

All about inflation

Not an economics article, but my experience with various tire inflation devices I have here and how they stack up.

	Summary	Description	Pro	Con
Floor pumps Silca Pista	It just works forever.	The Silca Pista is a venerable device which needs no introduction. Mine is 80's vintage and has pumped many tires in its time. It has the traditional steel construction with brass innards and an old fashioned leather pump washer. Much is made of the simplicity and effectiveness of the design, and the fact that they are inexpensive to repair and last for generations. There is not much to report other than this is all true. If you have the means this is the last floor pump you will ever buy. And then you can give it to the next generation in your will. This pump has a simple brass push on chuck which works well enough. Nowadays you can buy a much better chuck from Silca and I may eventually buy one. Then life would be perfect.	Expect a lifetime of reliable service.	Pricey these days in Oz.
Topeak JoeBlow Race	Functional. Cheap. Almost certainly won't last forever.	Topeak gear works well enough but seems to come apart eventually. It seems very unlikely to be a thing you bequeath to your children and frankly not a thing they might want anyway. This pump works well enough, the numbers on the gauge are easy to see because someone put it at the top of the pump and not the bottom. The chuck will take out a finger when you least expect it because the locking lever snaps back with a fair amount of force. And its plastic. But you can buy replacements. I actually like mine and I pay full attention when removing the chuck. There's also a facility to easily remove air if you've over inflated.	Functional, relatively inexpensive, gauge at the top of the pump makes it easy to see.	Watch your fingers with the chuck release.
Portable Topeak RaceRocket HP	Unobtrusive.	This one is short at 180mm and mounts via a plastic bracket secured to the bike under your bidon. It attaches to your tire via a hose that is part of the pump. Because the pump overall is short affixing the hose is slightly tedious, but not a problem. It screws on which makes for a good seal when inflating, but some air is lost when removing it. Because the pump stroke is short, inflating the tire this way is tedious, you'll be at the side of the road for some time. 160psi is claimed. I'm skeptical that's achievable by a real person in my lifetime. It will put 80psi in eventually however.	Small.	Requires a lot of effort to inflate a tire which is why it's not on a bike.

[Topeak Pocket Rocket](#)

Unobtrusive.

This pump has done tens of thousands of km's as a passenger on the seat tube of one of my bikes and it sure looks like it too. I've used it to inflate a tire on too few occasions to remember much about it, and I have no unfavorable recollections. I expect that's a good thing. Topeak say it inflates to 160psi, I'd be amazed if it were possible even if technically it were true. It connects directly to the tube which works well enough.

Small.

No bad habits to relate.

[Lezyne Road Drive](#)

Huuuuge... but works fine and has some neat tricks.

Its 260mm overall. This length makes it hard to fit to the bike unobtrusively and you'll need to ensure you have clearance everywhere when you fit it. I tried to fit it to the downtube but it was too long, and so it resides on the seat tube instead. Looks odd but works impressively which is why it's there. I mentioned this pump has some neat tricks, the hose is not affixed which means it's easy to attach to the bike before you connect the pump. It has a pressure valve in the hose as well which means no air is lost. Because of the length of the stroke, less time is spent at the side of the road. It's available in different sizes, maybe a smaller one would have been a better idea.

Pumps well, hose configuration works well.

Its big, however smaller lengths are available.

[Silca Tattico](#)

You spent how much??

This pump has all sorts of mystique and a big reputation to live up to. Hand crafted in Indianapolis by artisans with decades of motorsport fabrication expertise, drawing on a rich Italian heritage... or something. The box mine came in said made in Taiwan. Nonetheless, this device is a proper cut above the rest in every respect. The Tattico is really well made, crafted really, and works much better in every respect to the others. The hose is fixed to the pump, pushes on and has a proper metal locking lever which won't take your finger out. It is a thing of beauty and a joy to behold, and will pump your tire up quickly as well. The mounting bracket is a piece of machined alloy with a rubber retaining strap. It's pure class. I may buy another to put in the lounge room just to gaze at.

Best of breed by miles.

Expensive.

Gas

[Silca EOLO 3](#)

The last one of these things you will ever buy apparently.

You may have observed, I have a Silca thing going on. Turns out Silca invented the CO2 inflator and this is the third iteration. Again, insane levels of attention to detail, artisans, Italian heritage and so on. Mine says made in Taiwan. I bought it at the same time I bought the Tattico for good reason. Like you I've witnessed mixed fortune as others inflate their tires with these things. Sometimes it's quite hilarious. Rarely does it go as intended. And nearly always there is confusion as people try to remember what they did last time. This device has a lot of thought and engineering expertise applied. It's easy to use. It retains any leftover gas and it's not going to burn your fingers.

Easy to use and works properly.

None really.