





MARIN

HAWK HILL

A Mountain Predator That Can Fly

Marin Bikes is a brand that needs little introduction. It is one of the oldest mountain bike companies on the trail. Over the years, it has gone from making rigid steel frames to carbon superbikes, adapting to the needs of the modern rider. There are plenty of high-end full-suspension machines out there that will get the job done, but the entry-level market can be a tough one to crack, especially when trying to deliver on performance.

The Hawk Hill is the newest bike to come out of the Marin factory with a few surprises that most riders won't see coming. While the price may seem entry-level, we had to test Marin's claim that this was a serious performance bike riders could afford without taking out a second mortgage.

WHO IS IT MADE FOR?

The Hawk Hill falls into the trail category with a 120-millimeter suspension platform. The Hawk Hill will appeal to a wide range of riders with a versatile setup that can be customized to suit various types of trails. On paper, the Hawk Hill leans toward entry-level riders looking for their first full-suspension bikes, but with Marin pro riders like Kyle Warner winning enduro events aboard this platform, the Hawk Hill seems more capable than its price tag might lead you to believe.

WHAT IS IT MADE FROM?

Marin designed the Hawk Hill with an aluminum frame and 120 millimeters of rear suspension travel. The frame design has full internal cable routing, including the option to run a stealth dropper post, and an externally threaded bottom bracket. The Hawk Hill comes stock with 135-millimeter rear spacing but can be converted to a 12x142-millimeter system to accommodate future wheel upgrades.

Marin uses a modern, long, slack and low setup to give riders more stability on technical sections of trail. The Hawk Hill uses Marin's MultiTrac rear suspension design that shares kinematics similar to those of the IsoTrac setup on Marin's higher end builds. It is essentially a dual-link system that's built for efficiency and plushness. This is the only version in the Hawk Hill line and has a very competitive price of \$1500.

WHICH COMPONENTS STAND OUT?

There is plenty of creativity with the Hawk Hill build kit, and our test riders were impressed to say the least. The Hawk Hill comes tubeless ready with a 1x10 Shimano Deore drivetrain. The frame also has the option to run a front derailleur. Marin spec'd the Hawk Hill with an 11-42 Sun Race cassette to match the 32-tooth front chainring, giving our test riders all the gearing they needed. The RockShox Recon fork and X-Fusion shock tracked well and didn't give us any issues during our testing.



HOW DOES IT PERFORM?

We spent plenty of time on our local cross-country trails and even some of our rowdier trails to test the limits of the Hawk Hill. Out of the box, the Hawk Hill was set up tubeless, which came as a bit of a surprise to us. Most bikes in this price category require a tubeless conversion.

Suspension setup: We played around with the suspension quite a bit, starting the shock at 20-percent sag with 15 percent in the fork. After a couple rides, we settled at 25-percent sag for the shock but kept the fork the same. We ran the rebound a little quicker in the fork but left the shock settings in the middle.

Moving out: The geometry, combined with the 780-millimeter wide bars and short stem, gives the Hawk Hill a very comfortable fit that leans heavily towards trail riding. For a size large, a couple of our test riders felt that it ran a touch small, but we were all pleased with the overall fit.

Cornering: The wide bars gave us plenty of leverage, and the meaty Schwalbe Hans Dampf tires gave our test riders plenty of confidence when cornering. The tight wheelbase and short chainstays allowed the Hawk Hill to be whipped through switch-backs and narrow corners with ease. The suspension platform tracked well and maintained traction, even when we pushed hard through turns.

Climbing: The Hawk Hill won't be the first to the top of the mountain, but it will get there. The frame felt stiff and responsive when pedaling hard out of the saddle, and the fork was firm when locked out. The MultiTrac suspension gave us some support off the top of the stroke when seated on long climbs.

Descending: With the suspension open and our hands off the brakes, the Hawk Hill did all the work. The geometry felt playful, and the 120 millimeters of suspension travel felt adequate over a variety of terrain. The Hawk Hill rolled with ease on flowing singletrack and felt stable through gnarlier rock gardens. The rear



Modern lines: Marin designed the Hawk Hill to be a high-performance bike but without the high price tag. The Hawk Hill uses a full-aluminum frame and rear triangle with a tapered head tube and threaded bottom bracket.

suspension felt active and absorbed the big hits effectively. At high speeds, the bike felt stable.

TRICKS, TIPS & UPGRADES?

There are plenty of options for the Hawk Hill down the road. We didn't have many complaints about the build kit, but we would recommend investing in a dropper post. Considering the low price of the bike, we are confident riders will be able to justify making the extra purchase right off the bat.

The Hans Dampf tires hooked up well during our testing, but we would recommend something a little more trail oriented, such as the Nobby Nic tread, to shed a little weight but still hook up well.



Upgrade as you go: The Hawk Hill has the ability to convert the rear axle to the beefier 12x142 spacing. This will allow riders to upgrade wheels down the road and not have to drop the extra coin on a completely new bike.



MultiTrac it: Marin has had plenty of success with IsoTrac on their higher-end full suspensions. The Hawk Hill uses a different MultiTrac system that has similar kinematics to IsoTrac.

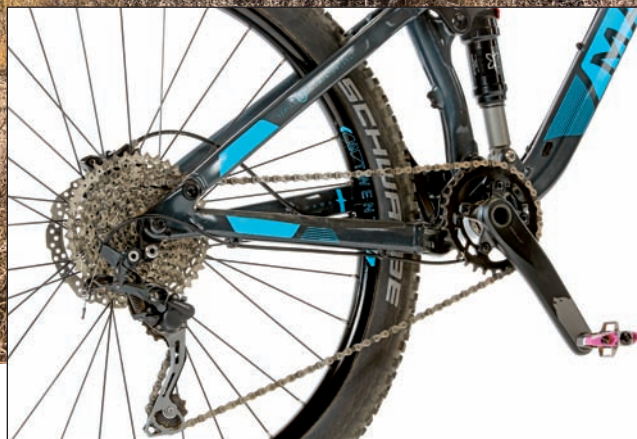


BIKE TEST / MARIN HAWK HILL



BUYING ADVICE

We have tested many full-suspension bikes in this price category that were disappointing, but the Hawk Hill stands out from the crowd with a dialed frame and a suspension platform built with a parts kit that doesn't need any immediate upgrades to be totally trail-ready, even for the serious rider. The bones of the Hawk Hill are strong and offer a solid base for riders to make strategic upgrades down the road—or enjoy the bike as it is. Either way, the Hawk Hill is a trailbike that will more than satisfy the needs of a huge cross section of riders, whether it's bone stock or upgraded to fit the specific needs of a pickier rider. □



Creative details: 1x drivetrains are often the mark of a high-performance rig. The Hawk Hill has a wide-range 11-42 cassette and 32-tooth front chainring to allow riders to step into a bike with a single-ring drivetrain at a healthy price point.

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Price	\$1500
Weight	31.4 pounds
Frame tested	Large
Bottom bracket height	13.25"
Chainstay length	17"
Top tube length	23"
Head tube angle	67.5°
Seat tube angle	69.5°
Wheelbase	46"
Suspension travel (front)	120mm (5")
Frame material	Aluminum
Fork	RockShox Recon Silver, 120mm
Rims	Marin Double Wall Alloy, 27mm inner
Hubs	Formula 15x100 (front), Joytech 135mm (rear)
Tires	Schwalbe Hans Dampf 27.5x2.35" Performance
Saddle	Marin Speed Concept
Seatpost	Marin two-bolt alloy
Handlebar	Marin Mini-Riser aluminum, 15° rise, 780mm
Stem	Marin 3D, 7° rise, 60mm
Brakes	Shimano BR-M315
Chainguide	None
Rear derailleur	Shimano Deore Shadow Plus
Shifters	Shimano Deore, 10-speed
Crankset	Marin forged alloy, threaded BB
Chainrings	32-tooth
Chain	KMC X10
Cassette	Sunrace 10-speed, 11-42
Pedals	None (weighed with XT Race)

It'll keep up: The Hawk Hill comes with a RockShox Recon Silver RL fork that will lock out when the trail starts going up. This fork uses an air spring and has plenty of high-speed rebound adjustments.

