

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT
★★★★★

FOUR MONTHS



Bell Race Star DLX Flex £649.99

'Beautiful quality and smart design...'

Tested by Emma Franklin for 2000 miles/four months



The modern-day evolution of the original full-face helmet from 1967, the Bell Race Star is a top-spec carbon-fibre lid that's up there with the best and is packed with features. First and foremost is Bell's Flex lining, which is a three-layer EPS that Bell claim will offer enhanced impact absorption at varied speeds, including protection from rotational forces. The outer-most petal-shaped layer also adds a level of adaptive fit, meaning Flex-equipped lids stand a better chance of suiting more head shapes, so say Bell. I have to agree, with the Race Star Flex being forget-you're-wearing-it comfortable right from day one. The next stand-out

feature is the huge visor aperture. Typically American, Bell call it 'Panovision', but it certainly lives up to the name. The lid also comes with a Transitions self-tinting visor, worth £140, as well as a Pinlock (for the clear visor) and a proper helmet bag. Other cool features include magnetically retained cheek pads, so there's no fighting with annoying press studs.

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

PROS & CONS

- +** Innovative features, lightweight, great visor
- High price but worth it for the quality features



Magnetic strap retainer and a classy visor design



R&G carbon fibre lever guard £149.99

'Lightweight but too flexible'

Tested by Ben Clarke for two months / 1000 miles



This carbon fibre lever guard from R&G is very lightweight and while it feels strong from a frontal direction, it has a lot of lateral flex. So much so, in fact, that you can quite easily get it to foul the brake lever. I wouldn't feel confident that it would protect the front brake if you made firm contact with another rider on track. It does mean your bike is allowed on trackdays, though, and looks cool with the exposed weave.

1000 MILES

Quality ★★★★★

Value ★★★★★

www.rg-racing.com

Alpinestars Faster-3 Drystar riding shoes £159.99

Tested by Michael Neeves for two years

These are my favourite boots for almost all my riding, including touring. Comfortable, warm and robust, you can get them for as little as £100 if you shop around. They won't offer the last word in protection in a spill compared to full-on touring or racing boots, but they're armoured around the ankle and heel, and feature rubber toe sliders. The upper is a microfibre synthetic suede that's stood the test of time well, even around the left toe after a zillion gear changes. The waterproof membrane keeps the rain out but it's easy for it to sneak in over the top of your jeans.

Quality

★★★★★

Value

★★★★★

www.alpinestars.com

