

'Waterproof denim jeans cost an arm and two legs'

Neeves's Rev'IT riding jeans kept him dry in all but the heaviest of downpours

Rev'IT Memphis H2O jeans: £199.99

Tester: Michael Neeves

Time used: 3250 miles

What's good? These aren't on sale until Spring 2015, but I tried a pre-production pair during a recent 3250-mile ride to Ibiza and back, on my BMW S1000R. Rev'IT claims the new jeans, which come with knee and hip armour, have extra abrasion protection and are also 100% waterproof, thanks to specially-treated denim. A mesh lining prevents friction against skin in a crash and prevents the jeans sticking to your legs, but I still wore an undersuit for comfort and extra warmth in the cold. They're not as light as normal jeans, but they're not overly bulky, so they're comfortable to wear on and off the bike. The seams don't leak and the jeans do their job and have kept me dry in rain, unless it's very heavy.

What's not? We had two days of riding in torrential conditions for four or five hours on end – the worst rain I've ever ridden in. Eventually the relentless weight of the water seeped through the material and to my skin, but these were really exceptional conditions and the jeans will keep you dry for general wet-weather riding. The other downside is the price, as it's a lot of money for a pair of waterproof trousers.

Contact: www.rev.it.eu

Quality rating: ★★★★★

Value rating: ★★★☆☆



Keep it zipped
Waterproof zips are a nice touch for keeping your cash etc dry



Armour
There's knee and hip armour plus extra abrasion protection and a mesh lining

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RIDING JEANS

1 Not all Kevlar is the same.

Kevlar is DuPont's abrasion-resistant fibre that's formed into a material used to line riding jeans. DuPont only allows those that use a substantial amount of Kevlar to be described as 'Kevlar jeans'. Others can only list Kevlar in their 'ingredients'.

2 Knitted is best.

The best abrasion resistance comes from a panel of material that's knitted rather than woven, so the best stuff will feel like a towel rather than a blanket.

3 Think about areas.

Some jeans are entirely lined with Kevlar or other abrasion-resistant materials, but they're bulky and aren't so comfortable to wear in general use. Most jeans are lined at the seat, hips and knees as those are the key impact areas.

4 Lining is crucial.

A mesh lining between the outer material and your skin helps stop friction building up and causing painful abrasions on your skin in a slide.

5 Not all riding jeans are lined.

Companies including BMW, Held and Rev'IT have developed denim-like outer materials that provide their own abrasion resistance, so there's no need to line them with bulky panels of aramid fibre anyway. These should still have the mesh lining to stop friction building up next to your skin.



Spot Gen 3, £150



Tester: Andy Davidson

Time tested: Eight months/3000 miles

What's good? Spot Gen 3 is a small GPS tracking device that can send check-in emails to loved ones and friends and give them location coordinates. Pushing the SOS button on the handlebars sends the rider's location to the emergency services. It works anywhere in the world and makes for the perfect adventurer's companion.

What's not? Like with a mobile, you pay upfront for the device and thereafter it's £108 per year for the basic service, which is paid a year at a time. Additional rescue plans can be added on top for another fee.

Contact: www.findmespot.eu

Quality rating: ★★★★★ **Value rating:** ★★★★★



Spidi Sport H2O Out jacket £240



Tester: Emma Franklin

Time tested: Six months/3000 miles

What's good? This versatile jacket saw me through spring and into summer.

Once the temperature started to climb I whipped out the thermal lining, and the outer with its integrated Forcefield CE armour in the elbows and shoulders felt as lightweight as motocross gear. It's remained totally waterproof, even the two outer pockets. Impressive.

What's not? The zip closure is bias-cut towards the collar, which does help keep out the rain, but it means the uppermost popper can be awkward to close. Plus, the jacket isn't as breathable as some I've tried.

Contact: www.spidi.com

Quality rating: ★★★★★ **Value rating:** ★★★★★



Forcefield Pro L2K back protector, £99.99 (replaced by the Pro L2K Evo)



Tester: Alison Silcox

Time tested: Two years/4000 miles

What's good? I've owned a previous incarnation of this Forcefield back protector and after a couple of years' use the shoulder straps stretched to a point of being almost unwearable – not the case with this model. The protector is flexible and moulds to my back and when I'm wearing it I don't actually notice it's there.

What's not? I wanted to be really picky the Velcro on the waist strap can be a bit 'grabby' on other clothing. Now superseded by the Pro L2K Evo at £119.99.

Contact: www.forcefieldbodyarmour.com

Quality rating: ★★★★★ **Value rating:** ★★★★★

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