Features

OF TEXTILE JACKETS **UNDER £200**

Durable Water Repellent (DWR)

The thing that makes water bead up on the surface of a jacket is the Durable Water Repellent, or DWR. This is applied during the manufacturing process and prevents the material from becoming saturated with water. DWR wears out over time but can be re-applied. In torrential downpours, for extended periods of time, even the most effective DWRs won't be able to prevent a jacket from becoming saturated.

Neck and collar closures

We don't like press-studs as they're too fiddly; Velcro is better, but can be an irritant. Magnetic closures are the most user-friendly but not widely available. A detachable neck/chin scarf offers the best protection.

Cuffs

A Velcro closure adjustment offers greater versatility for fit and a small, well-cut bellows (the 'pocket' that lies under an expansion zip, providing the extra fabric which allows the garment to expand when unzipped) avoids bunching of the fabric and interfering with glove fitment.

Zips

In the more expensive jackets you'll see water-resistant zips (they are not fully waterproof) being used, though that's not always the case on lower priced models. Standard zips need to be protected by storm flaps, period. A chunky, durable zip pull that is glove friendly is better than a small, fiddly one.

Vents

Breathability of a jacket is often oversold and motorcycle jackets tend to get a bit warm, therefore effective ventilation is ideal. Venting flaps that can be secured in an 'open' position are the most effective, and it's always better if the jacket features exhaust vents as this allows a good cross-flow of air. Vents will, of course, be weak points in terms of waterproofing, so water resistant zips and storm flaps are a must.

Pockets

Pockets are essential for keeping stuff close to hand. They need to offer easy access, be waterproof and big enough for your needs.

Storm Flaps

Like vents, zips are weak points through which the elements will pass. In our opinion, if you're going to be riding in heavy rain, a double storm flap which protects the main zip is ideal.

Reflective material

In poor lighting conditions it's best to do everything you can to make yourself more visible to other road users, hi-vis colours or reflective inserts help make you easier to spot.

CE-approved armour

While textile jackets offer an amount of abrasion resistance, it's the armour that's going to provide the initial impact protection. Make sure it's CE-approved for most protection, and well placed for your body shape.

Waist adjusters

Velcro or buttoned adjusters help in fine tuning the fit of a jacket and play a part in trapping warm air in for added insulation.

Hem draw cords

Some jackets come with draw cords around the lower hem. These help with the fit and shape of the jacket, stop loose fabric flapping in the wind, keep out drafts and are useful for battening down the hatches when the weather turns ugly.

Insulation

A thermal drop liner will help insulate your body by trapping warm air. In many cases it's often better to buy a separate, higher quality thermal jacket to use as a mid-layer (as reviewed in issue 25 of *Adventure Bike Rider*).