



# Simpson Ghost Bandit helmet

By Wes Fleming #87301

**THERE ARE A FEW THINGS WE** want a helmet to do. We want it to protect our head in case of a crash or collision. We want it to be comfortable, especially for a long day of riding. We like it to be hygienic, too, but we often overlook hygiene if a helmet hits the first two criteria strongly. The list of other major and minor concerns varies, depending on the rider, but another thing many of us want is for our helmet to look as bad-ass as possible. If that criterion is high on your list, look no further than the Simpson Ghost Bandit.

Those of us who review motorcycle gear often hear the criticism “every review is glowing,” that we never write a negative review. If something we

buy truly sucks, we tend to toss it or give it away and never speak of it again. I’m going to tell you up front the Ghost Bandit, as cool as it looks, has some downsides for me, but I’m also going to say I really dig this helmet and am looking forward to using it extensively.

Starting with the good, the Ghost Bandit is one of the lightest helmets I’ve ever used. I bought an XXL-sized one, so I imagine it’s the heaviest version available. Having said that, the Ghost Bandit is easy to wear on a long day, and I never suffered any neck fatigue. Because the cheek pads snug firmly to the lower jaw, it’s a relatively quiet helmet as well—not as quiet as my Schuberth S2, but quieter than my Arai Defiant.

Ventilation to the face is exceptional, as you might expect from a helmet with an

aggressive, extended chin bar and a double row of vents right up front. Coupled with a Pinlock visor, you’re unlikely to get much fogging in a Ghost Bandit. However, opening and closing the vents is fiddly—the mechanisms (one per side) are inside the chin bar. With the chin dam in place and gloves on, they are difficult to manipulate.

Ventilation to the rest of the head is sadly deficient. There are some exhaust vents up top, but nothing more. As a result, I can’t recommend this as a hot weather helmet. An 85-degree day had me sweating quite a bit, but the antibacterial liner handled it well, and the interior of the helmet didn’t stink like you might expect it to. The Ghost Bandit will be, without a doubt, a fantastic mid-fall through mid-spring helmet.

Both visors are exceptionally easy to



change. The external visor has a tool-free removal mechanism similar to that of other manufacturers, and the internal visor pops in and out with firm pressure. On Simpson's suggestion, I installed a clear visor to complement the dark smoke external visor I got; if I'm caught out after dark, my eyes are still protected with the external visor raised. Because of my head shape, which otherwise fits into the Ghost Bandit exceptionally well, the internal visor presses on my nose in its fully extended position.

The slider for operating the internal visor was difficult to use when I first got the helmet, but it got a little easier as I used it over the course of several weeks. It still requires a bit of effort, but I feel it will operate effectively for a long time. The slider is located almost exactly where most people would place a communication unit, which is inconvenient but can easily be worked around. I haven't installed a comm unit yet, but thanks to the built-in cutouts for speakers, it will be easy to do when I'm ready.

I have to give a shout-out to Simpson's customer service. Somebody from Simpson spotted my unboxing video on YouTube and quickly figured out they inadvertently shipped me an old version of the Ghost Bandit which had a smaller shell for the XXL. The prepaid shipping label they included in the box ensured that my return didn't cost me anything, and the updated helmet they sent me is the one I'm writing this review about.

Simpson's base model Ghost Bandit helmet has an MSRP of \$449.95. External shields are \$49.95, internal visors are \$39.95. Pinlock visors are sold separately. Available online direct from Simpson ([simpsonraceproducts.com](http://simpsonraceproducts.com)) or from Simpson's retailers nationwide.

**PROS:** Aggressive look is amazing; helmet fits well, is lightweight and imparts no claustrophobic feeling at all.

**CONS:** Poor upper head ventilation; internal visor placement is close to the face and the internal visor's deployment mechanism is rough. ☹️

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