

ASK OUR EXPERT

Can you recommend a lightweight, waterproof carry bag?

Chellie, GM forum

As you can see in this issue's Buyers' Guide, there are plenty of great options out there, but being lightweight and waterproof doesn't often go hand in hand. Still, the Titleist Players 4Plus StaDry and Callaway HyperDry C are both waterproof and weigh less than 2kg. There's also the Sun Mountain H2NO



SuperLite, which weighs just 1.85kg. Admittedly these cost well over £200, but you have to pay more for that extra protection.

I'm looking for a second-hand forgiving driver for under £100. Does that exist?

Adam W, GM forum

Golfbidder is a pretty decent used-club website and a quick scroll on there produced some good options. You can get a Ping K15 driver from 2014, which was really ahead of its time in terms of forgiveness, for £99. There's also a TaylorMade AeroBurner from 2015 and a Yonex Ezone XPG from 2016. So you don't have to go too far back to get a good deal, but make sure the spec is close to what you currently play.

JOEL TADMAN ON...

The start of the spikeless revolution



Ten years ago, golf changed forever. Little did we know that at the start of the 2010 Masters, the popularity of cleated shoes would begin to dwindle and in its place a new category of golf footwear would be born. Step forward the hybrid or spikeless shoe.

Freddie Couples had been wearing Ecco shoes since 2006, and had won three times in his debut Champions Tour season prior to the start of the 2010 Masters in Ecco's Golf Street shoe, the first golf shoe that featured tightly packed traction bars instead of cleats or metal

spikes. But when he got into contention at Augusta wearing his favoured deep brown pair, people noticed something was different. While he didn't win, sales of Ecco's first hybrid shoe went through the roof. In fact, 'Fred Couples' Golf Shoes' was one of the top five most Googled things in the world that weekend.

Ever since then, golfers have grown to love the off-course versatility and walking comfort that comes from a pair of spikeless golf shoes. Designs have evolved in the last ten years, with the level of grip and stability now coming very close to that of cleated golf shoes. The FootJoy Pro/SL, which launched in 2016, is arguably the only other spikeless shoe that has turned a similar number of heads in that time.

Ten years on, Ecco is releasing a limited-edition Street10 shoe that Couples will wear at this year's Masters – a fitting tribute, I think you'll agree, to the pioneering concept that might be the reason you own hybrid shoes today.

Couples in Ecco's first hybrid shoes



The new Street10 has subtle bronze detailing



How does a £15 putter compare with a Scotty Cameron?

JOEL'S TEST REPORT

Cheap vs expensive putter test

Many people say to us that golf equipment is too expensive and it stops people getting into the game, so we recently pitted the premium (£399) Scotty Cameron Phantom X12 putter up against the value (£14.99) Inesis 100 from Decathlon. What does the extra investment get you? We tested them both on three different lengths of putt.

● Looks/feel

The Phantom X is a beautiful, complex design comprising a mix of aluminium and stainless steel to give it a solid, stable feel. The Inesis is made out of zinc alloy, so it feels lighter, has a tinny sound and isn't as well balanced.

THIS CAUGHT MY EYE...

Exosuit

What is it? A compression garment with silicone panels that interact with the body to improve performance and help golfers protecting injuries.

GM verdict Could soothe long-standing shoulder injuries and also has the potential to improve posture and power, although it seems to be a short-term solution.

Price £75



Exosuit gently grips your skin to activate the muscles

● Performance

The Inesis was actually more prolific from four feet, as we holed ten putts in a row with it versus seven with the Scotty Cameron. On a 12-foot putt, we managed to hole one more with the Scotty Cameron and felt like we had more control with it, but the results were very similar. From long range, the Scotty Cameron gave us better distance consistency overall, as mishits with the Inesis were punished more severely.

● Conclusion

Ultimately, both putters propel the ball forward towards the hole, and with practice you could get on with either model, but they do the job in different ways. The Inesis was no dud and performed incredibly well given the £15 price tag. It is an entry-level putter and perfect if you're just getting into the game or on a tight budget. By contrast, the Scotty Cameron is a beautiful, well-balanced putter that offers more forgiveness, alignment assistance and a solid, premium feel at impact.

MY ON-COURSE REVIEWS



Mizuno M.Craft putters

Limited shapes to choose from, but the blue finish oozes class and they all offer a soft, gentle feel off the face. **Price** £249



Wilson Duo Soft+ ball

Feels soft on all shots, and while it gives up driver distance and short-game spin over premium balls, it's a good all-rounder.

Price £19.99 per dozen



PXG 0311P Gen3 iron

One of, if not the, best-feeling and most consistent irons on the market, but boy do you have to pay for it.

Price £440 per club