



Alpinestars Supertech R: built to last



Alpinestars Supertech R £599.99

'They've always done me proud'



Tested by Michael Neeves for two years

These second generation

Alpinestars Supertech R race boots were released in 2021. They look similar to the previous model, but there are a handful of minor updates to make them lighter, more comfortable and offer more protection in a spill.

There isn't a huge amount of difference between the old and new models in the way they feel on your feet, but there wasn't a lot wrong with the Supertech R in the first place. They're not too bulky, so they're comfy on the bike, fine for walking around and despite the heavy use they get racing and road testing, it's clear they're built to last.

While the outer synthetic leather boot is there for impact and abrasion

resistance, it's the ski boot-like inner boot that does the heavy lifting in a crash, stopping your ankle from twisting. They're designed to go underneath your leathers with the outer boot over the top. I've crashed in Supertech boots on track more times than I care to remember and they've always done me proud, so protection isn't an issue.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.alpinestars.com

Two years ON TEST

HJC i80 £229.99

'My first flip-front... and it's a winner'



Tested by Robin Kirkley for four months

Believe it or not, I'd never actually worn

a flip-front helmet before I took ownership of this HJC i80 – so I wasn't really sure what to expect. I had read that they can be fiddly to operate as well as being noisier and heavier than a full-face option, so I was slightly apprehensive. But the very first ride revealed that I needn't have worried.

The polycarbonate-shelled i80 was comfortable from the second I pulled it onto my head and I set off feeling every bit as protected as I do in my full-face helmets. In closed mode on the move, I barely even noticed I wasn't wearing a 'normal' helmet, especially as it seems just as quiet as full-face models I've tested (or quieter in some cases). Even on motorway stretches, the wind noise was minimal and it never competed against the audio from my satnav.

But it was when I pulled over to take a drink that the i80's party piece really came to the fore. Being able to flip the entire face up, take a drink and then get straight back on the road was a revelation and suddenly I understood what the modular converts have been talking about.



HJC's been a flipping revelation

Things only got better when I stopped for fuel and strode into the shop to pay for without looking like I'd come to rob the place.

The mechanism is easy to use and the flip locks securely in both open and closed positions, which means you can enjoy the cooling effect of the wind in your face as you cut across town.

I must admit I ended up taking the visor peak off since it caused noticeable wind resistance at anything above 40mph or so. That drag made the peak vibrate and even pushed my head around at speed, especially when I hit a crosswind on an open stretch.

I also find the internal sun visor a little flimsy and I don't think it comes down far enough, meaning low sun can still get me in the eyes. Also, the main visor is Pinlock-ready but the i80 doesn't come with one. But those are the only negative points. Best of all, the Roki Yellow design perfectly matches my 40th Anniversary BMW F850GSA.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.sportsbikeshop.co.uk

2500 miles ON TEST

Oxford Montreal 4.0 £59.99

'Toasty and dry hands'



Tested by Dan Sutherland for one year/5000 miles

These Oxford gloves

have been a great addition to my riding kit on colder days, and when it's raining – providing toasty all-weather protection to my fingers at a very reasonable price.

CE certified to the 1 KP level, they feature hard knuckle protection and an elasticated closure system that allows me to tuck them either inside a jacket sleeve, or comfortably over the top – depending on the width of the arm opening.

I've worn them in some appalling conditions, and they've kept my hands dry in almost every scenario. On a few occasions, moisture has found its way in via the cuff after



Pretty good for under £60

One year ON TEST

running down my sleeve, but that has often been the fault of the jacket, or the riding position of the motorcycle, rather than the gloves.

Their toasty nature does make them a bit too warm to be called upon for wet summer rides, and the

tip of the left index finger is showing some noticeable signs of wear – likely caused by contact with my visor when using the glove's integrated wiper blade.

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



You could live under there...

R&G Cruiser Cover £67.99

Serious coverage



Tested by Ben Clarke for five months

I needed a larger bike cover to envelope the heft of the Indian 101 Scout long-term test bike this year and so this option from R&G looked like a good choice. It is cavernous – it swallows up the Scout with room to spare, even with the hard panniers I fitted – which means it reaches all the way

to the ground all the way around the bike. I was concerned about it getting shredded in the wind because of how much slack fabric there is but it's secure enough with its belly strap and the fabric is so heavy duty that this hasn't been an issue. It was looking dirty before I took this shot, so I gave it a blast with a pressure washer and the bike stayed bone dry.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.rg-racing.com

Five months ON TEST