

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT
★★★★★

18 MONTHS



X-lite X-803 Ultra Carbon £429.99

'Incredible on both track and road'

Tested by Mike Armitage for 18 month, 2000 miles



Fabulously light? Amazing vents? Racy little spoiler? Jazzy interior? Yes, to all of it.

The carbon composite X-803 is X-lite's 'pure racing helmet', as used by WSB and MotoGP types. I first used it on a blisteringly hot July trackday and was delighted by its ability to stop my bonce turning into a clammy beetroot. Best track hat that I've used? I reckon.

But what makes the X-803 stand out is that it also works as a day-to-day road helmet. The quick-wicking liners of some race lids can become scratchy and irritating, but the 'innovative netting' and quality materials of the quick-release cheek pads and pleasingly bold lining mean it stays

comfortable on long days. Sure, you don't quite get the sumptuous luxury of some touring helmets but, a lack of fatigue from the light weight (1310g but feels less) is a pleasing payoff, and visor swaps are breezy. It's backed by a five-year warranty and there's more good news: officially it's £430, but online it's just £325 – and non-carbon X-803s can be found for £200.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.motogear.co.uk

PROS & CONS

- +** Great venting and very comfortable
- No drop-down sun visor to stop the glare



The interior does a great job of keeping you cool



Alpinestars Patron Gore-Tex boots £279.99

'No sign of wearing out anytime soon'

Tested by Michael Neeves for three years, 10,000 miles



So good I've reviewed them twice – the first was just over 12 months ago when they'd already put in nearly two years and 5000 miles of hard, unflinching service, keeping my size nines warm and dry. Now I've doubled the mileage having worn them on just about every cold and wet road test we've been able to do since. They're still not pretty, but they're not supposed to be and instead they're bombproof and get more comfortable with age. Reassuringly thick and sturdy, there's no sign of the armoured leather uppers or rubber soles wearing out any time soon and they're still completely waterproof, easy to slip on and off and are nicer to spend time with than they have any right to be. Full list price is high, but you can find them for half that online, which makes them great value for a boot that'll last a lifetime.

Quality ★★★★★

Value ★★★★★

www.alpinestars.com

10K MILES

Topeak Joe Blow Sport III £34.99

Tested by Ali Silcox for five years

This upright pump works on my push-bike, scooter, motorbike and car. It has a two-headed valve, for both Schrader and Presta fittings, and is easy to clip onto the tyre valve. There's a large, clear dial indicating the pressure in both psi and bar, and it seems accurate – that said, I always double check. After more than five years of use, is showing few signs of wear.

Quality ★★★★★

Value ★★★★★

www.halfords.com

