

Seat Height 2014 Update

To get an idea of how you'd fit on any currently available Motorcycle (including brand new ones and some older models) go to <http://cycle-ergo.com/> where you can input your physical measurements and get a picture (literally) of how you'd fit on a particular motorcycle, based on it's known manufacturer's details. Very clever site, and a good way to compare models of bike you might be interested in, whether short or tall. Of course it does not tell you that your trousers are too tight, which can be one reason why it feels as if your bike has grown over the winter! LOL.

Website Visor Down features a 'Top 5 Low Motorcycle Seat Heights', which lists the **Ducati Monster 696** at 770 mm,



the BMW F800R at 775 mm, the **Kawasaki Ninja 250R** at 790mm and a very low weight of only 169 kg (as opposed to 186 kg for the Ducati and over 200 kg for the BMW) and the **Kawasaki ER6F** (which we have already recommended- 790mm and slim across the seat as well). Their fifth recommendation is the **Suzuki GSX R600**, but at 810mm it might be the lowest (and lightest) Supersport 600 but it's too tall for my little 28" inside leg measurement! They also have the following report on the **BMW F800ST** – the bike my other half has just sold to our elder son (With thanks to www.visordown.com which I can recommend for bike reviews):

BMW's F800 ST Touring is another great bike that is somewhat overlooked. With a seat height of 760mm when using the optional extra low seat (costs extra) wet weight of 209kg and a cracking 800cc parallel-twin engine plus a host of standard features including ABS, heated grips, cruising range indicator and power socket. The F800 ST will cosset you from just-passed beginner to capable all-rounder road rider. The only slight fly in the ointment is the price. It's not cheap, but it is brilliant.

Read more: <http://www.visordown.com/features/top-5-new-bikes-for-short-riders/18290-4.html#ixzz2zcqgyq9c>

Having ridden with my other half on this bike I can say the standard reduced height seat is rather uncomfortable, for both rider and pillion – we bought an after market seat for it. This was slightly higher but much more comfortable. He found the indicator system very hard to get used to, you operate separate switches on the left bar for left and right bar for right. It also comes with panniers that are barely bigger than my handbag, though I am told larger panniers are an option now. Other than that, it is a very nice machine and seriously low in height.

My other half has always ridden a Honda and every time he rides anything else, he hankers after a Honda! His legs are only an inch or so longer than mine and he currently rides a **Honda CB600F (Hornet)**, which he says is wonderful, if a tiny bit tall for him (Seat height is 800 mm). He has placed an order (with a leap of faith) on the new **Honda VFR800**, which is coming out in June and has a seat height of 789 mm at it's lowest setting (it is adjustable and goes up to 809 mm). It's a bit of a lump compared to the BMW, at 242 kg and we're intending to put hard luggage (and me!) onto it, plus it has a sportier riding position than the BMW, so time (and a week long touring holiday of Germany later this year) will tell how all this goes. See WIMA news in September or October for a full report!

VENTURE MOTORCYCLES

I was recently looking round a bike shop with my younger son (who luckily for him, did not inherit the short legs the rest of the family has!). He asked to sit on a sports bike and the salesman commented upon what a pleasure it was to move a bike that was not like shifting an elephant – he'd spent the morning demonstrating 'Venture' bikes to potential customers. Venture biking is all the go, but do not be put off by the fashionably vast Triumphs and BMWs that we shorties would need a ladder to get onto. You do NOT have to have a large capacity bike featuring panniers big enough to take the kitchen sink, in order to have adventures on a bike! Bikes that are worth a look:

Triumph Tiger 800 - seat height 810 mm on it's lowest setting, though it is a heavy bike for off road work, at 209 kg.

Yamaha XT250 with a seat height of 810 mm but weighing only 132 kg this off roader is going to be a better option for anyone who seriously expects to end up off the tarmac. Not fast, but is said by website www.advpulse.com to have a 'decent' fuel range.



BMW G650GS Comes with optional Factory lowering, which would bring the seat height down to 768 mm. This is the single cylinder bike that BMW seemed to stop importing for a while in favour of the 800 engine, but it is now available again. It is incredibly fuel efficient, doing at least 65 mpg, even when ridden hard apparently. It is also reasonably priced. It might be viewed as an 'entry level' bike by the big bike boys but if you are short in stature and want a Venture bike, let's face it, this is probably the only serious alternative to a trail bike type of machine.



You may also come across some older models of bike such as the **Yamaha Serrow (XT225)**, manufactured until 2007, this is beloved by many of those people who were 'Venture' riding before it was called 'Venture riding'. Very popular as novice off road bikes and fun bikes to own, you might have to move fast to bag a good example. Seat height is 810 mm.

Another to look out for second hand is the **Honda 'Degree' XL250**, manufactured in the 1980s there are still examples knocking around and working (that's Hondas for you) low and light enough for little me to ride, but I'll be honest, not a machine I could go a long distance on. Somewhat sloooooow....

If anyone reading this has any other info or experience of low or lowered seat height bikes, please get in touch with me via my current WIMA email rally@wimagb.co.uk thank you.

Sue (Sherbs) Herbert.