

Review: Axio Swift

Book Accessories and Reviews

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by [Eric Schwarz](#)

If the [Axio Hybrid](#) is too big for your liking, there are plenty of smaller alternatives. One such product is the [Swift](#), a model primarily geared towards the bike and motorcycle demographic, due to its aerodynamic shape. The Swift, however, is suitable for anyone else, too.

The Swift takes the same design as many of Axio's other packs, and scales it down. Boasting 1200-cubic-inches of storage for your computer, PDA, iPod, a few magazines, and plenty of cables, the Swift is more than just a laptop bag — it's the whole package for anyone who has lots of stuff to carry.

Axio recently cut the prices of its backpacks, and the Swift is no exception. With a price common to other specialty computer backpacks, the Swift might cost more than a generic laptop bag, but it does a better job of protecting your computer.

Just like the Hybrid, the Swift is a well-made product. The attention to manufacturing details and the excellent design help justify the price tag, especially for people who like to carry a lot of expensive equipment. The inclusion of a removable cell phone holder is a nice touch.

The Swift is available in four color schemes: "Carbon Finish", "Electric Blue", "Gloss Red", and "Metallic Gray".

The first emulates a carbon fiber pattern on the outer shell with a red backing. The second and third have shells and backings that match in color. The last has a gray shell and a black backing.

The Swift pack is a standard hard-shell backpack, with a polycarbonate shell. Designed to protect your computer from being squished, the Swift keeps its shape, but might take some scratches. Unlike the Hybrid, the Swift has no outer pockets, and only one inner compartment. Inside that compartment is a magazine/paper pocket, a few pen holders, a zippered pocket that allows you to store things in the "hump" of the backpack, and a partial laptop holder.



Swift (Front)

The laptop holder only encloses about half of the laptop, although it does do a good job of protecting against bumps and normal abuses. If you have a lot of loose objects floating around in the backpack, you might want to get a sleeve or case to protect the casing of your 'Book. We tried the [MaxUpgrades MaxSleeve](#), and it fit well with a 12" iBook.

All of Apple's iBooks and PowerBooks are said to fit in the Swift with no problems. Similar-sized PCs would also fit, although machines on the smaller end will have more room to move around.

Also a useful inclusion is a cloth drawstring bag that prevents the Swift from being scratched, if you had to cram it in a luggage compartment or want to store it. The hard plastic doesn't scratch easily, but this added protection for a strong bag is appreciated.

The cell phone holder attaches to either of the straps and will hold most cell phones, or any other small device. It's not really fancy, but also features a belt clip for when you decide that you don't need the entire backpack — a nice touch.

The backpack itself is comfortable to wear, even plenty of stuff inside of it (this includes an iBook, a few issues of *Macworld*, an iPod, and the associated cables & adapters). The Swift also weighs less than the Hybrid, so you probably won't damage your back if you load it up.

Another nice feature is that the Swift has reflective strips on the shoulder straps and on the optional rain cover (more on that later). For anyone who walks or rides a bike or motorcycle, this is an excellent safety feature.

By testing the backpack in light rain, the results have been fairly good. The Swift is not waterproof and does not claim to be, but the outside is fairly water resistant. The zippers are pretty heavy duty and slide easily. What helps preventing water from leaking in is putting the zippers together at one end or the other when closed. The headphone pass-through could also be a potential leaking point, but we did not notice anything significant. Unlike the Hybrid, the headphone pass-through leads to the main compartment, rather than a smaller



Swift (Back)



Swift Inner Compartment

audio player pocket.

Axio now offers a rain cover for \$24.95. This is an excellent addition if you plan to take the Swift out in the rain, and does a great job of covering any exposed openings. It fits on in less than a minute (kinda like a shower cap), and even comes with a small bag that fits inside the Swift. This cover fits all of Axio's hardcase backpacks except the Hybrid and the Mini. Since the price of the Swift has been cut, we find the added expense for this new accessory appropriate.

Speaking of getting the Swift wet, the red back pad on the "Carbon Finish" and "Gloss Red" versions of bag might bleed if you are caught in the rain or otherwise get it wet. In our tests, we didn't notice it, but it's merely a disclaimer.

Overall, the Swift is a cool-looking, competent, decent-sized backpack. It's design makes it stand out, but doesn't scream laptop bag, and still lets you take your stuff with you. We like all the various pockets, as they keep a multitude of gadgets organized, and with the recent price break, the Swift is even more attractive, especially if you opt to get the rain cover.



Swift Storage Bag



Swift Rain Cover (w/Storage Pouch)

The One-Sentence Verdict™

Axio's Swift is a large — but not too large — backpack suitable for most laptop owners, who want something durable, cool, and classy.

Pros: Lots of pockets, well-made, inclusion of cell phone holder and protective outer bag

Cons: None significant

The Facts

Product: [Swift](#)

Company: [Axio](#)

Price: \$134.95 (Rain Cover \$24.95)

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Swift Cell Phone Holder