

## Endura Downhill shorts

Price: £59.99

From: Endura, [endura.co.uk](http://endura.co.uk)

Tested: Six months.



I have not done a whole lot of downhill in these shorts, if 'downhilling' equates to riding from start line to finish line down insanely steep scary stuff between two bits of tape.

I have, however, ridden down a lot of hills in them. Riding down hills (and up them, and along the flat bits which aren't hill in between) is something I excel at and enjoy. Which I suppose you'd loosely call 'trail riding'. So the first thing I'd like to do is rename these shorts as the 'Trail shorts' because calling them the 'Downhill shorts' has done them no favours at all. I imagine a large number of people take a look at the name tag and are immediately put off by the assumption that these are shorts which require a certain amount of gnar on the behalf of the wearer to do them justice.

But I'd like to bring them to the general trail riding public's attention as one of the toughest and best all-round bits of riding kit I've had in my wardrobe this year. On all but the hottest days they've almost displaced my beloved Gore Fusion shorts, which are lighter and therefore cooler, but not as tough and therefore offer less protection when crashing (a frequent hazard in my line of work). These puppies are made from a reassuring hefty weight of what Endura calls Oxford Canvas – which is basically a feel-a-like for the heavier-weight versions of Cordura. If you're not a fan of Hope Green then a subdued black on black on grey version is available and everything about them is lovely, from the zippered pockets that (quite sensibly) discourage you from putting your fragile iPhone/ potentially injurious house keys in them by dint of being in the 'fall zone', to the chunky waist adjusters which pull the right way

(forwards) so as to not interfere with pack straps. They fasten with two substantial poppers attached to a deep placket and the strategic use of stretch fabrics in the seat and around the back means they are way more comfortable for long stints of pedalling than anything this sturdy has any right to be.

The observant among you may note that I am not a boy and may therefore be wondering what business I have testing boy's shorts. The simple answer is, there are very few girls' shorts on the market which are tough enough to last more than a season, comfy enough to pedal in all day and – crucially – long enough in the leg for anyone over 5ft 5in to not look stupid when wearing knee pads. These shorts fit the bill on all counts and thanks to the stretchy corded back yoke aren't too unflattering either. At least I like to think that they're not. I can't see what I look like from behind when I'm riding and frankly I'm more concerned with the function anyway so don't shatter my illusions please.

It should be noted that at 5ft 7in and size 10, the smallest size of these is only just small enough for me. If you're shorter or smaller than I am, then your only option is to lobby Endura in the name of fair-shorts-for-all until they produce a girl's fit version. And, when that happens, you can put my name down for a pair.

**Overall:** Tough, robust and really rather good value; not elegant but then neither are scabby knees. Workwear for the trails.

Jenn