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Alpinestars Tech 7 Enduro Boots

by Bret Tkacs

The *Alpinestars Tech 7* boots have been a top choice for dual-sport and enduro riders since their introduction. *Alpinestars* has been paying attention to their customers, as they have addressed every issue I've ever experienced with this boot. I wore *Tech 7s* from 2009–2012 as my primary adventure boot. Subsequently, *Alpinestars* has expanded and redesigned the *Tech 7* series to incorporate the latest in protection innovation and comfort.

The *Tech 7* comes in three different versions, the *Tech 7 MX*, *Supersmoto* and *Enduro*. All received a complete overhaul from previous generations, with significant improvements. The boot in this test is the *Tech 7 Enduro*, which only varies from the standard *MX*-based *Tech 7* by a sole with lugs better suited for muddy trails and walking, fewer color choices, and an added \$20 in price.

About the boot

The new *Tech 7 Enduro* boot is a CE-certified off-road boot offering top-shelf protection for the rider. The boot is constructed with a one-piece injected dual-compound foot shell with co-injected hard toe protector and an integrated steel shank. This construction process gives the boot a narrow streamlined look while still leaving room for the toes on my "D" width foot to wiggle around.

New to the *Tech 7 Enduro* is what *Alpinestars* calls a "biomechanical pivot." What that means for riders is greater ankle flexibility while retaining support and a drastically reduced break-in time. This design also increases mobility for shifting, braking, and walking around. The new pivot reduces stress on the stitching that holds the ankle plates to the main boot, a known failure point in the older *Tech 7s* and *Tech 3s*.

Also new to the *Tech 7s* is the dual-compound, removable anatomic foot bed and reinforced heel. But my favorite improvement is the buckle system that has quickly become my new standard in comparing boots. It is the easiest buckle system I've ever used on a boot, and is even more precise than the buckle system on my *SIDI Crossfires*, which is setting a really high bar. It's really good to know that the high quality aluminum buckles are replaceable. My personal experience with *Alpinestars* and their warranty has been a good one as they have always stood behind their products.

Key Features:

- Upper material is reinforced for high levels of water resistance
- Replaceable sole and foot peg inserts
- Wide entry aperture for convenience, allowing broad ranging calf fit adjustment and support
- New buckle system made with high-impact aluminum bridge closures, with memory settings and a quick release/locking system with self-aligning design
- TPU ankle protection system incorporating a biomechanical link between the middle and bottom sections of the boot, helping prevent damage to the leg by providing progressive force relief for torsional forces
- Protection for heel and Achilles tendon, helping to prevent hyper flexion
- Redesigned instep and Achilles accordion flex zones construction for comfort, control and support
- Internal 3D lining includes anti-slide microfiber suede on the heel to help keep foot in position



Living with the Tech 7 Enduro

I have done my best to put these boots through as much work as possible, including several ADV tours on large-bore ADV bikes, riding hundreds of miles of technical and high-speed trails on an enduro bike in three states, plus competing in a motocross race.

There was no issue with adjusting the foot to the boots; they were immediately comfortable thanks to the high-quality build and the new biomechanical pivot. However, adjusting the boots to the motorcycle depended on the type of bike ridden. On my dirt bike, no adjustment was needed on the shift lever as the toe box is as thick as most other motocross and enduro boots. On my ADV bike, I adjusted my shift lever up one notch to accommodate the thicker boot, as it had been initially set up for street-biased boots. If you switch between a street boot for commuting and the *Tech 7 Enduros* for ADV trips, adjusting the shift lever may be a minor inconvenience, but is well worth the added protection you'll get from the boot.

The *Tech 7 Enduros* I received fit slightly larger than expected. I'm using half a size down, and have yet to experience any cramping or hot spots. Both thin and thick socks feel comfortable, and the secure feel of the smaller boot is reassuring.

As a professional motorcycle instructor and back-country guide with *PSSOR Training and Adventures* (PSSOR.com), the most common injury I witness off road are riders who don't choose to wear proper off-road boots and end up with leg/foot injuries. Way too many riders unknowingly purchase "adventure" boots which are typically street boots that have been dressed up to look like a motocross/enduro boot.

If a boot feels like a comfortable walking boot, it's likely not going to sufficiently protect you. In the off-road world, boots are debatably just behind the helmet in required protection. I have no problem recommending the *Tech 7 Enduros* to riders who are looking for a new ADV boot on a mid-range budget, or who are looking for actual protection off-road. As always, there are very good choices from other manufacturers, but it will be hard to match the *Alpinestars Tech 7 Enduro* boots for quality, protection, and price. **MSRP:** \$369.95 **Colors:** black / white / black, white, and orange **Alpinestars.com**



PROS

- /// The quietest "hinged" boot we have tested
- /// Very easy to use latch system
- /// Comfortable for light walking
- /// Sleek, narrow design
- /// CE-certified protection
- /// Cleated sole gives good traction
- /// Replaceable heel, sole and buckles
- /// Affordably priced

CONS

- /// Thick toe box requires shift lever adjustment when switching between street and dirt boots
- /// Thick shin armor can make it difficult to fit under pants or gear
- /// No option for waterproof model
- /// Not quite as much crash protection as the higher-end *Tech 10s*