



Women's shorts
 Go online to read our baggy shorts group test: cyclinguk.org/article/group-test-womens-casual-shorts-summer-rides

Verdict

If you're looking for 'true' padded pants then the similarly-priced Corinne Dennis or VeloVixen pairs will do the job for casual or short rides, giving you noticeable extra comfort. Of the two, I think the VeloVixen pants steal it: although they're the least flattering, the material is more breathable and so won't leave your groin damp.

The Altura pants are the least conspicuous but also provide the least amount of padding, so they're ideal for more 'fashion conscious' riders who don't feel comfortable going commando under kit for short rides.

If you'll be out all day and don't mind the bigger pad you can't beat the Endura boxers, which have excellent padding from front to back and feel unnoticeable once they're on due to the stretch in the material.



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1 Endura Women's Engineered Padded Boxer

£32.99 endurasport.com

THESE HIGH-STRETCH boxers have substantial padding; I could happily ride 40 miles off-road in them with the help of some chamois cream before my sit bones ached. You could team them with baggy shorts or trousers for off-road rides, or a loose dress or skirt. I wore mine under some 'fashion' cycle shorts and they felt comfortable but a little bulky. The pants have a fast-wicking antibacterial finish, which is good news for hot days. Sizes: XS-XL. The biggest size fitted my size 16/18 frame comfortably.

Comfy shorts with substantial padding for longer rides

2 Corinne Dennis Women's Padded Undies

£39.99 corinneedennis.co.uk

THESE COTTON-RICH undies have medium-thickness padding, which I found comfortable for up to around 25-30 miles of off-road riding. They've got more of a 'short' cut than the Endura boxers, which makes them feel more like underwear and thus not so noticeable underneath jogging bottoms, shorts, leggings, or a skirt. Because they're made from 90% cotton they won't wick sweat away as effectively as other materials so may start to feel damp on long/hot rides but will keep you fairly warm on cold days. Sizes: 8-20.

A good pair of undies for casual rides or commuting

3 VeloVixen Padded Cycling Knickers

£42 velovixen.com

I FOUND THE style of these knickers unflattering. They have decent yet firm gel-like padding but a very noticeable pant line, so I'd only wear them under loose garments – baggy shorts or trousers, dresses or skirts. While they're good for commuting or leisurely rides in 'normal' clothes, I didn't find them particularly comfortable for rides longer than 20 miles. They come in various designs if that's what you want from a pair of padded undies. I didn't feel sweaty in them thanks to the moisture-wicking polyester.

Stretchy and moisture-wicking, though an unflattering style

4 Altura Tempo Women's Cycling Knickers

£20 altura.co.uk

THE MOST APPEALING of the four pairs, these actually look like knickers. They're unnoticeable when worn, making them ideal for short-duration cycling like spin classes, as well as for situations where you want to wear normal clothes. I wouldn't choose them for journeys longer than 15 miles, however, as the padding is not very thick. I had no VPL, which is good if you're conscious of how they look under bottoms. They're made from a lightweight breathable fabric, which is inconspicuous but may not be as durable.

Barely-there knickers that are ideal for shorter rides