



Extra pep makes this Enfield feel lighter than its predecessors

FIRST RIDE

# NEW BULLET CLASSIC

Royal Enfield's new £4499 500cc Bullet Classic looks a winner. Its styling owes something to Harley-Davidson and Indian and combines with a power unit evoking the big head Bullet and Fury Enfield singles of 50 years ago.

But this is an all-new machine with a fuel-injected 500cc ohv five-speed unit construction engine. It is fitted with a catalytic converter and comes with electric start, electronic ignition, front disc brake, 12v lights and indicators. Surprisingly, there is no rev-counter fitted.

In top gear the Bullet Classic will pull snatch-free from 30mph up to its estimated 85mph top speed and the extra torque of the new engine gives it good acceleration, helped by a smooth-shifting five-speed box. You won't want to use it flat out on motorways for mile after mile but you can hold your own cruising at 70mph on A and B roads, and if you want to take your time there is a claimed 80mpg-plus to be eked out of a gallon of unleaded.

The single cylinder engine has no balancer shaft and there is some vibration through the open frame, but it is quite muted and doesn't inhibit the rider from using the available revs. Otherwise, the all-alloy engine with its hydraulic tappets is mechanically quiet.

The 18in tyres (chosen because replacements are easier to obtain) give excellent grip and the bike steers precisely although it can start to weave slightly at 70mph-plus. Nineteen inch tyres or a ribbed front might cure this. At the rear the 18in tyre looks slightly overwhelmed by the large mudguard.

The riding position is good and the twin-shock rear suspension plus a sprung saddle give plenty of comfort. The importers are working on an accessory range that will include a dual seat and possibly a buddy seat.

A lot of attention has been given to making the machine aesthetically pleasing and classic in its looks. The stylish RE wing is embossed on both engine sidecases and on the starter motor. The cylinder is powder-coated black and the non-polished including the exhaust collar are powder-coated grey. The speedo does a good impersonation of a Smiths instrument.

Available in three colour options – black, aqua green and red – the bike will be sold through the firm's network of 52 dealers. Royal Enfield expect the Classic, top of their range of five bikes, to push total sales above 1000 this year.

■ Contact: Royal Enfield Motorcycles. 01386 700907. [www.royal-enfield.com](http://www.royal-enfield.com)

## ■ SPECIFICATION 2009 ROYAL ENFIELD BULLET CLASSIC

### ENGINE/TRANSMISSION

Type ..... Aircooled ohv single  
Capacity ..... 499cc  
Bore x stroke ..... 84 x 90mm  
Compression ratio .. 8.5:1  
Carburation ..... Keihin fuel injector  
Clutch / Gearbox ..... wet multiplate / 5-speed

### CHASSIS

Frame ..... open diamond,  
single front downtube  
Front suspension ..... Telescopic fork  
Rear suspension ..... twin shocks  
Brakes front/rear ..... 11in (280mm) disc/  
6in (152mm) drum  
Tyres ..... 90/90 x 18, 110/80 x 18

### DIMENSIONS

Dry weight ..... 411lb (187kg)  
Wheelbase ..... 54in (1370mm)  
Seat height ..... 31in (790mm)  
Fuel capacity ..... 3.2 gal (14.5 litres)

### PERFORMANCE

Top speed ..... 85mph est  
Max power ..... 27.2bhp @ 5250rpm  
Price new ..... £4499 on the road



Splendid isolation – the only new 500cc single



We want to be Smiths clocks



Keihin fuel injection. On an Enfield? Whatever next?