



RiDE Best Buy is one of the most coveted awards in biking. A product bearing this tag has passed our tough tests with flying colours and is great value for money. **The RiDE Recommended** tag also highlights great kit.

Chain oilers



WHAT ARE THEY?

Who needs a chain oiler? Well if your bike's chain driven, does more than three thousand miles a year and doesn't have a centrestand then YOU do. Chain oilers eliminate the need to kneel in the dirt as you try to balance your pride and joy while squirting sticky goo all over it, and they increase the chain and sprocket life by a considerable amount at the same time. A well lubed chain loses less power than a dry one, so it could be seen as a performance mod, too. Owners of shaft drive bikes may feel smug and need read no further.

HOW WE TESTED THEM

We tested all six systems according to these five criteria, each marked out of 10 for an overall rating out of 50.

- **INSTRUCTIONS** were marked on ease of use and clarity. Do they come with a telephone hotline? Do you need to visit a website for more details?
- **FITTING** is an important element as all these systems are designed to be fitted at home. How much work is involved? Do you need special tools?
- **SETTING UP** is required for most of these systems. It should be easy to prime the system and adjust the flow rate, as the oil will run more quickly in warmer weather.
- **VALUE** is an essential part of this test. Quality, innovation and sophistication all come at a price, but no one likes paying over the odds.
- **A ROAD TEST** made sure all the systems lived up to the manufacturers' claims. We fitted all the systems to our Triumph Sprint ST long-term test bike, and all the systems were road tested using the same brand of chain oil.



ST's single-sided swingarm tested the adaptability of each system

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

OIL
Some of the systems include oil, others just tell you what to fill the system with.

INSTRUCTIONS
The different systems vary greatly in how they work but all can be fitted by the owner. Good instructions are vital for safe and efficient installation and set-up.

DELIVERY
The pipes all need to be held in place securely to put the oil on the chain but without getting tangled up in the moving parts.

CONNECTIONS AND FITTINGS
To be able to fit a wide variety of bikes any kit needs various ways of attaching to single- or double-sided swingarms and different parts of the bike.

MAIN RESERVOIR
This is where the oil is stored, and in some cases includes the delivery system. It should be easy to fit and refill.

Tuturo twin nozzle chain oiler £19.49

www.tuturochainoiler.com

OVERALL
43/50
RATING



1 TESTER'S NOTES: The Tuturo system is very simple. The small, clear reservoir has a tap connected to the hose that delivers oil to the chain. Adjust the tap for flow rate and turn it on when you ride and off when you stop. Chain oil is recommended although the system does work with engine and gear oil. The pack came with cable ties, mounting blocks, a syringe for filling and a twin-nozzle feed that oils both sides of the sprocket, although we fitted the single nozzle due to the Sprint's swingarm design. The end of the tube features a length of wire to help it stay in place.

The instructions were basic and would benefit from more pictures to position the nozzle correctly when setting the system up, but fitting was still quick as there is no connection to a vacuum or to bike's electrics. The reservoir is very small so it should be easy to fit it wherever you want.

The Tuturo system works on gravity so it took a little longer to set up than the other systems on test due to the amount of turns the tap has.

VERDICT The Tuturo is so simple and cheap that it makes a mockery of the more complex systems on test - but forget to turn it off after a ride and you'll be left with a puddle of oil.

VERDICT	Instructions	■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
	Ease of fitting	■■■■■■■■■■	9/10
	Setting up	■■■■■■■■■■	9/10
	Road test	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Value for money	■■■■■■■■■■	10/10
	OVERALL		43/50





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PDOiler automatic chain oiler £62

www.pdoiler.co.uk

=2 **TESTER'S NOTES:** The PDOiler is an electronic system with a pump in the main reservoir and a separate adjuster control, which comes with a useful red LED that shows if the pump is working. It can pump uphill and the attached filler tube has a dipstick and comes with a rubber pipe to help with filling up. Gear oil is recommended but engine or chain oil can also be used.

The delivery tube has a brass end that can be bent and attached with cable ties or sticky clips for a secure fitting, but care must be taken to stop it getting caught in the chain.

The instructions were fine and the kit included photos of a system fitted to a Sprint ST which made it easier to fit the reservoir, control and delivery pipe. The brass end took a little longer to fit than the other rubber tubes but did give a solid mounting.

Filling was best with a syringe and priming was similar to the other systems, with the adjuster turned up to maximum and then turned down to one drop per minute once the tube was filled.

VERDICT Simple to fit, simple to set up and easy to refill. A good system at a good price, although the delivery head could be more secure.

VERDICT	Instructions	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Ease of fitting	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Setting up	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Road test	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Value for money	■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
OVERALL			39/50



OVERALL
39/50
RATING

Scottoiler eSystem £210

www.scottoiler.com

4 **TESTER'S NOTES:** This is a complex electronic system which measures acceleration and ambient temperature to tell the reservoir pump how much oil to release to the chain. It even senses when the bike is started and won't oil the chain until you move off.

You can adjust the flow via the display, which is connected to the battery terminals and also shows you the temperature and the G force you are accelerating at. Flow rate is also displayed, which means the reservoir can be fitted out of sight using the included fittings.

The generic instructions are good, although like the vSystem you will need to download bike-specific instructions from the website. Fitting is easy but you will need to spend some time deciding where to position the display and the mounting plates for the delivery tube.

The set-up took longer than the vSystem because the prime function resets after every minute, but once the tubes were full it took very little time to get a good flow rate. The display was easy to understand and it can be linked to accessories such as extra capacity oil tubes.

VERDICT The crème de la crème of chain oilers – very easy to fit and very intuitive, but very expensive.

VERDICT	Instructions	■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
	Ease of fitting	■■■■■■■■■■	9/10
	Setting up	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Road test	■■■■■■■■■■	10/10
	Value for money	■■■■■■■■■■	4/10
OVERALL			38/50



OVERALL
38/50
RATING

Scottoiler vSystem £89.95

www.scottoiler.com



=2 **TESTER'S NOTES:** The vSystem has been around for years and is probably the best known oiler on the market. The kit includes all the relevant parts, oil, and a variety of methods of fitting the system to different bikes. A pipe from the inlet manifold provides a vacuum, which opens a valve allowing the oil to flow down the delivery pipe. The valve is either open or closed and doesn't adjust the amount of oil. The reservoir is adjustable for flow and is easy to mount with cable ties and a bracket or special clamp.

The generic instructions were basic and explained all the parts, how the system works and FAQs, but they have to be used in conjunction with a set of instructions for your model downloaded from the website. These weren't very detailed and it was only by looking at the accompanying photos that we located the manifold spigot and work out where to mount the delivery pipe.

The main problem was getting to the inlet manifold on the Sprint. The tank, airbox and corresponding wiring and pipes have to be removed before you can fit the vacuum pipe, though on other bikes this should be much easier.

Setting up was a case of filling the reservoir, adjusting the dial to prime and running the engine until drops appeared at the chain.

VERDICT A comprehensive and well made system.

VERDICT	Instructions	■■■■■■■■■■	6/10
	Ease of fitting	■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
	Setting up	■■■■■■■■■■	9/10
	Road test	■■■■■■■■■■	10/10
	Value for money	■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
OVERALL			39/50

OVERALL
39/50
RATING

Acumen Intelligent Chain Oiler CL10 £174.99

www.acumen-electronics.co.uk



5 **TESTER'S NOTES:** The CL10 is an electronic system that reads your bike's speed and revs to work out how much oil to deliver to the chain. The dispenser uses a pressurised can of chain oil, which means you can mount the can and solenoid anywhere on the bike, but you have to use Acumen cans at £13 for three. Each can should last around 750 miles on the middle setting. The kit has two cans included.

The instructions were OK though it took some time to fit the oiler as you need to find a feed from the rev counter to the ECU as well as the battery and an ignition feed. Acumen's website gives more details of which wires you need, but if you're not used to cutting wires on your bike then ask for help or take it to a dealer. Once fitted the system refused to prime so a quick call to the helpline put me through to a very helpful adviser who suggested to prime while the engine was running, which sorted it straight away.

The road test revealed that the delivery hose had worked loose and had moved from where we had positioned it.

VERDICT: A very clever system and great if you cover loads of miles but expensive to buy and expensive to run. And if you don't fancy cutting into your ECU wiring then you'll need to pay someone to fit it.

VERDICT	Instructions	■■■■■■■■■■	7/10
	Ease of fitting	■■■■■■■■■■	6/10
	Setting up	■■■■■■■■■■	6/10
	Road test	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Value for money	■■■■■■■■■■	5/10
OVERALL			32/50

OVERALL
32/50
RATING



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Loobman manual chain oiling system £16.99

OVERALL
26/50
RATING

www.chainoil.co.uk

6 **TESTER'S NOTES:** The Loobman system needs no power and no vacuum – you control the supply of oil. The reservoir is connected to a holding tube that's connected to the delivery hose. Squeezing the bottle sends a small amount of oil into a chamber that flows down to the chain. The delivery is also different in that it uses a head consisting of two cut-down cable ties that rest on the rear sprocket, which distribute the oil evenly over the chain. These can easily be adjusted or replaced as they wear down.

This oiler took by far the most time to fit because of the totally confusing instructions, a mixture of hand drawn pictures and a page of instructions. The fitment of the delivery pipe uses a wire stay that was fine on a double sided swingarm but proved impossible to mount safely to our Triumph, so we cut it down and mounted it on the shark fin mount.

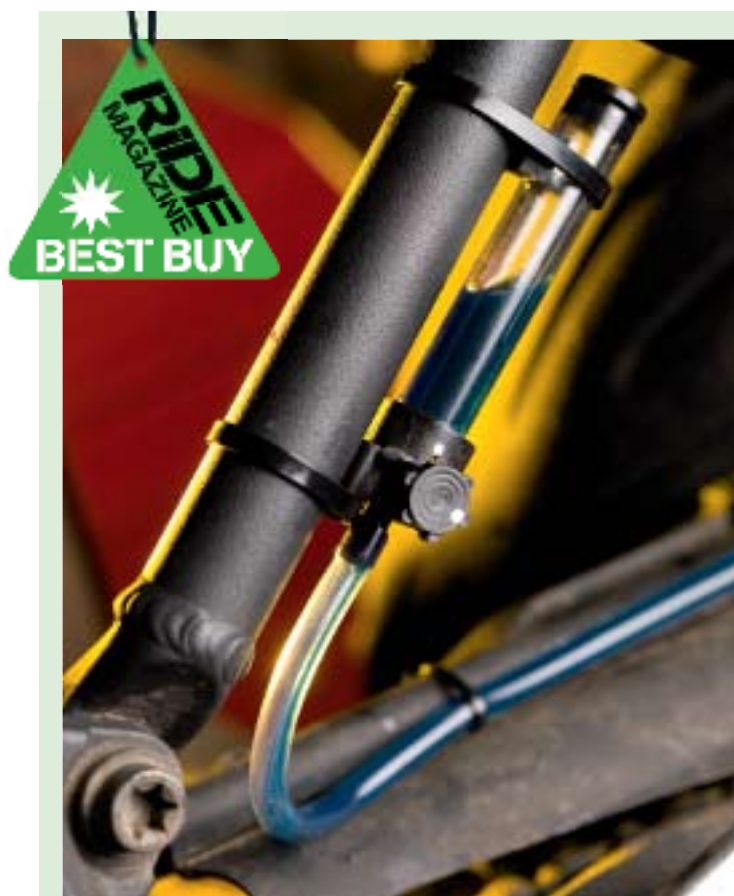
There is no set up as such but it did take a couple of attempts to get the right amount of oil into the tube as the oil goes all over your glove when you squeeze the bottle.

During the road test the delivery head disappeared.

VERDICT A good, simple idea let down by poor instructions. And if you squeeze it too much you get oil all over your gloves.



VERDICT	Instructions	■■■■■■■■■■	2/10
	Ease of fitting	■■■■■■■■■■	3/10
	Setting up	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	Road test	■■■■■■■■■■	5/10
	Value for money	■■■■■■■■■■	8/10
	OVERALL		26/50



VERDICT

The six different systems all tackle the job of lubing a chain completely differently, so you could well find that one suits your requirements better than the others, particularly if you have an unusual bike.

The Loobman didn't fare well but that could easily be improved with better instructions and a simpler delivery head. The Acumen system is very clever and could be the answer if you have issues about where to mount the system. It's also the cleanest system to refill. But the cost of the kit and the replacement cans prevent it from getting any more points here.

Scottoiler's eSystem is a doddle to fit considering its complexity and it has the most secure delivery fixings but, like the Acumen, it is very expensive. Their vSystem is much better value and gains a Recommended triangle for being a quality kit and including oil as well as the same delivery system as the eSystem. A Recommended triangle also goes to the PDOiler for being great value and easy to fit, and for its neat touches like the dipstick, though the delivery nozzle could have a more secure end.

But the surprise is the Tutoro system. It takes no time to fit, has a good, secure delivery pipe that stayed in place and the whole system feels well made. Once you've worked out how many turns you require it should only need playing with if you change to a different oil. You do have to remember to turn it off... but then you have to remember to take your keys out too. And the best bit is the price – it costs less than £20, which was a crucial factor in our decision to give it our Best Buy triangle.

NEXT MONTH: MULTI TOOLS