

# The complete skin care range for motorcyclists.



Save your skin. TAC

## Skin: useful stuff.

The skin is your body's single biggest organ.

It's highly shrink-resistant, waterproof, breathable, usually self-repairing and comes in an attractive range of colours.

Unfortunately, the one thing that Mother Nature didn't count on when she designed human skin was the invention of motorcycles and bitumen roads.

It's a painful fact of life that motorbike riders are more likely to be injured in a crash than any other road users.

And while it may be true that some of these crashes and spills are *caused* by other road users, being 'in the right' isn't much comfort when you're recovering from skin grafts, laid up or in traction for months, getting sponge baths and perfecting the art of using a bed pan.

**This is going to make gear changes tricky.**

Whether you like it or not, saving your skin (and the hide of any pillion passenger who happens to be riding with you) is your responsibility. After all, your mates, partner and kids deserve the same protection as you.

However, thanks to revolutionary materials, high-tech manufacturing processes and the ever reliable cow, getting that protection is easier and more affordable than ever.

**And he was only riding down to the shops.**

## Protective gear. What's the damage?

These days, the basics will lighten your wallet by over a grand, so it's worth shopping around.

If you're buying a new bike, have a chat to the dealer about working the protective gear into the package. Most dealerships have a decent range and, depending on the price of the bike, you could save quite a bit.

It's also worth asking if the protective gear can be included in a finance deal, so you can avoid the up-front cost and hit the road (so to speak) fully kitted out.

Whatever you do, don't blow your budget on your bike, then 'make do' with little or no protective gear. It's false economy of the most dangerous kind.

## Leather vs synthetics.

In the good old days, it was no contest; leather beat anything else, hooves down. Today though, high-tech synthetics like Kevlar™, Cordura™ and Gore-Tex™ have well and truly levelled the playing field.

And while one-piece race leathers are still the classic protective outfit, these days the choice depends on the type of bike you ride and your budget.

Still, there are a few boxes that you need to tick before you hand over your hard earned.

First, choose the most visible colour you can. Then, check to make sure there's double stitching that meets CE standards. Exposed seams can burst on impact. Next, make sure there are no loose buckles, laces or straps that can catch if you have a spill. And finally, try everything on while sitting on your bike, or mimic the position while sitting on a chair.

It might look a bit funny, but it's the only way to be sure your gear fits comfortably.



## Helmets.



Skid Lids, Brain Buckets. Call them what you like, helmets save lives.

You can buy approved plastic helmets, but fibreglass, carbon fibre, Kevlar™ or a combination is best. And your helmet must carry the Australian Standard 1698 sticker on the shell.

If the helmet has a visor (and all decent ones do) it has to conform to Australian Standard 1609. The visor can be tinted, but unless you can be bothered changing it every time you ride your bike at night, go for the clear type.

Try the helmet on for size and wiggle it around. If it fits properly, your skin should move, not the helmet. Ditch any chin cup and fasten the strap under your jaw.

And one more thing; while helmets are built to save your skull, they're only designed to do it once. If you head-butt the bitumen, or even if your helmet falls off the handlebars onto the footpath, get a new one.

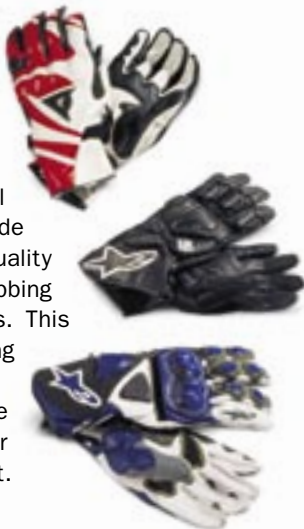
Yes, it's a pain. But then again, so is living with a severe brain injury.

## Gloves.

If your hands are unprotected they'll be badly mangled if you drop your bike or get cleaned up. And considering they control just about everything on your bike, hands are worth looking after.

A decent pair of bike gloves will be waterproof, snug fitting, made from strong leather or high quality synthetic and have reinforced webbing between the 4th and 5th fingers. This is to stop your little finger getting ripped out of its socket.

Gloves that feature carbon fibre or Kevlar™ inserts will damage your bank balance, but they're worth it.



## Jackets.

Brando-style 'biker jackets' are strictly for looks.

Real motorcycle jackets are made of stiffer, heavier leather or synthetic, which stops them ballooning in the wind. The zips and flaps are functional, allowing airflow around your body. And a proper bike jacket has built-in body armour for your shoulders, elbows and back.

The style you choose depends on the bike you ride. If you own a tourer you'll need a waterproof jacket that's cut for an upright position. Racing-style bikes require a jacket with arms sewn at a forward angle and darts stitched into the back.

Obviously, lighter colours can make you more visible, and therefore less likely to be in an accident in the first place. This is especially the case in wet weather. But if you do choose a dark jacket, make sure it at least has reflective patches.

## Pants.

If you fall or get knocked off your bike in traffic, you will not slip and slide neatly to a stop like Troy Bayliss.

You will bounce. And roll. And you will hit things like kerbs, poles and bonnets. Which is why it's essential your pants offer abrasion protection *and* body armour.

*At the absolute minimum, you need hip and knee plating.*

Whatever you do, don't wear off-road or motocross nylons. If you slide for more than a second or so on bitumen, they'll melt onto your skin.

And if you ride in jeans, consider this: *in European tests, 1.4mm leather gear withstood 5.8 seconds of heavy abrasion. Under the same conditions, denim jeans lasted 0.6 seconds.*



## Boots.

Thongs are designed for the beach. Sneakers are for the gym. And cowboy boots are for riding horses.

Motorcycle boots on the other hand, are designed to protect your feet while they're being dragged along bitumen at high speed, usually underneath a sliding bike.

That's why quality motorcycle boots are made from the strongest-grade leather or a resin-impregnated microfibre like Lorica™. They're reinforced on the toes, heels and shins. And they have no laces, rings or elastic sides, so they won't catch or get pulled off during an accident.



## Gear that's fit for women.

The choice of protective gear designed specifically for women has improved, but you'll still need to look harder than the guys to find stuff that fits properly. If you can afford it, consider having a suit tailor made. But whatever you do, don't settle for a bad fit.

The prices shown are examples only, not recommended retail.

## The Newly Licensed Rider.

Affordable protection for road riding.



**Leather jacket and pants with body armour in the shoulders, elbows, forearms and knees; separate back protector; leather/Lorica™ road boots; leather gloves with carbon fibre inserts; lightweight, advanced composite fibre helmet. Expect to pay around \$1,950.**

## The Sports Rider.

A high performance bike needs protection to match.



Leather one-piece suit with back hump and back protector compartment; road racing boots; leather road/race gloves with Kevlar™ reinforcing; super-light helmet made of fibreglass, carbon fibre and Aramylde™ fibre. Expect to pay around \$3,550.

## The Touring Rider.

Gear built for comfort in all weather.



Gore-Tex™ jacket with protective and reflective inserts; Gore-Tex™ pants with protective inserts; fabric/leather road gloves; leather boots with Gore-Tex™ lining; road helmet made from epoxy resin and multiaxial fibres. Expect to pay around \$2,350.

## The Regular Rider.

The outfit to match the bike you've always wanted.



A two-piece leather suit with composite protectors on elbows, shoulders and knees; separate back protector; waterproof road boots; leather road gloves with Kevlar™ inserts; ultra-light road/race helmet made from advanced composite fibres. Expect to pay around \$3,350.

## The Returned Rider.

Modern gear to replace the stuff gathering dust.



Cordura™ sport jacket with shoulder, elbow and back armour; Cordura™ pants with armour-plated knees; waterproof road boots; Cordura™ gloves with armour; road helmet in advanced composite core material. Expect to pay around \$1,350.



## Ride to live.

The big racing teams want to protect their investment in the guys that push the limits out on the track. As a result, safety equipment is improving all the time.

Stuff like back protectors, carbon fibre body armour and ultra-light boots that were once seen only in pit lane are now on the shelves at your local bike shop.

Riding gear isn't cheap, but it is affordable. And the people who sell it are seasoned riders, so they'll know what you need the moment they see the bike you ride.

That said, even the most high-tech protective gear is useless unless you wear it every time you hit the road. Excuses like 'I was just riding around the corner to the shops' or 'it was too hot' ring pretty hollow when you're flat on your back in a rehab ward.

Every year, the TAC helps many Victorian bike riders put their lives back together after serious crashes. Too many, in fact.

But the most heartbreaking cases are the guys and girls whose injuries are so bad, they'll never be able to get on a bike again.

And if you're one of those people who loves to ride, that's just about the worst pain there is.

**Visit the TAC motorcycle safety website at  
[www.spokes.com.au](http://www.spokes.com.au)**

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