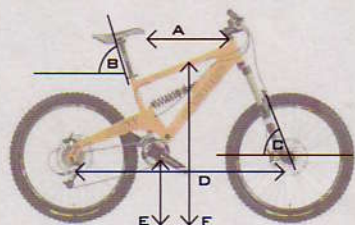


Orange Patriot 6.6 XCEL

£2,669.94 (3-way coil)



ANGLE FINDER

A	B	C	D	E	F
top tube	seat angle	head tube angle	wheelbase	bottom bracket height	standover height
22.5in	73deg	68deg	45.25in	14in	32in

Just like the original Sub Five, the 6.6 tag on Orange's latest long-travel trail bike is somewhat misleading — but calling it the Patriot 6.9 (the real amount of vertical rear wheel travel) doesn't quite have the same ring to it and could set off alarm bells in some riders' heads.

FRAME

Steve Wade, founder/designer at Orange, is a firm believer in folded, seam-welded monocoque tubing, and the multi-sided down tube on the 6.6 is one of the sleekest yet. The same production technique is used for the stays on the swingarm and the rounded front section on the new design saves weight over the original Patriot.

Piercing the down tube just below the big ring is the main pivot axle. This is welded in place and the bearings rest on the two spigots poking out of the down tube. The swingarm is then clamped to the sealed cartridge bearing with M5 bolts.

A black alloy shock shuttle piggy-backs the down tube and gives the choice of two geometry positions: 67 or 68 head with associated 72 or 73 deg seat angles, with bottom bracket heights of 13.75in and 14in respectively. Obviously the numerous holes on the shuttle offer additional combinations but you can run into all sorts of clearance problems — something that we discovered when we tried to run the 6.6 in a super-slack setting and found that our non-standard 2.5in rear tyre buzzed the front mech cable guide on the back of the seat tube. Colour options are: yellow/black, matt black, blue/silver, silver, orange and the frame only price is £1,199.95 with a Manitou Swinger 3-way coil

SUSPENSION

Swapping from the Swinger 3-way air to the equivalent coil shock added almost



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500g in weight to the 6.6. The spring rate on all coil-sprung 6.6s — regardless of frame size — is 450lb, which surprised us as we thought the smaller bikes would have lighter springs and the larger frames heavier ones. That said, you have fat short blokes and skinny tall ones, so the 450lb spring rate is a good compromise even if a tad heavy for us. We got a 400lb spring from the UK Manitou distributor, as Orange doesn't carry anything other than the standard 450lb unit. Any dealer worth its salt will be happy to source you the correct spring rate to match your weight and

