

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT



It's quiet and comfortable for long riding days

1360 miles ON TEST



It's a great lid that doesn't cost the earth



SHARK Skwal i3 £279.99

'You hardly know it's there'



Tested by Justin Hayzelden for six weeks

The i3 is the latest in SHARK's Skwal series, noted for standing out from the crowd, quite literally, with their LED marker lights. This version takes that to the next level with integrated brake lights.

SHARK have obviously got their sums right with the 'Best Fit' technology, because I don't think it would be any more comfortable with a complete bespoke interior. And because it fits so well, there's an overall sensation of the outer shell being compact, rather than a giant fishbowl. A good helmet shouldn't feel like you're wearing it at all, and the Skwal i3 ticks that box with a flourish. It's worth noting that I wear specs and there's ample room to slide in the arms without pressing on my temples.

The quick-release visor system is another impressive aspect – open the visor, hold a button either side, twist up, and it pops off.

Installation is even easier, just line up the tabs with the holder, push in and close. Job done. Although the ease with which the visor can be changed means carrying a tinted one wouldn't be a problem, SHARK have provided an effective drop-down sun shield.

Ventilation is perhaps the weakest attribute. There are two small intakes on the chin, two on the top and a couple of intakes fixed into the rear spoiler. It obviously creates some airflow as my hair doesn't end up a hot sweaty mess, but it's difficult to perceive. Noise levels aren't unduly loud, and there's no part of the helmet that generates localised wind noise at speed.

At less than £300 (£279.99 to be exact), the Skwal i3 offers excellent value. It's put together well and has everything that could be asked of it, not to mention the added safety feature of brake and marker lights.

The LEDs can be configured to be on, off, or slow flash and when activated by the onboard accelerometer, the rear lights flash rapidly for

a few seconds. I've been using them according to weather conditions (off most of the time, on and slow flashing in low visibility such as motorway spray) and am only topping up the charge once a week.

Fit, finish and details are first class, but where the i3 really works for me is in that feeling of compact lightness. On a personal note, I'm not a big fan of micrometric buckles, the old double D-rings suit me just fine, but that's something I'd be prepared to live with.

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

PROS & CONS

- + Compact, lightweight, excellent visor system, brake lights
- Ventilation could be better. Some will prefer a D-ring strap

Shark's 'Best Fit' tech really does seem to have paid off – Justin is very impressed



Visor operation is slick and it's easy to remove