



Self-adhesive and so easy

2300 MILES ON TEST

OXFORD
SMART FINGERS

TOUCH SCREEN GLOVE CONTACTS
OXFORD ESSENTIAL RIDER EQUIPMENT

Make any glove screen friendly

Oxford SmartFingers £14.99

'No more taking your gloves off'



Tested by Justin Hayzelden for three months

When I first saw Oxford's SmartFingers I thought they were a bit of a gimmick, but as I switched to heated gloves for winter they suddenly became a must-have item. The reason is that despite costing over £200, my cosy Keis G601 heated gloves aren't touch-screen friendly, which is insanely irritating when trying to use a satnav or paying for fuel via a pay-at-pump app.

Six pads are included in the resealable foil pack, and each covers a significant area of the fingertip or thumb. They're pre-cut, so it's simply a case of peel and stick. They work exactly as advertised, with an accurate and effortless operation, and despite being in near continuous use as the main point of contact for brake and clutch lever, they haven't lifted or worn in any way.

At £14.99 for half-a-dozen stick-on patches they sound expensive, but that's massively outweighed by the convenience of not having to unplug, unzip and whip off my gloves.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com



Top comfort and spec too

HJC RAPHA 91 £499.99

'Was good for a 10-hour day'



Tested by Alison Silcox for three months

I've been a fan of HJC helmets for ages and was keen to try the latest flip-front offering. I'm happy to say I've not been disappointed with the quality, comfort and fit. It's been great and is now my go-to helmet.

I like the styling, design and ease of use. Vents are well placed and offer enough draught to be comfortable even on the warmest day. The visor aperture is large and the visor easy to open/close with the larger-than-average tab.

I headed out on a 1600-mile round trip for the first wear of this lid, that is the confidence I had in the brand, and I wasn't disappointed. Padding is soft and plush, it shows no signs of wear plus it's retained the new helmet smell, even after I was stuck in torrential rain and riding for ten hours in one day.

One thing I have learned in recent times is that I have to wear a medium lid, my previous HJC helmets were always in size small but since the change to ECE 22.06 they seem a little more snug. One slight criticism at 1700g it is heavier than most lids I've worn of late but the weight doesn't make it uncomfortable.

Flip-front lids are great for touring, and I've worn loads over the years. This one has all the practical elements that I've come to expect. The drop-down sun visor is easy to operate, via a lever on the left underside of the helmet and the visor is sufficiently tinted to be of use. There's a Pinlock anti-fog insert, which is essential for year-round riding. The clear visor is quick release and it's incredibly easy to open, even with a gloved hands, as there's a large tab to grab hold of.

Vents are easy to operate and provide sufficient air to keep cool on the hottest of days. If you are a glasses wearer, there are grooves to accommodate the arms and the helmet also comes ready to accept an intercom (purchased separately).

The placement of vents and spoilers give the HJC a sporty feel and where quite often flip-front lids can look dull, this one doesn't. It is pricey at close to £500, but in my opinion it's worth the investment as it's comfortable, has plenty of quality touches... and can you put a price on safety?

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com

2000 MILES ON TEST



Perfect for a double digit dirt crasher...

2000 MILES ON TEST

Alpinestars Bionic Tech V2 £264.99

'Serious protection for off-road fun'



Tested by Carl Stevens for nine months

I'm a big fan of going off-road, but unfortunately, off-roading isn't a big fan of me. I'm not shy of falling off and even though this jacket has seen crashes in the double digits (it's amazing what MX and enduro does) not only has it always kept me safe and intact, but it has held up impressively well too.

There's a shed-load of armour that covers everything important, from the hard back and

chest protection to the kidney belt and the abrasion-resistant material that it's constructed from. It fits perfectly snug to the skin too and is not only comfortable enough to wear all day without any issues at all, but is also well ventilated for when things get a bit sweaty. There's also now a Bionic Tech V3 jacket on sale from Alpinestars, meaning that if you shop around you might just be lucky in bagging yourself a good deal on the V2.

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



Be ready for any downpour

Oxford Rainseal Pro MS £99.99

'It feels like a second skin'



Tested by Richard Newland for four years

Almost every wet ride in the last four years has seen this lightweight, compact and hardy jacket acting as my first line of defence. When not in use, it lives in my rucksack or a pannier (it can be packed away into its own inner pocket), and has been used against summer deluges at home and abroad, and throughout British winters. It's really pleasing in use, and has a soft second-skin-like feel to it. You should order your actual jacket size – don't upsize. The waterproof material is also breathable, and crucially it's able to stretch in all directions, meaning you can get a snug fit without it being restrictive or uncomfortable. Love it.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com

10,000+ MILES ON TEST