



Suits to shrug off spring showers

Once the summer sky starts clouding over and giant drops of rain slosh on your visor, you start to curse your ventilated leathers. We all know that they're the best thing for crash protection, but they're lacking when the heavens open.

Spring signals the start of surprise showers. So hooray for one-piece rainsuits: the lightweight, portable answer for those who want to stay dry without compromising safety. But with rainsuits costing anywhere between £20 and £80 do you necessarily get what you pay for?

We've rounded up a range of one-pieces and subjected them to the rigours of a RiDE test to find out.

Living with it

Our road testing began in late winter and continued into early spring, so these oversuits were all used in a wide variety of conditions.

As well as reporting any leaks, our road testers judged each suit on its comfort, the quality of its fastenings and how easy it was to put on.

Fitting

Too long spent doing the one-legged rainsuit dance at the side of the road can transform even the most waterproof of suits into something so impractical you'd rather not bother with it.

Our testers assessed how easy each suit was to put on over leathers and boots, whether there was enough space for winter gloves to fit beneath the cuffs, and rated it for overall comfort.

Waterproofing

The harshest but most important test of all: a five-minute soaking from a pressure washer. Underneath each test suit, our tester wore full bike kit with a light-grey absorbent base layer between the suit and kit to pick up any leaks. And she sat on a bike. After the drenching, each suit was carefully removed and the under layer was checked for leakage. While this test does not replicate a long ride in torrential rain, it is a good simulation of a downpour, and sorts out the best from the rest.



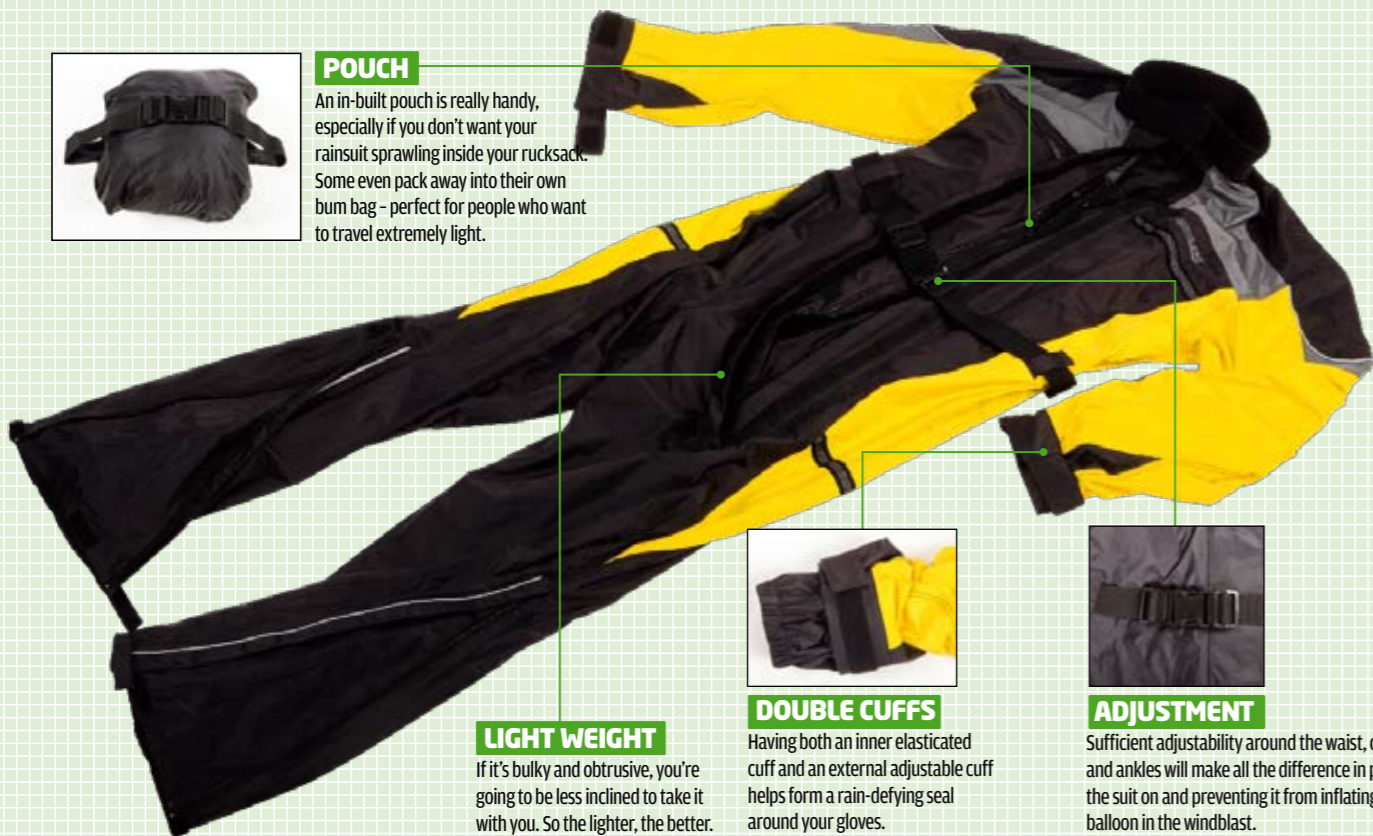
May the force be with you. Or at least a towel

THE PERFECT ONE-PIECE OVERSUIT



POUCH

An in-built pouch is really handy, especially if you don't want your rainsuit sprawling inside your rucksack. Some even pack away into their own bum bag - perfect for people who want to travel extremely light.



LIGHT WEIGHT

If it's bulky and obtrusive, you're going to be less inclined to take it with you. So the lighter, the better.



DOUBLE CUFFS

Having both an inner elasticated cuff and an external adjustable cuff helps form a rain-defying seal around your gloves.



ADJUSTMENT

Sufficient adjustability around the waist, cuffs and ankles will make all the difference in putting the suit on and preventing it from inflating like a balloon in the windblast.

Alpinestars El Nino £80

Sizes: S-XXXL Colours: black/grey, black/red, black/blue
Carry pouch: yes Contact: www.alpinestars.com

TESTER'S NOTES: Completely waterproof and very easy to put on. What more do you need from a suit? The El Nino excelled in the waterproofing test with a full 20/20 and we were impressed with the external material's hydrophobic properties: the water droplets just beaded up and ran straight off.

Out on the road, our tester commented on how easy it was to put on, and how well made it was. His only criticism was that the internal mesh lining occasionally got caught on his

boot. Unlike many other suits on test, the El Nino has adequate adjustment around the cuffs to allow big gloves to slide underneath. The vertical zip also meant there was no bunching around the groin area. A great performance.

RiDE VERDICT

Waterproofing	20/20
Ease of getting on	9/10
Comfort and adjustability	9/10
Total	38/40



Held Monsun £57

Sizes: XS-4XL Colours: black/fluro, black/silver Carry pouch: no
Contact: www.getgeared.co.uk

TESTER'S NOTES: Another suit to survive the RiDE soaking. Knee-high zips made getting in and out of the suit extremely easy even with boots on and our tester found that they never snagged on the inner storm flap.

Another impressive design feature of this suit is the double cuffs - an inner elasticated cuff and an adjustable Velcro outer cuff. Once you get the hang of this, it does make it impossible for rain to work its way through.

RiDE VERDICT

Waterproofing	20/20
Ease of getting on	8/10
Comfort and adjustability	8/10
Total	36/40



BLH Light £26

Sizes: S-3XL Colours: black Carry pouch: no
Contact: 01745 823333

TESTER'S NOTES: This one-piece suit is simple but effective. The BLH is one of the cheapest suits on test but managed to survive our torrential test. Its simple construction, with no internal lining to snag, meant getting it on and off at the roadside in a panic was easy, while an internal popper made closing the main zip a breeze.

Our tester's only criticism was that the ankle adjusters didn't have enough adjustment.

RiDE VERDICT

Waterproofing	20/20
Ease of getting on	7/10
Comfort and adjustability	7/10
Total	34/40





Oxford Bone Dry £40

■ Sizes: S-XXL ■ Colours: black ■ Carry pouch: yes
■ Contact: www.oxprod.com

=4 **TESTER'S NOTES:** Living up to its name with a leak-free test score, the Bone Dry's huge internal storm flap did a great job of keeping water from penetrating the zip.

However, our tester had a nightmare trying to get the suit on and off, having to sit down and struggling to get the trouser legs over his boots. He also commented that the size of that internal storm flap made the suit bulky and uncomfortable.

OVERALL
30/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	20/20
Ease of getting on	5/10
Comfort and adjustability	5/10
Total	30/40



Held Collin £57

■ Sizes: S-XXXL ■ Colours: black/red, black/yellow, black/blue, black/grey
■ Carry pouch: yes ■ Contact: www.getgeared.co.uk

=4 **TESTER'S NOTES:** This well designed and thought-out suit was let down by a leak at the waistband.

Our tester gave it full marks for comfort and for ease of use, while also being impressed by its Neoprene collar and grippy bum patch. But after its five-minute soaking with a pressure washer, a waistband seam appeared to fail and let in a significant amount of water. There were also light damp patches on the legs.

OVERALL
30/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	10/20
Ease of getting on	10/10
Comfort and adjustability	10/10
Total	30/40



Ixon R8.8 £70

■ Sizes: XS-5XL ■ Colours: black/orange ■ Carry pouch: yes - bum bag
■ Contact: www.thunderchild.co.uk

8 **TESTER'S NOTES:** This suit leaked in the most uncomfortable place, the crotch. While the five-minute spraying produced only a small leak, it was enough to soak through the stretch panel on our tester's leathers and become extremely uncomfortable. Different leathers might have made this less of a nuisance.

The leak is a shame, as this suit is easy to put on and is comfortable, although it inflated an above-average amount in the windblast.

OVERALL
27/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	14/20
Ease of getting on	7/10
Comfort and adjustability	6/10
Total	27/40



Bering Eco £27

■ Sizes: S-4XL ■ Colours: black ■ Carry pouch: no
■ Contact: www.bering.fr

9 **TESTER'S NOTES:** Slight leakage down the collar and ingress through the cuffs let down the scores for the Bering Eco slightly. So did the fact that our tester found it difficult to put on. He got his boots caught inside the legs and reckoned you'd be soaked to the skin trying to get it on at the roadside, so it didn't really matter how waterproof it was. An internal popper made closing the main zip easier.

OVERALL
26/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	16/20
Ease of getting on	4/10
Comfort and adjustability	6/10
Total	26/40



Spada 407 £43

■ Sizes: S-XXL ■ Colours: black/red, black/blue, black/yellow, black
■ Carry pouch: yes ■ Contact: www.feridax.com

=6 **TESTER'S NOTES:** Apart from a few small damp patches that appeared on the legs, the Spada 407 stood up to our waterproofing test well.

Our road tester rated it for its adjustability, especially around the cuffs, where he was able to get his gloves under the suit with ease. He also liked the fit, belt and soft collar.

However, the zips felt slightly low quality and it was a struggle to get the suit into its own carry pouch.

OVERALL
29/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	16/20
Ease of getting on	7/10
Comfort and adjustability	6/10
Total	29/40



Ixon Fabulous ladies £50

■ Sizes: XS-XXXL ■ Colours: black/grey/blue ■ Carry pouch: yes
■ Contact: www.thunderchild.co.uk

=6 **TESTER'S NOTES:** Our tester praised this suit for its fit and attractive design, but really struggled getting it on, falling over a few times in the process. While the Velcro adjusters at the ankles do help, the legs seemed to be a little narrow for our tester's size six boots.

The elasticated cuffs let water in during our waterproof test, resulting in a soggy right arm. A couple of droplets managed to get down the collar too.

OVERALL
29/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	16/20
Ease of getting on	5/10
Comfort and adjustability	8/10
Total	29/40



Ixon R8.1 £25

■ Sizes: XS-XXXL ■ Colours: black ■ Carry pouch: no
■ Contact: www.thunderchild.co.uk

10 **TESTER'S NOTES:** With only a light leak through the left cuff blotting the soak test, this budget Ixon suit was let down by poor scores from our road tester. Not only did he find it impossible to put his gloves inside the cuffs, but he also managed to pull the zip away from the main body of the suit.

Despite this damage to the main zip, the storm flap still managed to keep the body of the suit waterproof.

OVERALL
26/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	18/20
Ease of getting on	4/10
Comfort and adjustability	4/10
Total	26/40



Frank Thomas Aquapak £40

■ Sizes: S-XXXL ■ Colours: black ■ Carry pouch: yes
■ Contact: www.frank-thomas.co.uk

11 **TESTER'S NOTES:** Despite the exposed external zips at the ankles, this suit did a reasonable job in the waterproof test, where our tester got slightly damp around the neck, right cuff and left knee. He also struggled with the massive main storm flap which, while it did a good job of keeping water out, made doing up the main zip tricky. The elasticated wrists were also too tight to get over gloves.

OVERALL
25/40
RATING



RiDE VERDICT	
Waterproofing	17/20
Ease of getting on	3/10
Comfort and adjustability	5/10
Total	25/40



Bering Iwaki £40

■ **Sizes:** S-5XL ■ **Colours:** black/silver, black/fluoro ■ **Carry pouch:** no
 ■ **Contact:** www.bering.fr

12 **TESTER'S NOTES:** Despite surviving a light shower on the road test, the Bering Iwaki came unstuck during our five minute soak testing. Water collected around the groin, causing the seam at the base of the zip to fail. As a result our tester got a seriously wet leg.

The suit's easy to put on, although the diagonal zip takes some getting used to.



OVERALL
24/40
RATING

RiDE VERDICT

Waterproofing	10/20
Ease of getting on	7/10
Comfort and adjustability	7/10
Total	24/40



Louis 70 £25

■ **Sizes:** M-3XL ■ **Colours:** red ■ **Carry pouch:** no
 ■ **Contact:** www.getgeared.co.uk

13 **TESTER'S NOTES:** The Louis sprung a leak at the base of the storm flap seam, leading to a major leg and crotch soaking for our tester. It also picked up low marks for ease of use due to its fishing-net-like liner and the way the arm and leg adjusters would catch on things.

Water also found its way through the cuffs and led to damp patches on our tester's sleeves.



OVERALL
23/40
RATING

RiDE VERDICT

Waterproofing	14/20
Ease of getting on	3/10
Comfort and adjustability	6/10
Total	23/40



Spada Eco £35

■ **Sizes:** S-XXXL ■ **Colours:** black ■ **Carry pouch:** no
 ■ **Contact:** www.feridax.com

14 **TESTER'S NOTES:** This budget Spada suit really came unstuck during our tough spray test. It sprung a huge leak at the waist, totally soaking our tester right through her leathers, causing the whole of her left leg and stomach to take a drenching. The elastic on the cuffs also wouldn't allow big gloves to be worn inside the suit, which led to slight leakage on the sleeves too.



OVERALL
19/40
RATING

RiDE VERDICT

Waterproofing	4/20
Ease of getting on	6/10
Comfort and adjustability	9/10
Total	19/40



VERDICT

The Alpinestars El Nino is a clear points winner. It's not only waterproof, it's also a well designed, well cut, well made bit of kit that feels like it will last well and is good to use. In terms of design, ease of use and waterproofing it's ahead of all the rest. But £80 is a high price to pay for something that will spend most of the time folded away in its carry pouch.

That gets the RiDE Recommended triangle, but the Best Buy triangle goes to the bog-basic, unflashy BLH Light. It doesn't match the Alpinestars for ease of use or comfort, but is every bit as waterproof and is £54 cheaper.

And don't overlook the Held Monsun: full marks for waterproofing, not far behind the Alpinestars for ease of use and comfort, reasonably stylish and significantly cheaper.



NEXT MONTH: SAT NAVS