



Shoei GT-Air 3 £649.99

3 months ON TEST

Comfy, quiet and all-round excellent

'That bit more refined in every area'



Tested by Michael Guy for three months

Having used a Shoei GT-Air 2 for the previous three years, my transition to the GT-Air 3 has been seamless. There's a reason why my old helmet became my go-to for all my road miles and that was down to the combination of precise fit, plushness

and comfort along with noise – or lack of it. The GT-Air 3 offers more of the same, but manages to be that little bit more refined in every area. From the way it fits on your head and the way the visor closes, stopping any drafts, to the plushness of the interior and stunning paint finish.

It's fully loaded too with drop-down tinted visor, Pinlock, Sena intercom ready and good ventilation

plus a fully removable and washable lining.

Ultimately the proof is in the pudding and having done a number of four-hour rides where I only stopped for fuel, so didn't even remove my helmet, I have to say it's the most complete, fit-for-purpose helmet I've had the pleasure to use.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.shoei-europe.com

Makita DMP180 Inflator LTX £93

'It's a game-changer'



Tested by Michael Neeves for nine months

We all know how important it is to check and adjust tyre pressures. I've always used foot pumps at home, or borrowed other people's if I've ridden to a trackday and can't carry my own in the rucksack.

I've also pounded more steps than a London Marathon inflating my racing tyres over the years. Last summer all that changed. I was at a Spa trackday on my long-term and for the ride home, when I needed to pump my tyres back up, I borrowed a kind Dutch fellow's Makita cordless air pump. It made the job of restoring road pressures quick and easy, especially for the rear tyre, which runs ultra-low track pressures.



Pumping made easy

9 months ON TEST

Coincidentally at a Donington trackday I borrowed another Makita pump and was so impressed I bought one off Amazon there and then. I've not regretted it for a minute

It's robust, reliable and runs on a rechargeable battery, which isn't

included in the price (or the charger), but lasts ages. I use it on car, bicycle and motorcycle tyres. It's pricey, but it's made my life so simple. I can't believe I haven't had one before.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.makitauk.com

Oxford Heritage Backpack £99.99

'Imperfect retro chic'



Tested by Ben Clarke for three months/2000 miles

Let me start by saying that I would absolutely buy one of these backpacks for myself. That may sound strange, since I've only given it three stars, but let me explain. I'd be more than happy to put up with the Heritage's shortcomings because it's reliably waterproof, looks good on the kind of bikes I like and is comfy enough with a light load packed inside. But, I don't think it's worth the £100 RRP (you can find it cheaper from plenty of online retailers) and what I consider to be problem areas would likely be deal breakers for other riders.

On the plus side, I think Oxford have nailed the old-timey looks without it looking twee, or as though I'm off to a battle re-enactment. I'm riding an Indian 101 Scout on the fleet this year, and you can just about get away with modern-looking gear on that, but if you have a genuine classic or a modern retro like a Triumph Bonnie or a Royal Enfield Classic, you want something that looks the part. If the khaki look is a bit much for you, they also do it in a more subtle black option.

I also like the way you can stuff it



Retro without being overly twee

to its 30-litre capacity or leave it mostly empty and the fabric just sort of slouches to the appropriate volume. It's got a handy outer pocket where I keep my disc lock and although the outer waxed cotton soaks through in persistent rain, the inner liner bag stays completely watertight.

3 months ON TEST

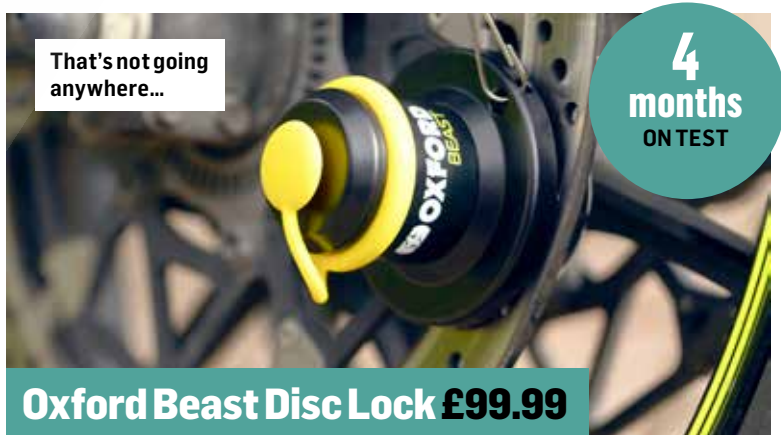
With a lighter load, the shoulder straps are comfortable and you get a chest and hip belts for security, too.

But, if you carry a heavy load the straps start to really dig into your shoulders after 20 mins or so and it's genuinely unpleasant. The quality of the finish is iffy, too, with cheap-feeling faux leather strap ends and stays clumsily stitched in place and flimsy-feeling plastic buckles. I lost one of the snap fasteners for the external pocket after only a few days, too, which I don't think is good enough for a £100 item. All of that being said, I genuinely do still like this bag (which is disparagingly known as the 'hipster sack' by rude colleagues) and I will keep on using it.

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

That's not going anywhere...

4 months ON TEST



Oxford Beast Disc Lock £99.99

'This thing really is a Beast'



Tested by Richard Newland for four months

This Beast disc lock takes all of the Sold Secure Diamond-standard protection of its bigger namesake and delivers it in a more portable package. It really is a hefty little lump of thief-beating metal, weighing in at 1.3kg and feeling more dense than I do after zero sleep.

The 16mm pin is separate from the main body, making it a two-hand job to deploy, and the anti-pick lock can be tricky to locate the key into in the dark – but the lock is otherwise effortless to use.

Like all disc locks, it suits some discs/bike better than others, but once fitted it'll take a very committed thief to get it off again.

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