

**VERDICT**

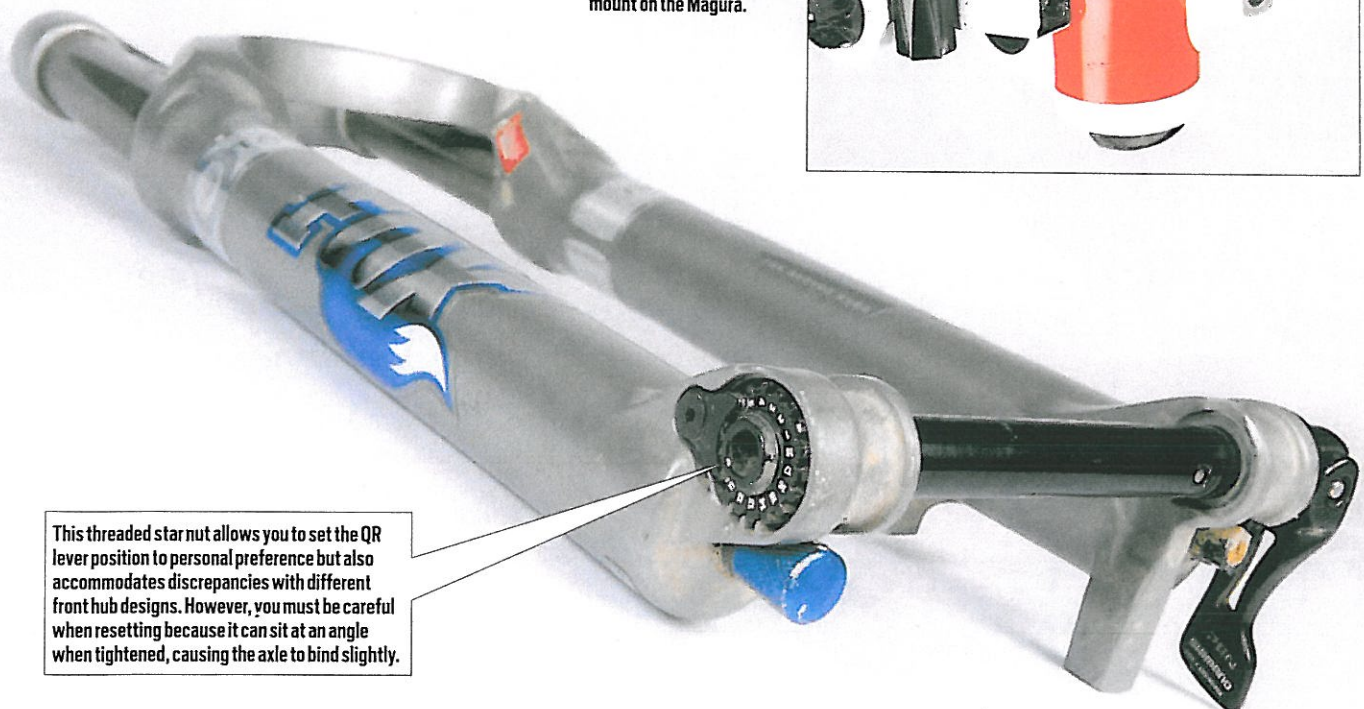
We suspect you're either a travel (ride height) adjustment sort of guy (or gal), or you're not. True, there's nothing stopping you running any of these forks at full travel and never touching the lock down or wind down, but it doesn't make sense to carry the extra features when you've paid so much for them. The best fork on test is the Fox and here's why. It's simple to set up and offers the most tuning options — it can be active in the shorter settings or locked out, mirroring the function of the DT and Magura. It'll mate to a shorter travel bike or improve climbing comfort on a longer travel full susser. It's mid-weight, mid-price and is reasonably stiff. It's not the most comfortable, but it outperformed the rest where it really matters — hammering rutted singletrack, bombing downhill and in technical sections. In runner-up spot is the RockShox Revelation. It's at the opposite end of the price spectrum to the DT and is weighty, although it's great value and is a good second choice if you can't afford the Fox.

Money buys lighter weight and exceptional build quality, but the DT Swiss needs to be perfect for this sort of cash — with improvements planned for the 2010 range, hopefully we'll get that. Marzocchi forks also get a revamp next year; however, we've already heard the ATA in this form will be no more. All of which leaves the Magura and its never-ending teething problems. Every time we test one it always seems to have to go back or need replacing, and it's no different this time round — meaning we'll update this test when we get the 'UK tuned' Thor back from the menders.

MAKE	PRICE	WEIGHT	TRAVEL	RATING
DT Swiss EXC 150	£899	1786g	150mm	8
Fox 32 Talas RLC	£740	1875g	100, 120, 140mm	9
Magura Thor MT140	£599	1880g	100-140mm	6
Marzocchi 44 ATA Micro	£699.95	1795g	100-140mm	7
RockShox Revelation	£574.99	2073g	100-140mm	8

**TOP:** It took us a while to work out a loose rebound adjuster was causing a rattling noise when testing the Revelation.

**RIGHT:** Marzocchi's crammed in rebound adjuster and the 180 post mount on the Magura.



This threaded star nut allows you to set the QR lever position to personal preference but also accommodates discrepancies with different front hub designs. However, you must be careful when resetting because it can sit at an angle when tightened, causing the axle to bind slightly.

## FOX 32 TALAS RLC £740

The Fox is the only fork here with pre-set travel positions, but cycling through them is quick and something we used when climbing. The 2009 lever has a smoother action and is easier on the hand than last year's.

Fox teamed up with Shimano to make the 15mm QR. It functions like a regular QR, but gets a ratchet nut that lets you position the lever where you wish and adjusts for discrepancies in front hub widths. Fox is the only firm that runs the lever on the left dropout, which some say increases the chance of using the rotor for extra leverage, though if you're sensible you shouldn't have any problems.

In theory the 15mm bolt thru is stiffer than a QR but you really have to do some back-to-back runs to feel the difference — testament to the stiffness of the original TALAS chassis. Weight is less noticeable, being only 10g between the lowers, but the price isn't to be sniffed at — there's a £65 difference.

We did a lot of experimenting with the sag set up on this fork. It has a slightly linear spring curve, and while not as flat as the DT, it still dives through the mid-stroke on steeper terrain. Propping the fork up with more air pressure and increasing the low-speed compression did reduce dive but this made the fork less compliant. We implemented a few factory tweaks that importer Mojo told us about, which did improve the sensitivity, but it isn't as comfortable as the Marzocchi or Rock Shox. But where the TALAS really outperforms its rivals is hammering rocky or rough terrain; it's controlled, stable and never out of its depth. We'd also say it was the stiffest 15mm fork amongst the three.

The TALAS RLC is the most versatile trail fork on test because it has an intuitive travel adjuster, combined with exceptional performance.



Weight: fork 1875g,  
axle 95g, system  
2543g  
Travel: 100-120-140  
15QR axle or 9mm axle  
£675 for QR £765 for  
150mm option  
Contact:  
[www.mojo.co.uk](http://www.mojo.co.uk)

