

Versatile Windshield Extension

The MRA X-Creen Tour Add-On Variable Windscreen Spoiler Blade (Bolt-On and Clamp-On)

By Roger Wiles #32797

PULLING INTO THE UNDERGROUND garage at the medical clinic, I spied a sharp red R1200R with an interesting windshield spoiler. Later, walking through the clinic hallway, I spied a nice young lady wearing a 'Stich and carrying a helmet.

"Excuse me, is that your Roadster out in the garage?"

"Yes, it is."

"Nice bike! Whose windshield spoiler is that?"

"You get them from Twisted Throttle."

"Thanks. Does it work?"

"Wonderfully!"

Helmet buffeting and dirty wind noise detract from the riding experience. Many of us use ear plugs in search of a quieter riding world and look for additional ways to reduce unwanted noise. Using windshield extensions and spoilers can make a significant difference in noise-reduction—or not. It just depends.

Available from BMW ON advertiser Twisted Throttle, the MRA X-Creen, in both bolt-on and clamp-on versions, offers one of the very best tools to potentially reduce wind noise and buffeting. The bolt-on-only version requires that four ¼-inch holes be drilled in the existing windshield to mount the extension hardware. The clamp-on version is actually the full bolt-on kit, including the permanent windshield mounts as well as two high-quality, sturdy clamps that fasten atop the existing windshield. Note that the current windshield clamps are different—and much nicer—than the clamps shown in pictures on the Twisted Throttle website.

The power of the MRA X-Creen lies in the ability of the extension arms—the ones that hold the spoiler—to articulate in both

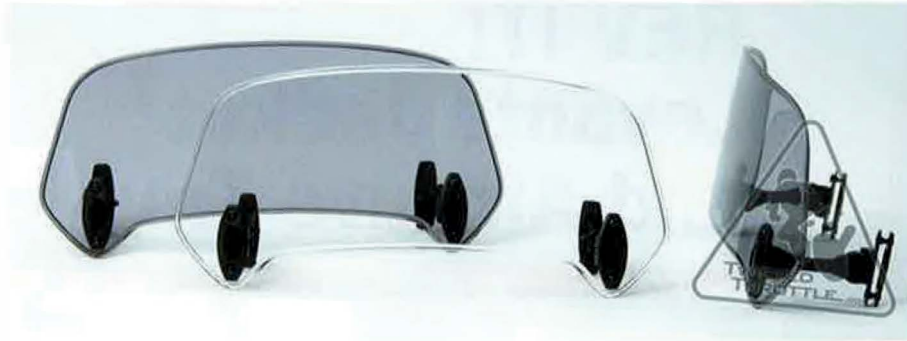
directions. Since both the windshield-based and spoiler-based joints articulate, they allow for a very wide range of positions of the spoiler blade, both in terms of height and angle. The hardware appears to be of the highest quality plastic component extrusions and feature elegantly designed joint locks that require no tools and are glove friendly. Changing angles and height is a quick 10-second job, and the locks are fully secure.

The clamp-on model allows one to move the spoiler from one bike to another. In my case, it was necessary to use the permanent windshield mounts when installing the MRA X-Creen on my R100GSPD with a 16-inch Parabellum Sport windshield. Using the clamps prevented me from setting the spoiler blade low enough to see over the top—most of us prefer to avoid

actually looking through a windshield—and so a lower mounting point for the MRA X-Creen to the windshield was selected. In my case, I temporarily mounted the windshield mounts on a strip of flexible material and then clamped the MRA X-Creen and temporary base to my windshield, setting the strip and mounts to different heights on the stock windshield until the optimum position was determined. The manufacturer recommends mounting the windshield mounts one inch (or at least, no closer) from the top of the stock windshield. In my case, I had to mount the windshield hardware four inches below the top in order to see over the spoiler and achieve the angle that virtually eliminated wind noise. So, think ahead and experiment if necessary before committing by drilling holes in the windshield.



PRODUCTREVIEWS



A note about drilling polycarbonate-type hard plastic: Use sharp, preferably brand new quality drill bits; use highest speed and use very, very little pressure to the work; brace the work so that it will not pop up when the bit nears the end of the hole, perhaps by enlisting the aid of a second pair of hands; and be patient and gentle.

On the other hand, I was able to use the clamp-on mounts to install the same MRA X-Creen on my R1200GSA. This bike comes equipped with the finest stock windshield I've ever experienced; it is very quiet when adjusted properly (I'm 5 feet 9 inches). Nevertheless, there was still some unwanted noise, and the buffeting, while gentle, pushed my face shield partially down after about 10 seconds. A basic principle of effective windshields include installing one that allows you to look over the top but not by much, and is as close to your nose as possible. Too low and/or too far away and the wind will always be a problem. By tilting the GS windshield all the way down and back, I was able to get the windshield and spoiler about three inches closer to my face, and the properly-adjusted spoiler virtually eliminated all wind and wind noise. It's like riding in a church pew, it's so quiet.

The kit is equipped with a pair of short extensions that articulate only on one end, allowing only for adjustment of the spoiler blade angle. The blade will be about one inch away from the stock windshield, while full horizontal extension of the double-jointed arms allows for three inches of separation. The proper use of this gap between the stock windshield and the spoiler blade

adds to the effectiveness of this type of spoiler. By adjusting the angle of the blade relative to the windshield, one can create either a high- or low-pressure area just above the windshield, and this can move the buffet and noise zone somewhere else.

Additionally, the laminar airflow effect can move the offending zone to another position. Adjusting the height so that one can comfortably just see atop the blade even when ascending a hill (sit up a bit straighter!) and achieving the proper blade angle can, and likely will, reduce or eliminate helmet buffeting and dirty wind noise on a very high percentage of bikes and windshield configurations.

The MRA X-Creen reviewed above is a universal kit; this windshield spoiler is also available in a variety of model-specific configurations, including the R1200GS (but not Adventure). See Twisted Throttle's website for details.

Fitting is top quality and elegantly engineered. The windshield clamps are very, very secure and do not mar the stock windshield. The only tools required are a 2mm and 3mm Allen wrench. Installation is straightforward and instructions are nearly perfect and include a handy sticky-back drilling template for perfect, permanent windshield installations.

Keep sharp track of the hardware; some fasteners are very small, dark and easy to lose! The kit has the German TUV approval, a sign of both quality and testing. Contact Twisted Throttle for the MRA X-Creen—I believe you will be very pleased.