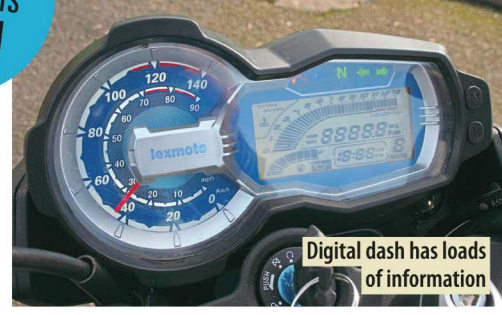


FIRST RIDE

LICENCE REQUIREMENTS **A1**



Digital dash has loads of information



Three-piston front caliper allows for linked brakes

Viper handles well and has decent 125 performance

Lexmoto Viper 125

WE SAY:

Aggressive-looking, well-equipped and with attitude



Latest variation on the Lexmoto Venom theme, and to Euro 4 spec.



iven the magazine column inches they attract, you'd think retro-style 125s dominate the market, but

Herald, AJS Cadwell, Mutt and others sell in small numbers. Lexmoto sold only 180 Valiants last year, against 1400 Venoms. The real sellers are modern-looking 125s with plenty of gizmos, and Lexmoto's Viper fits that bill.

STYLING, EQUIPMENT

The Viper is effectively an updated Venom with upside down forks, Bluetooth sound system, phone charger USB point and a hint of an off-road 'beak' below the headlight. Some of these changes also make it onto the standard Venom, which costs £100 less, but does without the USD forks and off-road beak.

Under the skin it has the same overhead cam single-cylinder with balance shaft, with Delphi fuel injection, a five-speed gearbox, tubular steel frame and monoshock rear end. Euro 4 spec brings linked brakes (press the brake pedal, and you get one front piston plus the rear brake at a front/rear ratio of 70/30,

while the brake lever on the bars brings in the other two pistons).

The Viper has a comprehensive dash which includes a rev counter, gear indicator, clock and fuel gauge, plus a big analogue speedo. It's certainly got showroom appeal, and that's underlined by the styling – a bit fussy, but very sharp and aggressive.

ON THE ROAD

Sitting position is quite far forward with a hint of Supermoto in the riding position, but it's still pretty comfy with wide bars and a decent seat. Fired-up, the packed digital dash comes to life and you're away. Lexmoto's power claim is unchanged from the same carb-fed engine in last year's Venom, but that's something to remember about these fuel-injected 125s – the efi is there to clean up emissions rather than boost power.

Either way, it gives the Viper good acceleration up to 50mph – enough go to keep up with city traffic and get safely away from the front of a red light queue. The motor actually revs out to an indicated 10,500rpm, but beyond 50mph acceleration is more blunted, though it will creep up to an indicated 65mph if you're patient. The injection system delivers all of

this faultlessly, a cut-out coming in gently at high revs and the motor happily accelerating away (slowly) from 20mph in top gear. To underline the bike's role as a town tool, the gearchange and clutch are as light as you'd expect.

It handles well too. The USD front forks feel resilient and the single rear shock is well-damped. Wide bars and light weight enable it to tip into corners easily and the whole thing feels easy to throw around, backed-up by the Magsport tyres, which grip well, at least on dry roads. The linked brakes work well – press the pedal and you get quite strong braking with no signs of locking-up, while bringing-in the front lever as well gives powerful stopping.

As with all linked brakes, you can't use the rear brake alone to steady the bike at low speeds.

Detailing on the Venom is a bit of a mixture. The switchgear and plastics are decent quality, but the matt black exhaust and slightly downmarket speedo detract a little from a bike that now costs over £2200. But as mentioned, it's got showroom appeal in spades; that's often what sells 125s to younger riders.

Words/images: Pete Henshaw

SPEC:

ENGINE

Air-cooled single-cylinder 125cc

POWER

11bhp @ 9000rpm

TORQUE

7lb-ft @ 7000rpm

BRAKES

Front: disc
Rear: disc
Linked system

SUSPENSION

Front: telescopic forks, non-adj
Rear: twin shocks, pre-load adj

WEIGHT

144kg

COLOURS

Blue, green, red

CONTACT

www.lexmoto.co.uk

PRICE

£2250

PLUS OTR