



Pros & cons
 + Wet-weather performance
 + Modulation
 – Slightly pricey

SwissStop

Full FlashPro BXP

Better wet-weather braking for your rim brake callipers

£26.99/pair [swissstop.com](https://www.swissstop.com)

You can't beat decent discs for all-conditions braking combined with less lever effort. But that doesn't mean that rim brakes don't still have a place or that you can't improve their performance from 'perfectly adequate' to 'surprisingly good'. You can fit better (or simply newer) cables and outers. And you can fit different brake pads – like these.

SwissStop's Full FlashPro BXP brake pads are meant for year-round use on aluminium rims. The 'full' part of the name denotes that they come with cartridge holders; the pads alone are £22.99 per pair. Those holders are advertised as compatible with Shimano and SRAM road callipers, although they may fit

others and certainly did fit my older-style Brompton callipers.

Talking of which: Brompton-branded Full FlashPro BXP pads are what you'll get when you buy brake spares from Brompton these days. It's a welcome development as the iconic folder used to have poor stopping performance. While the bike's levers and callipers have been improved in recent years, the convoluted cable run is a feature of the design (as it is with most folders). These pads make an immediate difference to a Brompton's braking, especially at the rear. Curiously, the Brompton-specific pads are £32/pair. The standard ones, which I fitted to my Brompton, are £5 cheaper and the compound is the same.

That blue-coloured compound is something special. It works well in the dry and is better yet in the wet, providing reliable and well-modulated braking even in downpours. There's no grabbiness or noise, just a reassuringly linear progression in stopping power as you squeeze the lever. These pads give an obvious performance boost to a bike with otherwise unimpressive braking, like my old Brompton, and peace of mind when you fit them to a front-brake-only fixie – which I also did.

If I had other bikes with sidepull callipers, I'd fit these pads to those as well. I'm skinny and have good grip strength so can get by with less effective pads – but who doesn't want better braking, especially in the wet? You'd expect what must be a softer compound to wear rapidly but that doesn't seem to be the case. There's plenty of pad material to wear through anyway, to the extent that you might need to re-clamp the cable (or fit a new one) when installing them. ●

Dan Joyce

Verdict

A worthwhile brake upgrade for any bike with suitable sidepulls. Especially useful for folding bikes, fixies, winter riding, heavier cyclists and hilly terrain. Grippier tyres like those on pages 69-70 will further complement their performance.

Other options

KOOL-STOP DURA2 TRIPLITE THREADED
£39.99

Kool-Stop's salmon-coloured pad compound is also well suited to soggy UK conditions. Often, as here, it's combined with other materials for a more all-round performance.

[koolstop.com](https://www.koolstop.com)



SHIMANO R55C4 105 CARTRIDGE TYPE BRAKE SHOE SET
£18.99

Replacement Shimano pads are decent in the wet and dry but aren't that much cheaper than even grippier ones from SwissStop or Kool-Stop.

[shimano.com](https://www.shimano.com)

