

Winter Storing @ Pre-Season Checklist

Pre-Season Inspections:

- Make Sure the Battery is Charged.
- Drain the Crankcase and Refill with New Oil. Replace the Oil Filter if applicable.
- Check the Engine Coolant for proper level, replacing if necessary.
- If the Bike is Chain Driven, Inspect the Chain and Drive Sprockets for Excessive wear or looseness. Replace or Adjust as necessary.
- Inspect the Tires. Tires with Cracks, Bulges, Excessive wear should be Replaced. Make sure the Tires are inflated to the Manufacturers Specification.
- Inspect the Brake pads or Shoes. Consult your Owners Manual or Local Dealer if you are unsure how to perform this check.
- If the Bike is equipped with Hydraulic Brakes, check the Fluid level to ensure it is at its Proper Level. Note that most Manufacturers recommend changing this Fluid at least Once a Season to eliminate moisture build up in the Master brake cylinders that can cause Corrosion and Eventual Brake Failure. Follow the Manufactures Recommendation on Fluid Type.
- Inspect all Brake Lines for signs of Deterioration or Cracking. Replace if Necessary.
- Inspect all Cables for ease of operation. Sticking, Binding, or Broken Cables should be replaced.
- Inspect all Electrical Accessories for Proper Operation. Of specific Importance are the Lights, Turn Signals, Stop Lights, Horn and Kill Switch. Make Corrections where Necessary to Correct these Problems.

Battery:

If it spent the winter well charged, as with a Battery Tender or a regular trickle charge, then it's probably ready to go. If it was neglected all winter, give it the same service and check it. If it comes out looking a bit sickly, replace it before it causes problems. Be certain the vent tube is connected and properly routed.



Engine & Drive Oils:

If you changed the oil immediately before you stored it, it is probably ready to rumble. Fresh oil can be contaminated by water, which will give it a milky appearance when it is first run. If you didn't change oil before storage, replace it now. Otherwise, those normal contaminants have been joined by a measure of water, a recipe for corrosion. Change the filter unless it was fresh. Use a torque wrench on that drain plug.



Fuel System:

If you left your tank full (a good way to avoid rust), the fuel has probably stratified, unless you used a fuel stabilizer. Before turning on your petcock and letting fuel into the carb, disconnect the fuel line and drain the tank completely. (Pour the old gas in your car--or your neighbor's.) This is a good time to clean your fuel filter and look inside the tank for rust.



Braking System:

This is a good time to install fresh fluid--after your old stuff has spent all winter soaking up water and is at its spongiest. You definitely should do it if you skipped it during the last year or two. Check the pads or shoes too. If they are "sort of" thin, get new ones now.



Suspension & Steering Systems:

Prop the front wheel off the ground, sit in front of the bike and grasp the fork lowers. Move them forward and back to feel for steering-head looseness. If you feel any movement or clunking from the steering head, tighten it properly. Have you changed fork oil recently? Is a fork seal leaking, even a teensy-weensy bit? If so, take care of it now.



Shines & Detailing:

This is a great time to pull things apart and thoroughly wax everything you can get your fingers and cotton swabs on. Remove any corrosion, and put on a nice thick layer of wax or other appropriate protectants (leather dressing for leather saddlebags, etc.) to preserve it during the riding season.



Tires & Traction:

1. Air It Out:

Check tire pressure every chance you get. There's probably no simpler procedure that's more important and more ignored by bikers of every stripe. The air, not the carcass, supports the bike, and under inflation is a tire's number one enemy. (Make sure the tires are cool when you take the reading.) Unsure of what the pressure is supposed to be? Look for the tire pressure setting on the side of the tire or check your owner's manual for the proper setting.

2. Step in Line:

Pay close attention to alignment -- check the position of your tires. Proper alignment ensures better handling and longer wear.

3. Steady, Now:

Although it primarily affects handling, improper balance can also shorten a tire's life. Check it after 500 or 1000 miles of use.



4. Top It Off:

The valve stem cap should be securely fastened on the stem, because it's an important part of your tire's sealing system. It'll give you extra security at high speeds, when centrifugal force can conspire to open the valve inside the stem.



5. Soap It Up:

Most tire manufacturers recommend that the only substance used to keep rubber shiny should be good old soap and water. Many alleged protestants actually promote premature cracking and finish deterioration. Make sure you wipe off any lube, brake fluid or gas promptly, too.

6. Look Before You Crank:

Before you saddle up, take a moment to visually inspect your tires. Once you're on the road, it'll be too late.

7. Stay Smooth:

This is common sense--avoid potholes and sharp objects on the road that can compromise your tire's integrity. The same goes for curbs.



8. Don't Mix and Match:

Never run two tires of differing construction. We can't stress this enough, and this rule applies to bias-ply vs. radials as well as tubeless and tube-type tires--even bias-ply vs. bias-belted tires. The results can be disastrous.

9. Scuff 'Em Up:

Optimal grip is obtained only after the tread surface has been ridden on, so go into those first few twisties with a bit of caution. The suggested break-in distance is usually 100 or so miles. After that, check the tire's pressure again!

10. Don't Scrimp:

If you replace your tires, make sure you replace the tubes, too. Some manufacturers even recommend that you change both tires at the same time, even if they wear differently.



TCLOCS = Tires, Controls, Lights, Oil, Chassis and Side stand.

You can run through this test in about three minutes it could be the most important three minutes of the whole day.

Front tire condition Air Pressure (PSI) _____
Rear Tire Condition Air Pressure (PSI)_____
Front Rim (Check Spokes)
Rear Rim (Check Spokes)
Throttle Operation
Clutch Operation
Front Brake
Rear Brake
High Beam
Low Beam
Taillight
Brake Light
Left And Right Turn Signal
Horn
Fuel
Oil
Suspension Condition
Solo Seating
Passenger Seating
Side stand