

ALLOY BARS

A BUYER'S GUIDE

What better way to give your cockpit an inexpensive upgrade than with a new set of bars. Thing is, which ones?

When it comes to handlebars there are more options than you can shake the proverbial stick at. In fact, most manufacturers have more options than we literally have space for – even if we decided to dedicate an entire magazine to them (don't worry, that's not in our plans!).

But why so many? The simple answer is because we need them. For a start, having varying handlebar widths means that bars can be better matched up to riders according to how wide their shoulders are. And it doesn't stop there, because when comfort and aerodynamics get thrown into the mix, you see further variations in length, flare, depth and actual shape. Many riders find that once they've found a bar shape they like, they stick with it and use it on all future bikes.

Since there are so many options from each brand, what we've done here is to give you a broad idea of what's available and how they differ. We've quoted sizes, reach and weight and highlighted anything else that we think deserves pointing out.



RITCHEY WCS STREAM

► Ritchey's Stream bar sees an update this season as it returns to the popular drop shape and gains Di2 compatibility via a pair of holes on the underside of the bar. Rare amongst bars, it features a 4.5-degree backward sweep from the stem, this top section is wing-shaped for better aerodynamics and is UCI approved. Stream features a 128mm drop and the reach is 73mm in all five sizes that run from 38cm to 46cm. Our 42s weighed 280g.

£94 upgradebikes.co.uk

VERDICT

A superb handlebar: lightweight, stiff, comfortable and innovative. It certainly gets our vote!

OVERALL
9
10