



## Osprey Raptor 10 mountain biking pack review

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Mountain Biking Pack Review

Featuring: Raptor 10

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A major key to enjoying a comfortable mountain bike ride is owning a good hydration pack. It needs to be balanced, snug, and have a plethora of pockets to carry all kinds of gear from bike tubes to energy bars to water reservoirs. Unfortunately, most hydration packs are made for a variety of activities – not specifically for mountain biking. But Osprey made one. Their line of mountain bike specific Raptor packs, including the Raptor 10, have all the features you'd want and more. Plus, their renowned hydration system got even better with a redesign for 2013.

I've been carrying the Osprey Raptor 10 on my back during spring rides in the Salt Lake City foothills, and wonder if this is the be-all, end-all of MTB sacks. The first thing I noticed with the Raptor 10 is how well it fits my body. The Raptor packs are men's specific (there is a women's version called the Raven) and easy-to-adjust hip and shoulder straps make cinching the pack down to size a snap. I really appreciate that the straps have clips at the ends so they attach to themselves and don't annoyingly flap around when I'm bombing down the singletrack.

The back panel is very well designed with airflow padding, concave shape, and a mesh fabric overlay to keep air flowing. Of course on hot, strenuous climbs nothing will keep my back from becoming a swamp, but it's nice to have a little help from the pack. What really makes the Raptor 10 stand out are the pockets. For such a small pack, this thing is loaded with storage space for just about anything you'd need to carry on a short to medium-long ride. First, there's a large, zippered main pocket with room enough for a couple tubes and a jacket. The main compartment also has a mesh pocket where I keep an energy bar, plus two vertical interior sleeves that are perfect for stashing air and shock pumps. Second, a smaller pocket at the top is lined with a softer fabric that's perfect protection for a smartphone or sunglasses. Inside this pocket is a zippered mesh with key clip. Third, the waistbelt has two zippered pouches just large enough for energy gels or bars so you don't have to take the pack off to get a burst of energy. Fourth, there's a stretch-fabric pouch on the outside where you can stash a rain shell or hat that is secured with a clip. But the best pocket of all is the tool pouch. It's located at the bottom, and once unzipped, reveals a roll-out "tool box" for things like chain tools, tire levers, multi-tools, hexes, and spare parts such as shifter cables, chains, patch kits and lube. It's all kept tidy in zippered, mesh compartments that roll up and cinch down tight. The overall effect is that all my tools are in one place, so there's no fiddling around, taking everything out to find that one tool I need when sidelined on the trail.





Another great thing about this pack (and all Osprey packs) is the reservoir system. It's unlike any other system out there and Osprey has clearly done their homework here. The 3-liter reservoir has this hard backer plate to keep the reservoir from "barreling" out, which has always been an annoyance with traditional hydration systems. This makes the water feel more stable and secure. I also like the cap as it only takes few turns to open and close after filling. Plus, the handle is a nice touch.

But my favorite thing about Osprey's system is the magnetic clip on the sternum strap. I've long been irritated by my reservoir tube hanging willy-nilly from the shoulder strap and was constantly pushing it back up into its sleeve. But with Osprey's magnetic sternum clip, the bite valve stays securely away right where I need it. It also makes it easier to find for a quick sip when riding. Plus, the magnet is strong and I've never had the bite valve fall off. The reservoir tucks away in its own sleeve that zippered down to the right shoulder strap so it's extremely easy to route the tube.

In addition to all this, there's Osprey's very cool helmet carry clip, and even a blinker light attachment on the back for those times when you're cycling at night on the road. Overall, it seems Osprey has thought of everything a mountain biker could ever want or need in a pack. It's also available in 14 and 6 liter sizes.

**The Good:** Tool pouch, helmet carry, excellent hydration system, magnetic sternum clip, hip-belt pockets, very comfortable, enough pockets to fit anything you need on a day trip.

**The Bad:** I found nothing to dislike about this pack!

**Final Word:** The Osprey Raptor 10 is the ultimate hydration pack specific to mountain biking.

