joseph Wright for six months

I used to need separate gear for each season, but the RST Ranger's 3-layer design has me covered from summer heatwaves to winter frosts.

It comprises a stylish thermal liner, great for casual wear, that easily attaches and detaches, a main jacket that offers some of the highest-rated protection and best airflow I've ever experienced, plus an outer waterproof layer which provides reliable waterproofing when it is required.

On-road comfort is excellent, with the materials feeling high-quality. The arm cuffs and neck collar on the main jacket are lined with a non-abrasive, comfortable fabric that glides smoothly over the skin when performing life-saver checks or making handlebar adjustments.

Off-road, the textile suit's biggest strength is its AirTech ventilation system, which keeps you at a comfortable temperature as you push harder on the trails. The vents are cleverly hidden and can be revealed by unzipping a barrier layer that folds neatly to the side of the vent. It's a bit complex and time-consuming to open all four front vent panels, four back vents, and two sleeve vents, especially on the move. But once set, it delivers airflow almost comparable to motocross gear. Additionally, airflow improves significantly when standing, as the thigh vents align with the wind for maximum cooling.

The Ranger also boasts some quality features like a hydration pocket, collar loop, and a detachable map pocket – all essential when I have completed navigation rallies and multi-week tours. These thoughtful additions really give the textile suit a premium feel.

The protection in these textiles is top-notch, with both the jacket and jeans earning that all-important AA rating. Without diving too deep into the technical details, you've got Level 2 armour from head to toe, along with added impact cups and ballistic lining in all the key areas. Despite all this armour, the jacket still moves with you comfortably. It really doesn't get much better than this, and in a worst-case scenario, I'd definitely want to be wearing this suit. The only improvement I'd suggest is a sportier colour scheme.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
rst-moto.com

6000 miles ON TEST



2000 miles ON TEST

Shoei NXR2 £499.99

D-ring strap and decent vents

'It's popular for a reason...'



Tested by Gareth Evans for four months

The ECE 22.06-rated NXR2 is among the most popular helmet reviews on the MCN website because there have been some fantastic deals on this sports-touring lid, with some designs up to 45% cheaper than when they were launched. That's not the case with the one you can see here, though, which is finished in Capriccio TC5; a new design and one of 23 currently on offer.

But despite the differing price levels in the range, from £399.99 to £519.99, all come with

a wide selection of sizes, and for me this one fits like an absolute dream.

It's a very lightweight structure too, which takes some of the strain from your neck, and wind noise is minimal thanks to slippery aerodynamic properties. It's secured with a double D-ring fastener, has removable cheek pads and is well vented.

There are six inlets on the brow and chin, feeding to four outlets on the rear, allowing you to adjust the airflow for the situation at hand. A Pinlock helps keep fogging at bay.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
shoeiassured.co.uk



Versatile and it has MIPS tech too

Bell MX-9 Adventure helmet £199.99

'Value do-it-all'



Tested by Adam Oldfield for five months

Could this be the perfect do-it-all, value-for-money helmet? The MX-9 is Bell's main staple in the MX market, now in an adventure riding guise for more road riding applications, utilising its built-in flip-down sun visor. With the visor lifted, you can fit a pair of goggles as well, should you get into the gnarly stuff. The peak can be quickly detached using the thumb screws, allowing you to keep the visor on for a decent road lid. Albeit, resulting in a wider than standard view, and a bit more wind noise over a dedicated road helmet. Integral MIPS protection – to help combat rotational forces in an impact – gives added peace of mind should the worst happen.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.bellhelmets.co.uk

2654 miles ON TEST