

» California Heat

GAUNTLET HEATED GLOVES

A series of “Artic Blasts” across the eastern U.S. provided the perfect subfreezing backdrop in which to test California Heat’s Gauntlet heated gloves.

The dorsal side of the conventionally styled exterior shell as shown in Figure 1 is dominated by a Cordura textile section covering the forearm and wrist, with cowhide accordion paneling leading from the upper knuckles to the pre-curved fingers. The entire ventral side is cowhide, with a rubbery synthetic material stitched across the thumb and upper palm for added grip on the controls. Six small squares of integrated gel padding on the outer edge of the palm help to quell handlebar vibrations. The left thumb features an integrated squeegee. A single adjustable Velcro strap on the wrist keeps the glove firmly in place once donned, while an elastic string with stop-adjuster pulls the cuff tight against the forearm. A small plastic hook allows both gloves to be conveniently clipped together when not in use.



Inside, the gloves feature a “Hipora” breathable/windproof/waterproof membrane between the exterior shell and the soft inner lining, shielded by a layer of 3M Thinsulate. The “Finewire” ultrathin heating elements run down each fingertip and the back of the hand. Connectors are industry-standard 90-degree coaxial type, with zippered pockets for storage when not in use. The interior is plush and luxurious, offering warmth even before the elements are activated.

On the road, the Gauntlets impressed, with excellent overall quality. The cavernous 5-inch wide opening easily fit over even the bulkiest of winter jackets, while its neoprene lip completely eliminated draftiness (even without using the elastic string on the cuffs). Each glove draws 13.5 watts at full blast, which shouldn’t be an issue for all but the most ancient charging systems. To objectively test performance, I attached temperature probes to all fingers, plus the back of the hand and applied full power. The results indicated a jump from room temperature to ~95F average within 100 seconds; to 113F at 200 seconds; and stabilizing at ~120F at the 300-second mark, with a gradual rise thereafter, peaking at 600 seconds and clustered around +125F surface temperature. In real-world use, the fingers warm up in seconds. Within two minutes, my hands were already comfortably warm in subfreezing temperatures. Heat was evenly distributed, with no hot spots, and the elements were completely undetectable—not like the old days, with spaghetti wires bunched up under the liner!

Heated gear is no longer the novelty it was when I started riding in the late 1990s. Now, serious riders understand that staying warm in extreme temperatures is not just a matter of convenience, but of safety. California Heat’s Pakistani-made Gauntlets are helping to extend my riding season well past when most have hung up their helmets here in the east, and carry an MSRP of \$170.00.

—Moshe K. Levy

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» Motion Pro

RIM SHIELD II

Motion Pro has developed a capable rim protector tool called Rim Shield II. Sold in pairs, they are molded in blue DuPont Zytel, a tough polyamide nylon resin.

We tested them while changing the tires on a vintage bike, using a tire model that has tight-fitting beads—a worthy challenge for our product test. Once the bead was broken, the Rim Shields went to work under the levers. Removal of the old tires was easily accomplished, no rims were scratched and the apron with finger holes allowed us to keep one tire iron in place and, with the other hand, reposition the second rim shield.

Installing the new tires and tubes was where the Rim Shield IIs really excelled. The Rim Shield II is always visible, with its long apron. Additionally, the two raised beads on the backside create a small air gap between the tire and the protector, facilitating the insertion of the tire levers.

Repositioning was again a single-hand operation. The tool’s light weight and stiffness provide enough feedback to feel when the Rim Shield is firmly installed on a rim but away from the tube.

A post-op inspection of the protectors revealed numerous gouges on their surfaces from the tire tools, but no cracks were visible, even through a magnifying glass—an indication the set has many more tire changes ahead of them.

The Rim Shield II is manufacturer-recommended to work with any size or brand of motorcycle wheel, except Harley-Davidson cast rims. The product’s price of \$14.99 for two, is less than half what a typical shop charges to swap one tire on a rim. Then, when someone asks who mounted your gnarly adventure tires you can say, “I did,” and ride off with tires and ego fully inflated.

—Arthur J. Treff

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