

## Bar Mitts Reviewed by a Broken Pinky

Last winter, I broke my pinky at the start of the cold season. I was riding a road bike at night, without [bike lights](#), down a trail with the brakes a bit out of tune. I bailed out while dealing with a deep rut in the trail. Surgery ensued, with little pins holding my mangled pinky bones together. And the doc told me not to bike commute for several months while thing healed.

Frustrated, I focused my energy on this time properly gearing up for the [winter bike commuting](#) that I would still have left once I was cleared to get back on the bike.



One of my biggest concerns about getting back on the bike again was how I would keep my hands warm while wearing the protective brace for my pinky I was told to wear while engaging in activities such as cycling.

Having come across a few variations of gloves that attached to the handlebars, I was curious if this might be the solution I was looking for. So I gave [Bar Mitts](#) a call and they were more than happy to get us set up for a review of both the standard flat bar set as well as their drop bar version.

Right away, I enjoyed how [easy they were to install](#), or should I say dress my bike with.

The flat bar version installed quite intuitively, sliding right over the handlebars with the zipper open to allow the grips, brake levers, shifters and cables to pass through. In position, the zipper closed around the cables with an internal piece of neoprene holding the grip end of the Bar Mitt in place, secured with a piece of Velcro strapped around the grip. With the ergonomic grips, I barely had enough Velcro to stretch around the grip, but I managed.



The road version of the Bar Mitts was not quite as intuitive. In fact I mangled the no instructions installation and had to bring up the Bar Mitts website to figure out the puzzle. But it all made sense and those to were a breeze to install once I knew what I was doing.

The Bar Mitts are made from heavy duty neoprene, the same material that is used for wet suit construction. The material lends itself to a product which is wind and weather proof. Once I had my Bar Mitts on, I left them on throughout the winter months. If it was a warmer day, I would wear summer gloves. For the coldest days, I would put on winter cycling gloves and would have perfectly warm hands through this combination. I have to say, that on those bitter cold days, I've never been satisfied with winter gloves alone. But combining with Bar Mitts was a winning setup.



The first ride with the Bar Mitts on takes a little bit of getting used to. With my glove centric thinking, I had to think through a few simple things like “How do I bail off my bike in emergencies if my gloves are attached to the bike?” and “How do I operate my brake levers if I can’t see them?”

The first question was a silly psychological barrier that eroded briefly into the first ride. The second question did pose a small obstacle. Actually, brake and shifters are so intuitively designed these days that not being able to see them is rarely an issue. On the other hand, I did experience some issues as I was test riding some [electric bikes](#) with which I was unfamiliar. Getting the feel for the throttle while using the Bar Mitts took just a little bit of getting used to as well.

I like the look that the Bar Mitts lend to the bike. Something about them proclaims that I’m serious about winter cycling. And every cyclist I pass seems to notice and I can almost read their thoughts form into an expression of something like, *Why is it that I’ve not gotten myself such a clever setup? Life is not just.*

While it took a broken pinky to find a reason to try out this interesting new product, once I discovered them, I was a convert. The first time this fall that the temperature

dipped below freezing for that morning commute in, I slipped my bike into a cozy pair of Bar Mitts.

