

Bike Geek Gear: Giustaforza Torque Wrench

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Here's the thing about this review: If you're the sort of person who doesn't get a deep satisfaction out of holding and using a perfectly crafted object, no matter how humble, you're probably going to think I'm crazy. But if you know the joy I do when you encounter an elegant, well-balanced knife, or a pen that fits your hand just right, or an operating system that just makes sense - well, you'll understand it when I say that this torque wrench from the Italian firm Effetto Mariposa is just a sheer joy.

Bikes these days, constructed as they are out of carbon fiber and other exotic materials, practically require the dedicated home mechanic to invest in a torque wrench. There's are few sounds in the world more depressing than the sickening crack of your new \$300 handlebars being broken by over-enthusiastic tightening. A torque wrench insures that every fastener on your bike is as tight as it should be, and no more.

The Giustaforza is simple and elegant -- a knurled handle with a receptacle for quarter-inch bits at one end, and a knob for torque adjustment at the other. The torque scale is metric, so it's newton-meters all around, which isn't an issue for bike folks, as that's how most specs are published. The adjustment range is from 2 to 16 Nm, which is perfect for most of the small bolts on a bike, although it won't handle things like bottom brackets that require much more torque.

Use couldn't be easier. Find the right bit from the included set (which should cover most cycling needs), stick it in the holder, use the knob to set the desired

torque, and start to tighten. When you reach the specified level, there's an audible and tactile "break" that signals it's time to stop. Clean and easy.

We got the red pro model for testing, which the company says is good for 5,000 clicks before it needs to be recalibrated -- which is free for the pro model. Most home mechanics won't tighten that many bolts in a lifetime. Just remember to dial the torque setting to its lowest level after you use it to keep things calibrated. But beyond the function is just the sheer beauty of this thing. It's extremely solid, and a little smaller than many torque wrenches. There's just a feeling of pleasure that comes from picking this little guy up and using it, and a piece of mind that comes from knowing you're not about to ruin your ride.

It's not cheap: [\\$250 for the pro model](#). But bikes aren't cheap either, and this will pay for itself the first time it keeps you from totally screwing up. I'd also prefer if it ratcheted, which can speed up your work.

But overall, the Giustaforza wrench is a tool that's earned a permanent place in my toolbox, and one that I'll love to pick up each time I need it.