



# BEHIND THE LENS

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## PRODUCT REVIEW

### E-13 SRS Chain Guide Review

By Robbie Davidson july.01.2005 10:08



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With every new season comes fancy new bike parts! Back in December when I was ordering all the parts for my new bike, my buddy recommended that I try out E-13's single retention system chain guide this year. I had ridden with MRP's for the past 4 seasons and had been very happy with them, but with all of the buzz that E-13 has created in the past couple of years, I was curious to try one out. After checking out their website and talking to a number of owners, I decided to take the plunge. I was trading in my tried and true aluminum guide with bright orange rollers for something made of plastic.

Taking it out of the box I was blown away by the fact that all the little plastic bits were still connected together in what looked like the makings of a McDonald's happy meal toy. In addition to this, the outer plate weighed next to nothing and looked like a thick ring of plexiglass. Despite all that I had heard, I was a little skeptical of the guide at that point. How would it hold up to the abuse I would put on it? Only time would tell.

**Setup:** 4.5/5

After separating all the pieces from my happy meal toy, the guide was incredibly easy to setup, and it took my roughly 30 minutes to remove my old cranks and bb, install the E-13 guide and get it all setup with my chainline. Since the bike industry is known for not having any standards and most parts are only somewhat compatible with other things, I was rather pleased with how easy this guide is to install. It also comes ready to mount directly on a frame with ISCG tabs or you can use the bb mount adaptor (which I used) for frames without ISCG tabs. The only tricky thing while using the adaptor is that some bottom brackets have slightly taller threading which mine did, so the adaptor need a slight bit of sanding so that the bb cup would fit through it. Apparently this is not an issue with most setups out there, but with select bb's it can occur.



**Performance:** 4/5

The first thing I noticed about the E-13 is that due to its design, it has a much larger circumference than an MRP for a similar size chain ring. This slightly worried me as I seemed to ding my old guide on rocks and logs quite frequently with the long travel bike. With the E-13 I immediately noticed that I was hitting it on the ground even more than I was accustomed to. Given the size this was not a surprise, however what was surprising was how smoothly it flowed over things. I would hear it hit, but it would glide effortlessly over any surface, and not once did I feel the bike get held up. What more, no matter what I hit, there was never any bending or denting of the bash guard that I was accustomed to with the aluminum guides that would wreak havoc on the drivetrain's performance. With all of the impacts the outer plate received, it only showed a couple of scuffs and small flat spots, none of which had any adverse affect whatsoever on the path of the chain.

On one impact I hit the plastic parts that hold the pulley on at the lower side of the boomerang. I managed to crack it but it still held together well enough to get me through the race. Luckily E-13 sells the full "happy meal" replacement kit for a reasonable \$23. The kit includes all of the plastic guide plates and a spare pulley.

Without having a top roller, the guide uses an inner plate that funnels the chain in and closes off the top to keep it on. I did notice that with this setup there is always a little bit of rubbing between the chain and the guide plates, particularly when running in the larger cogs in the rear. This is particularly evident when it is new as it seems to have a wear in period. I also found that the guide was much more susceptible to mud, and creates a fair bit of noise and resistance when riding in extremely muddy conditions. The E-13 runs the chain over a pulley on the bottom to keep chain on. This pulley functioned flawlessly and seemed to help keep the chain running smoothly.

**Overall:** 4/5

The overall performance of this chain guide is fantastic. The guide has flawlessly kept the chain on the front ring, which is its main objective. The setup was a breeze and smoking the bash guard off of rocks and logs is nothing it can't handle. Holding the chain guide back from a perfect five is the slight resistance and grinding inherent in the system. By choosing to go with a plastic bash guard, E-13 has shown how innovative they are. They have definitely created a quality product here and I can't wait to see what they have lined up for us next.



**Editor's note:**

Although the E-13 chain guide is compatible with most suspension frame designs out there, it might not work with all. Check with E-13 or your local shop about compatibility before trying to install the chain guide. For those running Intense M3 bikes, certain modifications to the guide need to be done in order for it to work properly. Instructions for this are available on the E-13 website.