

# Reviews

# Gear up

COMPONENTS, KIT, AND MEDIA SELECTED  
AND REVIEWED BY BIKE JOURNALISTS AND CYCLING UK STAFF

## Put to the test

Is there a product that you think needs reviewing?

Write to: *Cycle*, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ

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media.co.uk



### Pros & cons

- + Very waterproof
- + Not too long
- Noisy when pedalling



Endura

## MT500 Waterproof Short

Shorts that keep you dry no matter what the trail throws at you

£99.99 [endurasport.com](http://endurasport.com)

For post-work blasts along waterlogged trails, I can put up with a damp bum; I know I'll be warm and dry again soon. For longer off-road and multi-day rides in such conditions, damp shorts are unpleasant and uncomfortable.

I find waterproof trousers boiling, but thought they were my only option until a pal recommended Endura's MT500 waterproof shorts. I already have the fantastic MT500 jacket, so when I found the £99 shorts discounted I took the plunge.

In short (sic), they were a godsend throughout last year's

wet autumn. I'm truly impressed. Water beads off, and even muck has a hard time clinging to the ExoShell60™ three-layer waterproof fabric.

They dry quickly too. On my first outing with them, I encountered an overly deep puddle on Wiltshire's downs that sent me swimming. While everything else remained soaked for the rest of the journey, the shorts soon dried off.

Coming in black or maroon (called cocoa), they're a comfy breathable short with an elasticated waist band that's compatible with Endura Clickfast

liner shorts. I'm a 32in waist and chose the small, which is just right. Unlike many MTB shorts, the length comes just over the knee rather than half way down my shin (thumbs up for that), and I would imagine, given the range of movement, that they would be fully compatible with knee pads.

There are only two hip pockets, which have very firm zips. I've already broken the plastic tag on one as I pulled out my phone in a hurry. Still, those zips are waterproof. There's a reflective strip on the back of the shorts, which will help companions keep you in sight on night rides and add conspicuity for road sections.

The shorts are really noisy when you're pedalling, but no more so than waterproof trousers and perhaps to be expected. ●

**Sam Jones**

## Other options



### FOX DEFEND PRO WATER SHORT £100

These promise to keep the worst of the trail and heavens out. They have fully-taped seams and waterproof zippers. Black or green camo. <https://uk.foxracing.com/>



### MADISON ZENITH WATERPROOF SHORTS £74.99

Cheaper than others, Madison's Zenith waterproof shorts are still a pretty penny. These come in grey or a vibrant orange. [madison.cc](http://madison.cc)

## Verdict

*These shorts might put a dent in your wallet, but if you ride long distances in the wet and mud, you'll find its money well spent.*



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FumpaPumps

# Fumpa and MiniFumpa battery pumps

Mini compressors that can reach track-pump pressures

**Fumpa £139 miniFumpa £109**  
[fumpapumps.co.uk](http://fumpapumps.co.uk)

**Pros & cons**

- + Effortless inflation to 120psi
- + Good build quality
- Expensive
- Noisy



**A**ustralian-made Fumpa pumps – both the regular workshop

Fumpa and portable miniFumpa are tested here – aim to take the effort out of inflating tyres. They do just that, using a patented miniature air compressor and a rechargeable lithium ion battery to generate an impressive 120psi.

The larger model will inflate at least five 700x23C tyres to over 100psi, while the miniFumpa can manage two such tyres and will get both to the 120psi max. Fatter tyres need less pressure, which means the pump doesn't have to work as hard, so expect around half as many extra inflations when pumping mountain bike tyres to, say, 30psi. Either pump will top-up a tubeless tyre but neither is likely to seat such a tyre from scratch.

Both recharge from a USB port.

A micro USB cable is supplied but no charger; a mobile phone plug will do the job, but Fumpa's literature warns against using 'cheap, counterfeit wall chargers' from 'sites such as Amazon', so beware. Charge rate is the USB-standard 550mA, so recharging the big pump takes around 3hrs from flat; the smaller one takes about 2hrs. Stored in a bar bag, the miniFumpa could feasibly be recharged from an on-bike dynamo-powered charging device while riding.

The miniFumpa's charging light goes out once full, while the larger model's does not. Instead, the digital readout, which also shows inflation pressure in Bar, kPa or psi, indicates 100% when the on-off switch is 'on'. Leaving

the device turned on flattens the battery overnight. The miniFumpa has no switch, and is only 'live' when the operating button is in action. The mini's press-on chuck only fits a Presta valve, while the larger version's will do Presta or Schrader.

First-time use is a startling combination of noise and vibration. This is followed at higher pressures by considerable heat as the device warms up; there's a thermal cutout to prevent damage. The Fumpa's hose-mounted chuck is tricky to push onto a valve one-handed. Pressure indicated on the Fumpa's gauge steadily drops once inflation stops, perhaps as air leaks out of the compressor. ●

*Richard Hallett*

**Verdict**

*The miniFumpa is the more appealing of the two: it's easier to push onto the valve, charges more quickly, and has enough capacity for most home workshops. Although only 185g (the Fumpa is 380g), it's an awkward, angular shape for a pocket but would fit comfortably in luggage.*

**Other options**

**TOPEAK ROAD MORPH W' GAUGE**  
**£36.99**

A mini-floor pump with a fold out foot that's capable of 160psi. Weighs 260g and measures 35x6x3cm. [topeak.com](http://topeak.com)



**SKS AIRBUSTER CO2 INFLATOR**  
**£22.99**

Pressure control regulator, compatible with 16g and 24g threaded CO2 cartridges. [sks-germany.com](http://sks-germany.com)





Alpkit

# Koala Exo-Rail

A bikepacking seatpack-and-rail bundle that limits sway and works with a dropper

£95.99 [alpkit.com](http://alpkit.com)

**A**lpkit's Koala is a bikepacking seatpack in 7- or 13-litre sizes, while the Exo-Rail is an anti-sway support for it that extends from the bike's saddle clamp. Getting both together as a bundle saves £11 compared to buying them individually. I tested the 7-litre Koala (note: the 13-litre pack is pictured), which is a good size for a day-bag carrying a repair kit, waterproof jacket, pump, and some snacks, or stuffed full for a trip. It's easy to make it smaller by rolling it up more.

The Exo-Rail is only compatible with fore-and-aft twin-bolt seatposts. Fitting may require the supplied extension bolts. These didn't have the same chamfer at the head as the ones on my Fox or Thomson posts; it's easy to sort if you are handy with a file. Once

fitted, the Exo-Rail increases the saddle height by the thickness of the rail and spacer block – worth considering if your dropper is inserted to the collar.

There is a lot less wag from the pack than the non-Exo-Rail version, and less tightening of the straps is required to stabilise the load. A loaded pack will, however, exaggerate any free-play in your dropper. On my full suspension bike, the pack hit the rear wheel under sag in the fully-up position. On my hardtail, it just missed the rear wheel on full drop. It was perfect with a rigid post.

When using the pack on a dropper without the seatpost strap fitted, the loaded pack hits the slider part of the post. In time this could wear the surface. As a workaround, I tried the pack with the seatpost strap fitted and some

electrical tape around the slider to protect it. This kept the pack a lot more stable but the tape hit the dropper post seal when the saddle was dropped.

Removing the bag from the bike involves unthreading the straps from under the seat and sliding it off. The bike is then left with the metal loop of the frame out over the rear wheel. I wouldn't fancy riding hard with the bare frame sticking out so it would mean removing the Exo-Rail frame if you choose to ride without the bag!

The build quality is great. The bag's new locking-strap buckles are an improvement, and the Exo-Rail has shown no signs of twisting or rust and no creaking or loosening from the block. ●

**Ralph Jessop**

## Verdict

*Adding the Exo-Rail to the Koala bag is a big improvement. It works well on a rigid post and, with care and enough clearance, on a compatible dropper.*

### Pros & cons

- + Great build quality
- + Improves bag stability
- Limited compatibility

### Other options



**SPECIALIZED BURRA BURRA STABILIZER PACK**  
£132

In the middle of the Koala sizes, at 10 litres, with a similar frame idea. Not dropper-post compatible. [specialized.com/gb](http://specialized.com/gb)



**ROCKGEIST GONDOLA**  
FROM \$120 + P&P

A simple, lightweight design that's customisable, the dropper-compatible Gondola doesn't use additional rails. Size: 4L or 5L. [rockgeist.com](http://rockgeist.com)