MIDDLESEX Community College

Tools and Technologies for Tech Writers 2022

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Contents

Motorcycle Pre-Ride Safety Check

How to perform a motorcycle pre-ride safety check.

A pre-ride motorcycle check is an often overlooked safety procedure. The pre-ride check of your motorcycle is as important as proper riding gear and seasonal maintenance. This is not a comprehensive list, but a good starting guide for making the pre-ride check a normal routine before embarking on any ride.

- Horn and Turn Signals
- Kickstand
- Lights
- Fluid Leaks
- Tires and Tire Inflation

Additional Information: Allstate Pre-Ride Check Reference

Horn and turn signals

Safety check for horn

The horn is an essential safety device that alerts other drivers to your presence. Motorcycles are often not seen by other drivers, the horn can be used to avoid potential accidents. Make sure the horn is functioning normally and the button is responsive. Turn signals provide information to drivers about your intentions. They let the other driver know you are about to turn. They are also used for the hazard lights. Check that both the right and left turn signals work independently, and both illuminate when the hazard lights are engaged.

1. The turn signals are on the left side grip handle. Toggle the button left and right and check the lights for illumination.
2. Press the horn button. It is usually located on the left handgrip.

Kickstand

The kickstand is crucial for any motorcycle. An often overlooked safety feature, the kickstand holds the bike upright for dismounting and also for safely parking the motorcycle. A loose or faulty kickstand can collapse when the motorcycle is parked causing damage when the motorcycle tips over. A faulty spring mechanism can cause the kickstand to retract during riding and potentially cause an accident if the kickstand catches the ground or an obstacle. Both of these situations can cause a range of problems from scratches to bodily harm. Make sure the kickstand footpad is not loose. Check that the spring mechanism is working properly. When the kickstand is retracted up to the frame, it should hold the kickstand tightly against the frame. If there is any motion downward or the spring is loose or fatigued, resolve the issue. Check all Kickstand bolts for corrosion and motion. The bolts should be tight.

1. With the motorcyle upright, lower and retract the kickstand.
2. Observe the spring mechanism function.

Lights

All of the lights should be turned on and checked for burnt out bulbs. Check the low and high beam headlights, the passing lights, and taillight.

1. Pull the hand brake lever to make sure that the brake lights illuminate when the brakes are engaged.
2. Depress the rear-brake foot pedal and check the rear brake light function.

Fluid Leaks

With the engine running, check for any fluid leaks. Pay attention to the front forks and make sure no fluid is leaking onto the tire, the brake pads or the brakes. Check for gasoline leaks or oil leaks as the engine idles. Any leaking fluid can cause brake loss, slippery conditions, and chance of fire.

1. Mount the motorcycle with the kickstand down.
2. With both hands on the handlegrips, press down on the front suspension forks.

Demount the motorcycle and check the front forks for fluid leaks.

Start the motorcycle. Turn the key to on and press the ignition button. Check the ground for gas or oil leaks.

Tires and Tire Inflation

Tires and Tire Inflation

Proper tire inflation ensures that the tires will perform as intended under speed and load. Over-inflated tires can cause blowouts (if the tires are not run-flats) and overheating. Under-inflation can also cause overheating, tire rollover under heavy cornering and cause unresponsive turning on the front tire. The tires should be checked for uneven wear, cracks, and punctures.

1. Check the tire inflation with a manual tire pressure gauge.
2. Walk around the motorcycle and visually inspect the tires.