

PaintNation custom paint

How Long: 5 months **Cost:** £180–£400, depending on complexity **Contact:** paintnation.co.uk



➤ There's not a lot more I like than covering my ugly mug with this helmet's amazing paintwork and I'm so proud of it. I was going to keep it just for Sunday best but it's the only helmet I wear now.

It's a good job the quality of the work is up to the task. I was stunned when I first saw it and still take a few minutes to admire it each time I put it on. There's so much

detail, all airbrushed with no stickers and perfect masking turned around in just three weeks by the same guy who sprays a lot of top racers' lids.

Half has a matt finish, the other half is a gloss design and Phil at PaintNation did warn me that matt finishes aren't as resistant to chips as gloss. But there have only been a couple of chips so far, caused by stones thrown up from a bike in front.

Mark White



Clarke CDP151B drill press

How long: 4 months **Cost:** £128.39 **Contact:** machinemart.co.uk



➤ This is what you buy when you're fed up with trying (and spectacularly failing) to make perpendicular holes with a hand drill.

It'll take a 13mm drill shank, the 300W single phase motor has plenty of power and you can jiggle the belts at the top around to vary speed from 460rpm (aluminium and nylon) to 2480rpm (steel and wood). It's big – 720mm high – so you need a fair bit of space.

The drill tip vibrates a bit until it's drilling, but it's accurate enough to make

tools and brackets, and tireless enough to stitch-drill any shape from steel plate. The table clamp is easy to adjust up or down, and the whole thing is suitably rigid.

What you don't get is a light (which is why I've cobbled up an old desk lamp) or a vice to hold the work (a 4in Clarke one is £12). You need both.

Is it all worth the money? I was happy paying £128 for something that improves my garage life. The trouble is it's made me want a lathe, too...

Rupert Paul



Autojumble spanners

How long: 6 months **Cost:** £10 **Contact:** tool stands at bike autojumbles, like Newark and Stafford



➤ It's amazing how cheap tools have become these days. Ten quid for eleven perfectly good spanners? It's ridiculous.

Some far Eastern tools are a waste of money – hacksaws, pliers, screwdrivers and the like – but these are fine, and widely available at places like the Stafford Classic Bike Show (twice a year) or the Normous Newark autojumble. They're 15,



17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 30 and 32mm, which is ideal for working on forks or getting wheels out. And you can get a smaller range set for the same money. Worth ten quid? Definitely.

Rupert Paul

Sidi B2 Gore boots

How long: 3 years/15,000 miles **Cost:** £230
Contact: sidiselect.co.uk



➤ Goretex-clad sports boots are the Holy Grail of road riding and these don't disappoint. If you want a no-nonsense, protective and practical boot that you can wear in all seasons, the B2 Gore fits the bill.

With a leather upper, they use a Goretex membrane throughout the boot and have Sidi's trademark squeaky Vertebra system that stops lateral movement in the event of a crash.

They also don't have the buckles and ratchets many Sidis do and that's a good thing – fit is still OK, though.

With a stiff sole they take some bedding in and don't give a huge amount of feel to begin with, but stick with them – it gets better with time.

Waterproofing is good, with no leakage through the zip and only a slightly damp toe on the left-hand boot after lengthy high-speed rain riding. Simple, good boots.

Matt Wildey

