



Richa Travis WP £159.99

'Shorties with protection'



Tested by Ben Clarke for 4000 miles

These excellent casual style boots have seen me through everything from thousands of touring miles and office commutes, along with an overnight stay at the UK Indian Rally.

I rarely hop on the bike without tackling a national speed limit so I tend to shop for the most protective kit I can. I was drawn to the 1-2-2-2 CE certification of the Travis (the highest achievable for a short boot) and the inclusion of top quality D30 armour is a bonus.

My only small niggles are that the area on the left toe where I shift gear has become discoloured and the friction has also caused the membrane to come loose inside. It's not a big issue yet, but I suspect it would affect the waterproofing eventually. Although that leads me into my second grumble... I tested out the waterproofing claim by heading out into Storm Amy at the beginning of October and within 30 minutes the zips had given up trying to keep the water out. I've had no issues with summer showers or even fairly heavy but not sustained rain, but these are not a serious option for proper wet weather.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.richa.eu

Casual style
with protection



6 months ON TEST

HJC Smart 11B intercom £149.99

'Connected for sound'



Tested by Richard Newland for five months

Helmet comms are something I resisted until last year – but now I hate riding without. I still refuse to make or take calls while riding, but I listen to music non-stop, via my phone or the dash (depending on the bike).

This Smart 11B system is fitted to my HJC RPHA60, and the integration is absolutely superb. The slim control unit clips into a pre-formed recess, while the battery pack bolts into the base of the helmet at the nape of your neck. Speakers slot neatly into their recesses, while the mic has its own little home, and all the wiring clips into pre-formed channels. So far, so faultless.

The position of the battery means



7000 miles ON TEST

It's good but
could be louder

it can be meatier than most self-contained units, and it lasts for a genuine 22 hours or so. But when it's out of juice it tells you once, then dies immediately. Cardo's approach of warning you in advance on each use, so you can recharge it before the silence descends, is much better.

The unit runs on Bluetooth 5.1, has voice prompt functionality, a 400m range for the two-way intercom,

noise control, and recharges in around 2.5 hours from dead.

Downsides? It's not MESH enabled, the app is basic, there's no radio – and the speakers are too quiet if you're travelling over 40mph and wearing decent earplugs. Overall, a great value, low-cost unit, that does the job without fanfare.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com

AGV K7 £449

'It's up there with the best'



Tested by Steve Herbert-Mattick for six months

Here at MCN HQ we test and review a lot of kit. You know you're on to a good thing when your shiny, new whatever has the rest of the editorial crew rubbernecking and making their way over for a poke and a prod. The arrival of this K7, AGV's new-for-2025, ECE22.06 composite fibre lid was just such an event.

Claimed to be the most compact full-face helmet in its category and weighing just 1693g for my size M (the 3g is probably just six-months of sweat and dirt), it's certainly light enough. The unusual, aggressive and windtunnel-developed shell is available in three sizes with four EPS sizes.

The helmet incorporates a drop-down sun visor that gives nearly full coverage and is very easy to operate via the switch on the collar. While it comes comms-ready, that only works with AGV's own headset. The built-in port prevents you installing an aftermarket unit which is a shame if you already own one or ever switch helmets.

Venting is decent with one on the chin and three on top. The flush, aerodynamic switches can be a little tricky to locate and slide with gloves



Unusual aero shape really works and the interior feels supremely plush

on and when open, airflow is best with your head dipped slightly – proving the K7s sporty intentions. Stability is excellent – that shell really works, especially with its bow-shaped chin bar. And with the close-fitting collar and generous chin curtain, it's one of the quietest helmets I've used.

The thick, 190-degree visor ratchets open to multiple positions and locks shut with a satisfying click, and the removal mechanism is well-designed and easy to use. There's a Pinlock in the box, too.

Where the K7 really slays is the interior. They call it premium but I'd say it's ultra-premium, and the 'oohs' from the office pokers and prodders suggest I'm right. The soft, super-plush lining is instantly – and all-day comfy and so far, resilient to the sort of stubble-shredding I've seen with luxury lining in the past. It's favourite-pillow-after-a-long-day good. True, not everyone likes a ratchet chin strap, but I do.

Best new lid I've ever had? It's right up there for sure.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.agv.com

2000 miles ON TEST

Tested by Richard Newland for five months

Helmet comms are something I resisted until last year – but now I hate riding without. I still refuse to make or take calls while riding, but I listen to music non-stop, via my phone or the dash (depending on the bike).

This Smart 11B system is fitted to my HJC RPHA60, and the integration is absolutely superb. The slim control unit clips into a pre-formed recess, while the battery pack bolts into the base of the helmet at the nape of your neck. Speakers slot neatly into their recesses, while the mic has its own little home, and all the wiring clips into pre-formed channels. So far, so faultless.

The position of the battery means



7000 miles ON TEST

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noise control, and recharges in around 2.5 hours from dead.

Downsides? It's not MESH enabled, the app is basic, there's no radio – and the speakers are too quiet if you're travelling over 40mph and wearing decent earplugs. Overall, a great value, low-cost unit, that does the job without fanfare.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com



Designed to stay in ears

Powerbeats Fit £199.95

'Not the best but not bad'



Tested by Gareth Evans for four months

These earbuds aren't specifically for motorcycling, but they've got very good active noise cancellation, which means they're a great substitute for earplugs even before you beam any music through them. They're meant for fitness usage, so they're sweat- and water-resistant. They

boast up to 30 hours of battery life, although if you initiate full noise cancellation this drops to six hours.

They're not without drawbacks, : the design stays in my ear well but they protrude slightly too far for them to stay in place when I remove my lid, and the app lacks sound customisation – I'd prefer a bit more bass but don't have the option.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.beatsbydre.com

4 months ON TEST