

# THE 5 BEST MOTOCROSS BOOTS YOU CAN BUY RIGHT NOW

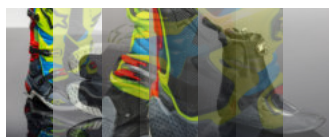
## GUIDE TO PREMIUM MX BOOTS

May 11, 2018 | By Michael Antonovich



Premium MX Boot Buyer's Guide

Next to a high-quality helmet, boots are arguably the second most important piece of safety apparel in a rider's gear bag. Sure, many of us started out on our Yamaha PeeWees wearing hiking boots or (gasp!) cowboy boots, but properly protecting your feet and ankles, especially, can guarantee you a long, pain-free motocross career. As is the case when selecting a helmet, investing in a premium product will provide you with the most technology, safety features, and protection. We test motorcycles year-round, and as a result, we've spent plenty of time in just about every quality pair of motocross boots available. In the pages that follow, we've gathered our favorite five pairs of motocross footwear and broken each down with insightful information from both our testing staff and several consumers that we polled at our local tracks. When choosing a pair of motocross boots, there are many factors that go into selecting the pair that is right for you. We hope this feature helps make your decision easier.



**Price:** \$599.95

**Adult Sizes:** 7-14

**Country of Manufacture:** Croatia

**Sizing Recommendation:** True to size

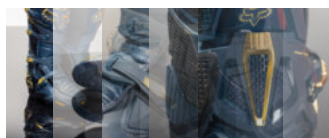
**Weight Per Pair (Size 10):** 9 pounds, 4.8 ounces

**Replaceable Parts:** Buckles, sole insert, sole

**Features:** At the highest levels, the Alpinestars Tech 10 is the most popular boot in motocross, as it is used by more professional racers than any other boot. Alpinestars is known for continually updating and improving its products, and since its introduction in 2001, the Tech 10 has undergone countless revisions. Comparing the original to the current model would reveal two radically different boots that share only branding and model name. The Italian company is the originator of the internal bootie design, which adds greatly to the boot's overall comfort, both initially and in the long run. The current booties feature internal ankle braces on each side that are designed to protect the wearer from rolling and twisting injuries. As for the boot itself, it is constructed of an injection-molded, one-piece chassis that consists of five different polyurethane compounds, combined with full-grain leather and microfiber uppers. Using a rear blade system, the boot is designed to protect against hyperextension injuries of the ankle. A dual compound sole is bonded to the bottom of the boot and features a replaceable arch area. The internal steel shank offers support and protection from hard landings.

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**Editorial Feedback:** The Tech 10 is arguably the most comfortable boot available, thanks to its heavily padded internal bootie. Most of our testers love the bootie design, as it adds an element of security and support. Some riders do not care for the feel of the bootie though, as it does add some bulk in the ankle area and reduces the feel against the sides of the motorcycle. The tri-buckle system is easy to operate and adjust, though we have struggled to open the bottom buckle with gloves on. The Velcro in the upper gaiter area is strong and keeps dirt out well. Break-in time is minimal and the boots can be raced in right out of the box, but finicky riders may need a few rides to adjust to them. Feel for the pegs, shifter, and the rear brake pedal is excellent from the get-go. Exceptionally sharp footpegs or improper riding technique (riding on your arches) can chew through the soles, but either the replaceable arch panel or the entire sole can be replaced if the boots are sent to Alpinestars' California headquarters before the damage becomes too severe. Mistimed jabs at a kickstarter lever have left us with damage to the inner arch area of the boot where it can come into contact with the footpeg. Though white boots are still the Astars staple, the brand has begun to release limited-edition colorways to commemorate major race dates on the calendar, and the eye-catching designs are awesome.



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**Fox Racing Instinct**

**Price:** \$549.95

**Adult Sizes:** 8-14

9. 9 pounds, 7.8 ounces

**Replaceable Parts:** Buckles, sole

**Features:** The Fox Racing Instinct Boot was developed by racers at the highest levels for several months before a production version was finally released to the public in 2012. Unlike Fox's previous boots that had a more traditional build, the Instinct adopted a hinged-ankle design and floating buckle system meant to flex with the movement of the ankle for unrestricted motion. A proprietary Duratac rubber sole is bonded to the bottom of the boot, which positions the rider's feet low inside the chassis for a better feel of the pegs and rear brake pedal. The same Duratac rubber is used on the inner surfaces of the boot as a burn guard, but it also serves as an ideal traction pad for gripping the sides of the motorcycle. Fox intentionally designed the Instinct with a low-profile toe box for maximum feel of the shifter and slim overall profile of the boot. An internal steel shank provides arch support. The Instinct does not utilize a gaiter or Velcro closure at the top of the boot, as the boot's shin plate is designed to slide against the uppers with the flexion of the ankle. The uppermost padded areas of the boot are curved inward to prevent dirt from finding its way in. Throughout the season, Fox Racing will traditionally produce several very limited-edition Instinct colorways to match its LE racewear; this navy and gold version being a perfect example. You must act quickly to procure a set, however, as they move fast!

**Editorial Feedback:** Thanks to generous padding and smooth, mesh fabric on the insides of the Fox Instinct, they feel more like high-end basketball shoes than a dirt bike boots. Thanks to the hinged ankle, the boots require no break-in time and can be raced in right out of the box. The four buckles are easy to adjust, and obtaining as snug a fit you desire in the ankle area is easy. Buckles on the Instinct are easy to operate, but the bottom buckles can become clogged in muddy conditions, which makes them tough to close. The Instinct looks wider at the ankle than other hinged boots, but it is undetectable while riding, as the rest of the boot is so low in profile and easy to maneuver in. The Duratac rubber sole and burn guards offer great traction on the pegs and against the side of the bike, and the sole holds up great to even the sharpest of footpegs. Though the sole is marketed as replaceable, we've not met anyone who has done so, which is a testament to the durability of the compound.



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**Gaerne SG-12**

**Price:** \$619.95

**Adult Sizes:** 8-14

**Country of Manufacture:** Italy

**Sizing Recommendation:** One size larger (size 10 fits like an 11)

**Weight Per Pair (Size 10):** 9 pounds, 6.4 ounces

**Replaceable Parts:** Steel toe sliders, buckles, buckle back plates, straps, strap keepers, shin plates, soles, rear wishbones, insoles, grip guards, pivot kits

**Features:** Built on a full-grain leather base, the Gaerne SG-12 utilizes a dual-stage pivot design for comfort, mobility, and safety. The first stage of the pivot exists in the "Razorback" portion of the boot—a support brace built into the rear calf area of the boot. The second is in the ankle area, and it allows the boot to pivot freely while at the same time protecting against twisting, rolling, and hyperextension injuries. Thermoplastic armor on the outside of the boot and an ergonomically designed shin plate offer maximum impact protection and supply the structural integrity of the SG-12.

Plates on the boots are lined with three generous rubber grip guards that are designed to offer superior traction against the sides of the motorcycle, while at the same time guarding against exhaust pipe burns. The Gaerne SG-12 is the only premium motocross boot that utilizes a stitched-on sole and a steel toecap. Gaerne's dual-compound sole consists of a tougher, more-durable compound in the high-wear arch area and a softer compound in the remaining areas that provides excellent grip. A steel shank is utilized in the arch for support, and the entire sole is replaceable.

**Editorial Feedback:** The Gaerne SG-12 surrounds your feet in comfortable padding from the second you slip it on. In fact, slipping them on is easier than any of the other boots, as the ankle area opens up generously. The SG-12 buckles are, by far, the simplest and easiest to use, as they open and close with a silky smooth operation. Cinching the boots tight for a secure and safe feel is easily accomplished with the adjustable straps, and the stretchy gaiter at the top creates a tight seal against your pants. Riders who have thick feet will love the SG-12, as the toe box is extra roomy when it comes to up-and-down toe wiggle room. Riders with narrow feet will need to wear a thick riding sock. The SG-12's steel shank and dual-compound sole offer a ton of support on the footpegs and guard well against hard landings. On the flipside, they require a bit of break in to acquire a good feel for the shifter and rear brake pedal. Some of our testers don't care for the nailed-on steel toecap, as it can slip off the rear brake pedal if you're not used to it.



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**Sidi Crossfire 3 SR**

**Price:** \$595

**Adult Sizes:** 8.5 (42 EUR)-12.5 (47 EUR)

**Country of Manufacture:** Italy

**Sizing Recommendation:** True to size

**Weight Per Pair (Size 10):** 8 pounds, 11.2 ounces

**Replaceable Parts:** Straps, strap retainers, buckles, sole, upper, shin plate, ankle pivot cover, calf section, inner arch protector

**Features:** Available in two versions--SR or TA--the Sidi Crossfire 3 SR is differentiated by its completely replaceable sole, which is stiffer than the TA's traditional sewn-on sole. The trademark feature of Sidi's popular Crossfire line of motocross boots is its hinged ankle design, which is intended to offer exceptional mobility while at the same time protecting against rolling or twisting ankle injuries. Sidi's dual-hinge design also protects against hyperextension in both directions with a hard stop built into the ankle mechanism. Constructed entirely of manmade materials, the Crossfire 3 SR is highly adjustable and can literally be rebuilt piece by piece should they become damaged or worn out. Cambrielle and Teflon-coated mesh line the interior of the boot for cool, moisture-wicking comfort. The calf plate of the boot features a double adjustment so that the boot can accommodate the largest calves or knee brace lowers, while inner heat shields on each boot provide excellent grip against the motorcycle. A nylon insole rests above the completely replaceable sole system, which fastens with four large screws.

**Editorial Feedback:** The Sidi Crossfire 3 SR feels super protective from the second you slip them on as the hinged ankle moves freely, yet with great support. The fit of the ankle area is snug and secure, but this also makes the boot tougher to slide your foot into than others, especially if you have large feet. The range of adjustability of the Crossfire 3

ishment, and the buckles themselves offer smooth operation, though their petite size can make it tough to gain leverage if you prefer an extra-tight fit. The burn panels are made of a softer material than the rest of the boots, and they really allow you to clamp down on the contact surfaces of your motorcycle for exceptional control. Riders who aggressively grip their bikes may cause more wear and tear to the graphics and seat cover in Crossfire 3s. Small impact guards in the inner arch area of each boot protect against footpeg damage, and especially so on the right side while kickstarting the bike. We've seen plenty of other boots with holes torn in the sides of them from coming into contact with the footpeg in this instance.



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**TCX Comp Evo 2 Michelin**

**Price: \$549.99**

**Adult Sizes: 5-14**

**Country of Manufacture:** Italy

**Sizing Recommendation:** One size larger (size 10 fits like 11)

**Weight Per Pair (Size 10):** 9 pounds, 6.0 ounces

**Replaceable Parts:** Soles, buckles, straps

**Features:** The defining feature of the TCX Comp Evo 2 Michelin boot is--as one would assume by its name--the Michelin rubber sole. The two-piece construction method features a polyurethane footbed with an internal steel shank, sewn directly to the bottom of the boot. The Michelin MX Hybrid sole is then affixed to the boot with a high-strength bonding process and is designed to offer high wear and excellent grip. The boot's polyurethane frame features a Double Flex Control Unit hinge that allows 18 degrees of forward flexion and 15 degrees of rear flexion, with stops built on each end to prevent hyperextension injuries. Internally, the boot is generously padded, and four aluminum micro-adjustable buckles allow you to customize the fit of the Comp Evo 2 boot. TCX offers an adjustable shin plate for riders with larger calves, and rubber heat guards on the inner surfaces of the boots offer burn protection and great grip against the side of the motorcycle.

**Editorial Feedback:** The TCX Comp Evo 2 Michelin is the least known of the premium boots readily available in the United States, but it is a high-quality offering worth serious consideration. We were intrigued by the exclusive Michelin rubber sole and found it to offer excellent traction against the footpeg. These soles have proven quite durable as well, as we've not been able to wear through or chunk them, even when riding on sharp aftermarket footpegs. The opening of the boot is wide and allows a rider to slip their foot in without much effort and the four straps can be extended or shortened to perfect the fit around a rider's leg, which are then kept in place by easy-to-operate aluminum buckles. Adequate break-in time is necessary, as the Comp Evo 2 is quite stiff when new, in spite of its hinged ankle design. Once the boot is broken in, it is very comfortable and offers a good feel for the motorcycle surfaces it comes into contact with. The overall feel of the boot is quite substantial, albeit a bit bulky until you get used to it, as the roomy interior is lined with a double-compound polyurethane padding and features a solid footbed that remains comfortable during impacts. Even with the robust construction of the boot, the D.F.C. System allows for a wide range of motion and limits extreme flex in all directions. Grip against the side of the bike is excellent, but the inner edges of the shin plate can tear up the bike's graphics.