



Silverline Hard Base Tool Bag 268974

Price: £15.35

Contact: 01935 382222

silverlinetools.com

Rating: ★★★★★

BEST BUY THERE'S nothing innovative or unusual with this bag, but it did exactly what was required.

Certainly, it was excellent value for money, and easily big enough for the emergency kit as well as many of the extras. Although none of the 10 external and eight internal pockets were covered, they proved practical for taking smaller objects.

We liked the grip that gave a comfortable cover to the twin handles, the 1.2m shoulder strap and the strong plastic base, which helped keep the bag rigid when fully laden. A well priced bag that would cope with most things, most of the time.

"It's excellent value for money and easily big enough for the emergency tool kit"

Stanley 16in Rigid Multipurpose Tool Bag

Price: £38

Contact: 0845 057 9000, halfords.com

Rating: ★★★★★

RECOMMENDED PURELY as a bag, this is probably still our favourite because its rigid sides are ideal for those who carry more tools. The downside of that is it can't be squashed down when you're running light.

More positively, the hard base came 30mm up the sides and provided yet more rigidity, as well as protecting against moisture. The twin-zipped lid had an internal, clear document wallet, and on the outside one of the six pockets had a flap. We also liked the 12 internal loops, but the bag drops down the order due largely to a recent £8 price rise, which impacts its value for money.



Stanley 16in Open Mouth Tool Bag

Price: £25

Contact: 0845 057 9000, halfords.com

Rating: ★★★★★

RECOMMENDED DESPITE being more conventional, this bag offered almost as much space as the Rigid version (above). It looked and felt tough, and the hard plastic base kept the contents under control.

The one-metre shoulder strap was plenty long enough and there were six useful exterior pockets, plus one full-length pouch and three smaller ones inside. The bag handled almost all of our complete kit while easily swallowing the emergency tools. A touch pricey, but likely to last long enough to be worth it.

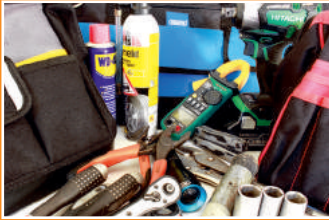


TE Dave Pollard

IF you need to carry tools in your car, a bespoke bag is often the best way. Its soft corners will take less of a toll on your boot than a box, plus it's easier to carry, with no sharp edges to dig into knees or thighs. Many also have a shoulder strap to take the strain off arms and hands.

There's a range of designs on offer and your choice will depend on what you need to carry and whether the kit is destined to stay in the car or be carried to a workshop or garage.

How we tested them



WE looked for a balance between size, price and practicality, along with build quality. A rigid base stops the bag sagging as you lift heavy loads, and a hard plastic underside helps keep moisture at bay.

We totted up the various pockets, while those with sealable flaps to keep the contents safe gained extra points. A long shoulder strap is always handy, and finally we tried them out with both a cut-down, just-in-case-type tool kit and then with a more complete version. The final factor was price from online sources.

TOOL BAGS

A proper tool kit deserves a proper tool bag – we find the very best

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Every week, we extensively test all the latest car kit from tyres to trim cleaners. Log on to www.autoexpress.co.uk to look through our huge online test archive

Auto EXPRESS Verdict

OFFERING the best value, the practical Silverline Hard Base pushed its way to the top. The impressive but pricey Stanley Rigid had to give best, and the Open Mouth Stanley chased it hard.

1. Silverline Hard Base Tool Bag 268974
2. Stanley 16in Rigid Multipurpose Tool Bag
3. Stanley 16in Open Mouth Tool Bag



VonHaus Rolling Tool Bag 3500067

Price: £49.99
 Contact: 0161 833 5442, vonhaus.com
 Rating: ★★★★★

THE VonHaus had more than twice as much usable space as our winner, and it easily coped with our full kit. It had 11 pockets outside, and inside seven pouches were complemented by the corner loop. The wheels and handle made it easy to move, but its price has risen, which hurt its overall score.



Silverline Tool Bag Open Tote 748091

Price: £16.95
 Contact: 01935 382222, silverlinetools.com
 Rating: ★★★★★

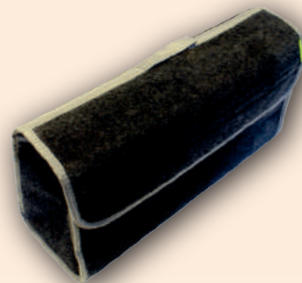
THIS is the only fully open bag here, making it easier to carry taller objects. The handle was padded and the bag could be compacted when not in use. We liked the seven loops and five pockets inside, plus a mesh and five fabric pockets outside. If you don't need a lid, this is very good value.



Amazon Basics Tool Bag

Price: £12.82
 Contact: amazon.co.uk
 Rating: ★★★★★

ONE doesn't expect too much from the Basics range, so we were pleasantly surprised by the strong material and very good build quality here. We liked the twin-zip fastening, six exterior tool loops, covered handles and exterior pockets – normal and mesh. But it's by far the smallest bag on test and struggled even with the emergency kit.



Sakura Large Tool Bag SS5233

Price: £9.99
 Contact: 01488 689400, saxon-brands.com
 Rating: ★★★★★

THIS was the least expensive bag we looked at and it lacked rigidity until it was attached to the side and floor of the boot. At that point, it was very useful and took almost all of our tools. There were no pockets or loops at all and it sagged when carried fully loaded, but it was good value.



Mil-Com Abrams M1 Tank Tool Bag

Price: £14.95
 Contact: amazon.co.uk
 Rating: ★★★★★

THE Mil-Com has the coolest name – referring to the American tank – and the bag was suitably olive green. But its handles had no covers and there were no exterior pockets or loops. Inside, there was just one pocket along each side, so it was hard to keep the tools separate. Its price was good, but the bag didn't live up to its namesake.