

Speed Triple: Owning it...

Speed Triple: owning it Tempted? Proud owners joined us at Bruntingthorpe, Triumph's development track, to tell us what the Triple's like to live with.

Taff Johnson
 £1995 Speed Triple T309
 £25,000 miles | **Mods:** A16 Tuning end cans, Scottroller | **Tyres:** Bridgestone BT020 | **Used for:** Pleasure and a bit of two-up UK touring.

"I've owned this since it was a year old and regularly use it to go to rallies with my wife as pillion. I've done all but 7000 of the miles and it's never let me down. My wife said she'd buy me the latest model as a wedding present, but I'm reluctant to sell this. Perhaps I'll keep both!"

Problems? "No mechanical issues,

ever. It just eats batteries - a new one every year. The sidestand bracket also bends over time because of the bike's top-heavy nature. And I've heard of starter clutches failing - listen for a knocking from inside the motor after pressing the starter."

Tracy Pankhurst
 £2002 Speed Triple 955i
 £8000 miles | **Mods:** Triumph hugger | **Tyres:** Bridgestone BT56 | **Used for:** Fun and commuting
"My Triple was the result of window shopping. You could call it a £5000 impulse buy. I was initially after a Buell, but after taking one out

on a test ride I wasn't convinced it'd last. Then I saw this. All the quirky looks of a Buell with the added bonus of Triumph build quality. And the engine is amazing"

Problems? "It's been ultra reliable. The only problem I've ever had is a fuel leak after an O-ring failed, but that's it."

Nick Harper
 £2001 Speed Triple 955i
 £10,500 miles | **Mods:** Triumph race cans, Corbin seat, hugger, flyscreen, tank cover | **Tyres:** Michelin Pilot Road | **Used for:** Inner-city commuting.

"I've got nine other bikes - but this is one of the best I've ever owned. It's just so much fun. If I had to sell my bikes, this would be the one I'd move heaven and earth to keep."

Problems? "Apart from the battery dying last year and the seat being rock hard, it's perfect. Though I've heard 955i engines can suffer a slight oil leak from the head gasket."

Jules Smith
 £2005 Speed Triple 1050
 £2800 miles | **Mods:** Standard | **Tyres:** Michelin Pilot Road | **Used for:** Pure fun

"This is my joy bike. When it comes to the hard stuff I've got a Fazer 600, 1000 and a Harley Sportster. I'd been looking at the 1050 for ages, before my head overruled my heart and I bought a Sprint ST. Luckily my wife picked up on my Speed Triple fascination and bought me this as a Christmas present."

Problems? "It had 'Triumph spongy brake syndrome'. They were a little below par. When I found out about Triumph's goodwill replacement offer, I had them upgraded free. The sponginess has gone, but now they feel a little wooden."

Gareth Fenn
 £2001 Speed Triple 955i
 £13,500 miles | **Mods:** Flyscreen and hugger | **Tyres:** Bridgestone BT014 | **Used for:** Playing and the occasional bit of touring

"It was the Speed Four that I originally had my heart set on. But as I was in my local dealers looking for one, a bloke came in and part-exchanged this Speed Triple for a newer model. I bought it there and then for £3800. Apart from the seat being hard, it's perfect for everything. I even manage to get 40mpg from it, despite what all the road tests claim."

Problems? "I had to remove a race can I'd fitted. It looked and sounded great, but made the bike too lumpy in town. There have been tales of the wrong parts being fitted to the wrong bikes - particularly exhaust manifolds - making it a nightmare to fit aftermarket exhausts."



I helped develop the T509 Speed Triple

Dominic Clifford tells us what happens when a prototype meets a Renault...

I was working for Triumph around the time they launched the radically-styled T509 Speed Triple. It was a beautiful looking bike and so different to the previous model. Sadly, Triumph decided to launch it alongside the new Daytona T595, so some of its impact was lost. I was tasked with running in one of the hand-built early models for use on Triumph's press fleet. Only it never made it. I was riding around Warwickshire on this great new bike, when I was cut up by a Renault Espace. The Speed Triple was completely destroyed (see the pic below). I guess when Triumph asked me to 'run it in' they didn't exactly have that in mind! I walked away, unscathed. But with a quarter inch chunk missing from the chin bar of my Arai. I also had a set of prototype Triumph leathers on - which showed me the importance of wearing decent kit.



Here's how the Speed Triple scored in last year's **RIDER POWER** survey... Be sure to complete this year's survey at www.riderpower.com

	Your rating
Build quality	★★★★★
Engine performance	★★★★★
Handling/suspension	★★★★★
Rider comfort	★★★★★
Pillion comfort	★★★★★
Brakes	★★★★★
Gearbox	★★★★★
Controls/equipment	★★★★★
Dealer back-up	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Wind protection	★★★★★
Ease of maintenance	★★★★★
Mirrors	★★★★★
Headlights	★★★★★
General impression	★★★★★



Overall rating 72.89%
 Insurance Lowest £103 Highest £586
 Avg mileage 12,067 Avg economy 42mpg

Triumph Speed Triple 105
 A naked sportsbike with attitude to match. Aggressive looks and matching performance. A stunt rider's dream. Many unfaired musclebikes are a disappointment, but not the Speed Triple. You vote it fifth best engine, eighth best for rider equipment, the sixth most reliable and 52nd for dealer back-up. Any bad points? The Speed Triple ranks 74th for fuel consumption, 71st for build quality and 142nd for pillion comfort, which definitely scuppers the Triumph's chances of becoming a decent two-up tourer.
 Age 1997-2004 Price range £1750-£8450
 Weight 196kg Claimed power 108bhp Top speed 141mph



16 With all the technical stuff almost done, the bodywork goes on. First is the mudguard.



17 Then comes the plastic tank and rear subframe cover, giving a more complete look.



18 The bike is now fully assembled and ready for shipping to its destination country.



19 The bike gets packed up to go the dealer ready for its pre-delivery inspection.