



S Doc 100 Chain Cleaner, from £10



Tester: Alison Silcox

Time tested: One application

What's good? I recently gave my bike a 'big clean' in readiness for winter-proofing and needed to give the chain a going over. Applying the cleaner to the chain and leaving it to work for 15 minutes ensured that it worked and it helped to lift all the claggy lube that had built up over recent weeks. Removing the cleaner was easy afterwards and, with the aid of a toothbrush, damp sponge and a little elbow grease, the chain came up gleaming.

What's not? It's a little bit more expensive than other cleaners on the market but you get what you pay for and with this it's really worth investing that little bit extra.

Contact: www.sdoc100.co.uk

Quality rating: ★★★★★

Value rating: ★★★★★



Oxford Tyre Gauge Pro, £19.99



Tester: Tony Hoare

Tested for: Two years

What's good? Investing in a decent tyre pressure gauge has encouraged me to save money in two ways – firstly, it's made sure I don't lose the thing (better to invest £20 in one decent gauge than waste it on a succession of cheap, nasty ones). Secondly, it's encouraged me to use it more frequently, and every tyre manufacturer's number one tip for increased longevity is to make sure pressures are correct. This gauge speeds up the correction process because it has a bleed valve to let out air until it's at the exact pressure required. So my technique is to inflate the tyres until my footpump's gauge says they're a little over the right pressure, then use this gauge to let out air until it's just right. The 90° angle of the head makes access to most valves easier as well.

What's not? It isn't so ideally suited to bikes with valves mounted at 90° to the rim, but works well enough. Draper sells a similar, gauge (code 69924) for around half the price.

Contact: www.oxprod.com

Quality rating: ★★★★★

Value rating: ★★★★★

You'll pay for the pleasure

All-weather BMW kit packs high-tech features but don't expect much change from £1100

BMW Streetguard 3 two-piece suit, £1060



Tester: Andy Downes

Miles/time: 15,500/two years

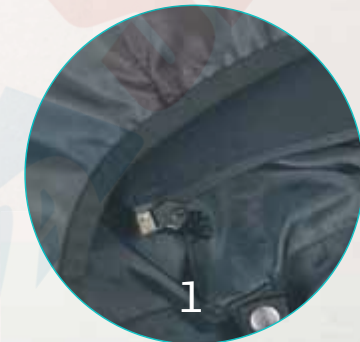
What's good? This BMW Streetguard suit is a two-piece suit that replaced my old Hein Gericke suit, and it took some getting used to. The warmth, waterproofing, armour, practicality and sheer quality are amazing. I wore it for a 2500-mile trip over four days across Europe and it was near faultless in conditions ranging from 40°C heat through to 750 miles of lashing rain and temperatures of 4°C. I don't wear it on a daily basis but for long trips where the weather is too unpredictable for leathers it's perfect. The material has a compound which is said to reflect heat so you don't get too hot which does seem to work well.

What's not? It's wallet-smashingly expensive. There aren't enough pockets on the outside of the jacket and it means I have to faff about finding the interior ones for stashing my phone, wallet and the like. After riding for almost a whole day back from Italy in heaving rain I was wet under the jacket. I don't think it leaked; it appeared water had been blown down between my waterproof neck warmer and the jacket. Annoying, but I'm not sure any jacket would have fared better. I think the option of zipping the jacket and trousers together is reserved for Olympic gymnasts. I have stopped risking knacker my already wonky back after a few pathetic attempts at getting the zip to go all the way around. Even trying to get them zipped together while laid on the floor has proved challenging.

Contact: www.bmw.co.uk

Quality rating: ★★★★★

Value rating: ★★★★★



Top two details

1: Top and bottom zip together but it's far from easy (unless you are a gymnast or yoga freak)

2: No shortage of reflective panels, which are a bonus when you are riding in the dark or in bad weather with low light conditions



Cold Killers Mini Tube, £16.99



Tester: Michael Neeves

Time used: Three months

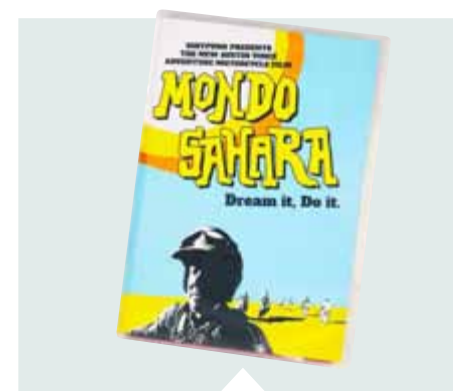
What's good? Neck-warmers are right up there with the best-ever biking inventions: the undersuit and earplug. The Cold Killers Mini Tube is excellent value, well-made and perfect to wear for general autumn and spring riding – I wear a cloth neckwarmer in the summer and if it's Baltic, a balaclava. This warmer has a warm, soft lining, a water-resistant, windproof shell and is big enough to go from my neck right to the top of my nose, if it's really cold. There's a mesh section next to the nose for easy breathing.

What's not? It would be nice if they offered the Mini Tube in some 'happier' colours.

Contact: www.coldkillers.co.uk

Quality rating: ★★★★★

Value rating: ★★★★★



Mondo Sahara, £18.50



Tester: Richard Newland

Time tested: 1h 31min

What's good? From the moment the soundtrack kicks in – a mix of spaghetti western and Arctic Monkeys at their most whimsical – this video diary of Austin Vince's latest jaunt is pure entertainment. The somewhat gonzo style might give you flashbacks to the desert race in Hunter S Thompson's *Fear & Loathing* as the Saharan sand starts to dominate the vistas, and it's no less funny or emotive. It's a far cry from the mass-budget, overly-supported, *Long Way Round / Down* trips – and when things go wrong there's no descent into self pity, the Mondo team just plough on through. It also goes to prove what you can do with just a few weeks in the wilderness, rather than having to abandon your life to years on the road.

What's not? There are times when it feels a bit 'too cool for school', and the production values might annoy some viewers, but when you consider that this was all filmed in-house and on a budget, it's incredibly well done.

Contact: austinvince.com/mondo-sahara

Quality rating: ★★★★★

Value rating: ★★★★★