



Welcome

The rise in popularity of bike fitting services is encouraging. It's an acknowledgment that the bike can be made to fit the rider instead of the other way around. It's confirmation that aches and pains aren't something you just put up with.

Professional bike fitting can seem complex. Motion capture! Metatarsal measurements! Protractors! I guess it's nice to get some science when you're spending a couple of hundred quid. The most critical part of bike fitting isn't complicated at all, however. It's a simple question: am I comfortable?

The answer, in terms of making the bike fit best, will be as individual as the cyclist asking that question. We're all different shapes and sizes, with asymmetries and different ranges of motion. When I broke my back in my 20s, I fitted a swan-neck stem and a BMX handlebar to an old Dawes MTB with wide, slick tyres and a sprung saddle. I sat bolt upright, with the handlebar a foot higher than the saddle.

The best bike fit will change over time. While I can manage a time trial crouch these days, the general rule is that a racier riding position becomes less comfortable as we age – if it ever was. So when you're not racing, don't feel you have to ape the riding position of a racer. Your most comfortable posture could be anywhere along the ascent-of-man diagram line, from hunched over to upright.

A bike fitter might well find that position for you. But 15 minutes with an Allen key or a new stem might, too.

DAN JOYCE
Editor

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On the cover

Climbing up to the Kerry Ridgeway while riding Marcher Castles Way.
By Robyn Furtado

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