



Grouptest

Floor pumps

A floor pump takes the effort out of inflating tyres, getting them up to pressure in less time.

Vicky Balfour tests four



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Vicky is a bike mechanic and the founder of Vicky Bikes, a platform that empowers everyone to find pockets of adventure through a love of cycling.

A floor pump is one of the most useful additions to any cyclist's home workshop. Whether inflating mountain bike tyres with a huge air volume or putting high pressures into narrow road tyres, a floor pump will save you time, effort, and frustration compared to a small hand pump.

Pumping isn't just easier, it's more accurate because a floor pump's pressure gauge takes the guesswork out of making tyres firm or supple enough.

Most floor pumps are track pumps, with a T-shaped handle for the hands, a vertical barrel, and a hose that connects to the tyre valve. Foot pumps are also an option, however, and we've included one in this test.

Cycle's test promise

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Details

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

1 Gauge

Analogue or digital, the gauge needs to be easily readable while you're using the pump. What pressure measurements does it display: PSI, BAR, or kPa? Does the gauge have a way of marking target tyre pressures?

plungers are better for lower pressures and higher volumes (e.g. mountain bike tyres). Check the pump's pressure range matches your requirements.

2 Pressure/volume

Like hand pumps, smaller diameter plungers are better for higher pressures and lower volumes (e.g. road bike tyres), while larger diameter

3 Pump head

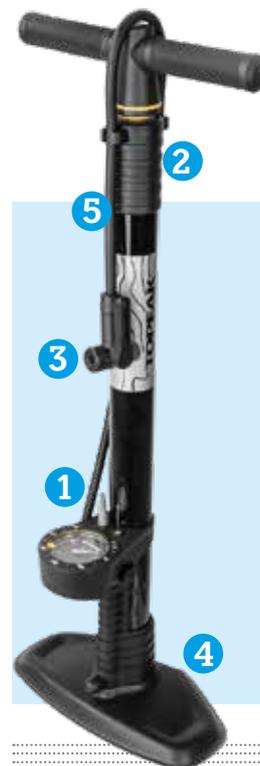
Many floor pumps have a dual or adaptable head so that they'll fit to both Presta and Schrader valves but some will only do one or the other. What valves do your bikes have? (A Presta pump head also works on a Woods valve.)

4 Stability

The stability of a pump affects its ease of use, especially if you are using it to inflate to a high pressure or using a large volume one to seat a tubeless tyre. Look out for big or weighted foot plates – or a stable base on foot pumps.

5 Hose

Too short and it can be hard to inflate tyres if the bike is on a bike stand, too long and the hose can get in the way when being stored. Check out the length and how the pump is designed to store the hose when not in use.



1



2



Pumps to go
Looking for a pump to take on your ride? Read: cyclinguk.org/article/choose-best-portable-cycle-pumps-group-test

3



4



Verdict

The pump I ended up using most was the SKS Airstep. Although it's the least efficient at putting air into the tyre, it is so easy to use and store that it feels completely hassle free.

For Presta-valved tyres up to 100psi, the Lezyne is a great pump. It's by far the most comfortable to use, and the facility to seat tubeless tyres is handy.

The Topeak pump is well suited to mountain bikers and fat bikers. It gets wide tyres up to pressure in minimal time, albeit with more effort.

The Cube pump was frustrating. The insecure attachment, especially to Schrader valves, left me feeling that I was missing something.



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cyclinguk.org/advice

1 SKS Airstep Foot Pump

£66.99 sks-germany.com

UNLESS YOU'RE WEARING cycling shoes with cleats, this foot pump is really easy to use. My mum and daughter had no problems with it. The pump head is designed for both Presta and Schrader valves and locks on securely in one go. When not in use, the Airstep is compact and easy to store – the hose coils up neatly and the moving foot plate fixes in place. The only downside is the relatively slow input of air. Max: 102psi. Strokes to reach 20psi (27.5×2.4in tyre): 43.

Compact and user-friendly foot pump with modest max pressure

2 Lezyne Sport Gravel Drive

£70 upgradebikes.co.uk

MOST TRACK PUMPS are made to put high pressures into narrow road tyres; this one is meant for gravel bikes and other mid-volume tyres. It only fits Presta valves, but locks on easily and the head can be adapted for seating tubeless tyres (with the valve core removed). The thin foot plate is stable and the wooden handle comfortable, making it easy to use. The long hose was sometimes a nuisance as it didn't clip securely in place. Max: 100psi. Strokes to reach 20psi (27.5×2.4in tyre): 21.

Presta only but great for gravel, touring, and commuter tyres

3 Topeak Joe Blow Mountain X

£57.99 extrauk.co.uk

DESIGNED FOR MOUNTAIN bike tyres, the Joe Blow shifts a lot of air per stroke but tops out at 60psi so won't double as a road bike pump. It does Presta and Schrader valves – you engage the relevant connector and lock it on with a central lever. It works fine but isn't as comfortable to use as the Lezyne, and the hose is fairly short. The large volume pump cylinder means that it fills the tyre more quickly but each stroke is harder work. Max: 60psi. Strokes to reach 20psi (27.5×2.4in tyre): 11.

Ideal for (but limited to) lower pressure, higher volume tyres

4 Cube Acid Race Digital

£49.99 cube.eu/uk

FIRST THE GOOD news: the gauge is brilliant. Mounted high up and with a clear digital display, it's easy to read and to toggle between PSI and BAR. There's an air release valve on the gauge too. The base is stable and the handle comfortable. The problem is the EZ-Head. It's meant to push on but didn't do so securely, especially on Schrader valves, where it leaked air badly. I resorted to YouTube to see if anyone had made a video of how to use it... Max: 160psi. Strokes to reach 20psi (27.5×2.4in tyre): 21.

Let down by the pump head, which is anything but 'EZ'