

USED BUYING GUIDE

2015-present | £5200-£9400 | 135mph | 113bhp

Yamaha Tracer 900

From the original MT-09 to the latest GT, the Tracer triples are the best-value all-rounders

WITH 40,000 SOLD in the past five years the Tracer 900 is one of Yamaha's most successful bikes.

As a faired, sport-tourer version of the brilliant MT-09 roadster, it shares the engaging three-cylinder motor, nimble handling and affordable ethos. Yet with a 60mm-longer wheelbase, lengthened rear subframe and seat, 17-litre tank, roomier ergonomics and a half-fairing with adjustable screen, it adds all-day practicality and comfort.

It arrived as the 'MT-09 Tracer' in 2015 and was a hit – but not perfect. Although its forks were better than the over-soft MT-09's, they were still mushy. Its screen couldn't be altered on the move and its seat wasn't the comfiest. That changed in 2018 when a facelifted model, the Tracer 900, received improved ergonomics, a more padded seat, and a one-hand adjustable screen.

At the same time a GT version was also launched for £1400 extra with upgraded, multi-adjustable suspension, colour-matched panniers, full-colour TFT dash, heated grips, cruise control and quickshifter.

Both are among the best and most affordable bikes in the class.



SCREEN WOES

The original Tracer's screen was both too low and impossible to raise on the move. For some riders it was also quite noisy. Its successor's adjustment was improved but that's all, which is why many owners fit taller screens. Yamaha's own is expensive but there are plenty of options from MRA, Givi, Puig, Ermax, Powerbronze and more

TRACER STORY

The original MT-09 Tracer ran from 2015-18; the facelifted and renamed Tracer 900 came in 2018 with better screen operation, seat and grabrails/pannier mounts with the up-specced GT version adding adjustable suspension, colour-matched panniers, slick TFT dash, heated grips, quickshifter and cruise control at the same time



Yamaha's CP3 triple is lively and engaging

ENGINE

Yamaha's 'CP3' triple is same as MT-09's, has three power modes and is a gem with no major reliability concerns. Some owners report the ECU benefits from flashing to improve low-rpm response. Clutch noise in neutral at idle is normal. Cosmetics and fasteners benefit from looking after

SUSPENSION

The original Tracer suffered from overly soft forks and shock. Although this could be mostly adjusted out (front and rear are both preload and rebound adjustable) and was improved on the second 'gen', it can still be an issue. The GT has more refined, more adjustable gold-finished KYB units

TYRE CHOICES

Like the MT-09, the Tracer comes with sporty 120/70x17 and 180/55x17 tyre fitments, although these are under-utilised by distinctly average OE Dunlops. By far the most popular owner upgrade is to Michelin Road 5s for their mix of wet and dry sports-tourer ability, followed by Metzeler Roadtec 01 and Pirelli Angel GT

COMFORT

Original's seat was widely criticised and significantly improved (reshaped, re-padded with new pillion handles) on the 2018 model. But it still isn't perfect and for some, at 815mm, is a little high. 'Comfort' replacements by Sargent, Bagster and Corbin are common, as are lowering links by likes of Lust Racing

WHAT TO PAY

	Dealer	Private
> 2015	£5500	£5200
> 2016	£6000	£5750
> 2017	£6500	£6100
> 2018	£7100	£6500
> 2019	£7600	£7300

What it'll cost to run

HOW MUCH TO INSURE?

£147 Fully comp, £500 excess	£116 TPF&T, £200 excess
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2019 model worth £7000. Based on a 52-year-old male engineer, married, licence held 25 years, 9 years NCB, no claims or convictions, for social, domestic and pleasure use. Bike is garaged with postcode WA14 1NU and annual mileage is 5000 miles. Quote as at March 2020

HOW FAR ON A TANK?

	MPG	Range to fuel light	Range to empty
Average	51.0	160 miles	200 miles

HOW MUCH TO SERVICE IT?

600 miles Oil and filter change, £90
Every 6000 miles Oil and filter change and suspension service, £170
24,000 miles 6000-mile service plus valve check, £400

Prices supplied by Webbs Yamaha

WHAT IF I DROP IT?

R/H mirror	£63.64
Front brake lever	£59.80
RHS fairing panel (inc badges)	£139.11
Indicator	£24.72
Footpeg	£35.89
Silencer (inc gaskets)	£1273.99
Handlebars	£155.42
RHS engine cover	£44.18

Prices from Yamaha UK

READER'S ADVICE AND RIDE VERDICT

We own one!

RiDE readers' highs and lows of owning a Tracer 900

'Bridgestone tyres transformed it'



ANDREW ROBINSON 42
2018 Yamaha Tracer 900 GT
Mileage 6685

"Last summer I did 2840 miles on an eight-day trip to Norway, doing 635 miles on the first day. I averaged 60+ mpg and it handled the motorways and twisties with ease. I replaced the OE Dunlop tyres with Bridgestone Battlax T31s and they've transformed the bike in the cold and wet. I've also replaced the screen with a touring one and fitted crash bungs and a fender extender."



'I don't see anything else for the money'



SIMON HARVEY 51
2019 Yamaha Tracer 900 GT
Mileage 5000

"I bought it new at the end of 2019 and have done 5000 miles through a very wet winter with no problems. I fitted the Yam 50 topbox and carrier, as it's easier to filter with just the box. It's a lovely ride. Definitely feels plusher than the 700 with better suspension. The standard screen was awful for buffeting and noise so I opted for an MRA screen with adjustable spoiler. It's a great all-round bike; I don't see anything else doing the same job."



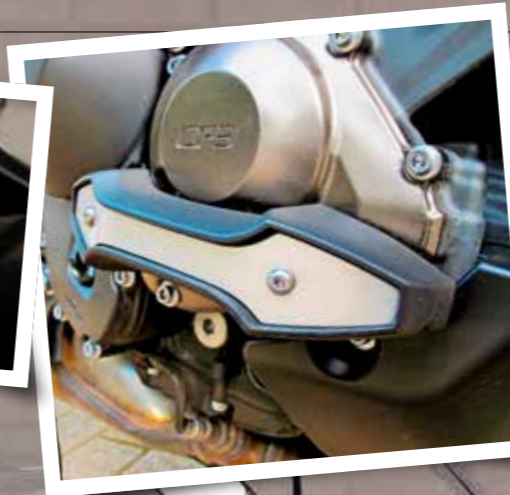
THE FACTS

Yamaha Tracer 900

- Engine** 847cc dohc triple, 4v per cyl, 1/c
- Capacity** 847cc
- Power** 113bhp @ 10,000rpm (claimed)
- Torque** 65lb-ft @ 8500rpm (claimed)
- Fuel capacity** 18 litres
- Seat height** 850mm
- Wheelbase** 1500mm
- Kerb weight** 214kg
- Rider aids** 2-way traction control, three riding modes, ABS

CORROSION

The Tracer's exhaust headers, disc rotors and centrestand are particularly prone to corrosion and rust respectively, especially if used year-round. Regular cleaning is the best prevention; a fender extender helps the headers. Rotors can be cleaned with wire wool and WD40/GT85; Harpic/Cillit Bang improves the headers



ACCESSORIES

It's an accessory magnet – some may be desirable, some not, so shop around as there's plenty of choice. Yamaha heated grips, Akrapovic exhausts (which retain the centrestand), tall screens, quality luggage, suspension upgrades, crash protection and comfort seat are among the best but extended handguards and even GS style 'beaks' are also popular



Look for a bike with the accessories you want – there are plenty around

What to look for on the test ride

If you've never ridden Yamaha's triple before, you can't help but be impressed by its lively performance and easy, nimble manageability. Many owners have switched from heavyweight bikes and liken the Tracer more to a light, upright supermoto than a traditional sports-tourer.

With both in mind, expect weather protection that may leave you fairly exposed, a variety of touring accessories you may or may not desire (if not are the standard parts available?) and the possibility of novice dings and damage.

Handling should be light and intuitive but can be greatly improved by suspension set-up and quality tyres. Switchgear is a little budget and flimsy, so check it all works. Cosmetics and finish can suffer if neglected.

With over 40,000 sold, the Tracer is a hugely popular bike so there's not only plenty to choose from but also a strong online community with active, helpful forums. Do your homework, shop around and you can find a great example of one of the best all-round bikes you can buy.

The best alternatives



DUCATI MULTISTRADA 950

> 111bhp > 71lb-ft > 229kg

Introduced in 2017, the middleweight Multi is the nicest of its family, with sweet handling and a lusty motor. Finish is good, but used prices are still at a premium.



Triumph Tiger 800 XR

> 94bhp > 58lb-ft > 208kg

Base, road-orientated adventure-style triple is a great all-rounder while 2018 updates saw higher-spec versions gaining Brembo brakes, TFT dash, adjustable suspension and more.

Three ways to make it better

▼ Ermax tall screen €91.67

With the stock screen too low and Yamaha's own tall screen £150+, this 50mm taller Ermax offering comes in a variety of tints and is a great choice. www.ermux.com



▲ 39-litre top box £142

Yamaha's own takes a full-face or riding gear and turns the Tracer into a great urban commuter. Backrest and inner bag also available. www.yamaha-motor.eu

▼ Metzeler Roadtec 01 SE £273 a pair

Winners of last month's sports-touring tyre test, the Metzeler's work very well from cold and have nimble steering. www.metzeler.com



Its performance, practicality, fun and value make a good case for it being the only bike you need, but is a touch basic. GT adds class but takes it out of budget territory. **R**

WHAT'S GOOD?

Flexible, fun performance, nimble handling, light and manageable, genuine versatility, value

NOT SO GOOD...

Unimpressive screen and wind noise, fairly budget suspension and some of the finishes

THANKS
Thanks to Superbike Factory for use of its Yamaha Tracer 900 and facilities. www.superbikefactory.co.uk/ride