



Alpkit

CarbonLite Ultra Trekking Poles

£45  270g*

*300g with baskets and rubber feet
www.alpkit.com

FIRST LOOK
REVIEW

Carbon fibre trekking poles are usually expensive as well as ultralight. Alpkit's latest model is certainly very light – lighter than any poles in my review in the March issue – but also inexpensive, costing less than many conventional poles. The shafts are pretty rigid too, without that worrying bend when under pressure found in some ultralight poles. There are the usual features – tungsten tip, small baskets, removable rubber feet, adjustable wrist straps. The three sections extend to a maximum of 134cm and telescope down to 62.5cm when packed (if that's too long you can separate the sections – the longest is 52cm). Adjustment is by internal twist-locks that feel positive and don't slip. The EVA foam handles are very comfortable as there is a slight 'give' in them. Alpkit says they have excellent impact and vibration absorption plus thermal insulation properties. I can vouch for the latter, having used the poles in cold winds, and I haven't had any problems with jarring impacts or vibrations. The webbing straps are lined with EVA foam that feels comfortable and they can be shortened or lengthened easily.

For helping keep the weight of your gear down these poles are an excellent choice, especially at this low price. While I wouldn't expect them to be as strong as much heavier poles, for the weight they seem pretty tough. Other poles may have better features (in my opinion) such as external clip-locks and shaped handles but these weigh considerably more and most cost far more too. If you want functional ultralight poles at a good price, the Alpkit CarbonLite Ultra can't be beaten.

Chris Townsend