They're fitted with Schwalbe One tyres – the rebranded Schwalbe Durano and a decent all-rounder. I’d switch to Schwalbe One Plus (Durano Plus as was) if I were buying an Audax Mono primarily for commuting.

There’s some choice with the specification, which is why the test bike has an 80mm stem and a 38cm handlebar; I asked for them. Similarly, I picked the 42/18 gearing because 63in will get me up and down local hills. You get a freewheel as well as a fixed sprocket on the flip-flop hub, and could have a tooth or two's difference between them.

The chainring is a narrow-wide one you normally see as part of 1x drivetrains. While you don’t really need this, a narrow-wide ring’s improved retention should reduce the risk of unshipping the chain, which is dangerous on fixed if it jams.

The test bike has upgraded TRP RRL-SR brake levers (+£25). These are among the more comfortable non-integrated levers I’ve used. If you’ll only ride fixed, you can legally dispense with the rear brake as you can slow the rear wheel through back-pressure on the pedals. If you’ll ever ride with a freewheel, you must keep both.

**The ride**

It’s a few years since I was riding fixed on a daily basis. I’d forgotten what a leg-taxing, full-body workout it can be. Riding fixed won’t just make you pedal more fluidly; it’ll make you fitter, full stop. There are really only two ways to go faster on a bike: pedal faster or push a bigger gear. Fixed-wheel trains both.

To spin smoothly you need a gear that suits you and your terrain. The Audax Mono can provide this because you choose it. (Not sure? Try 42/18, 42/17 or 42/16.) You also need the contact points just so, to avoid bouncing around like a sack of potatoes. The Audax Mono helps with this, too, as you can choose the bar, stem and cranks.

I don’t know that I’d do a long audax on fixed but I’d happily do 100km on this one if I could ride at my own pace. Fixed doesn’t work so well if you have companions on gears as you get dropped on descents, and I found single free oddly unsatisfying.

**Verdict**

With practical fittings, less racy geometry and clearance for 28mm tyres, the Audax Mono has the key things I want from a fixed-wheel frameset. The fact that the complete bike comes with well-built wheels and components you can tweak to your taste makes it an even better buy. I’d like a smidgen more space under the brake callipers but if you’re looking for sensible fixed-wheel bike at a sensible price, this has to be on your shortlist.

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