

Pre-Ride Inspections

Every time you ride you should inspect your motorcycle ***BEFORE*** you leave on the ride. This is one of the most important things you can do to reduce your riding risk and ensure a safe and enjoyable ride.

MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation) has a system called the **T-CLOCS** which is a helpful inspection checklist. It only takes a few minutes and could make the difference between an awesome, enjoyable ride or a frustrating roadside debacle.

Quite Simply Put:

1. **(T)**ires and Wheels – Inspect for wear and tear, rim dents or cracks, tight and straight spokes and above all tire pressure – your life line to the road beneath you.
2. **(C)**ables and Controls – Be sure they operate properly. Inspect front and rear brake cables, throttle, clutch and shifter. Squeeze the clutch to feel if it is operating smoothly. Squeeze the front brake; it should feel firm and keep the motorcycle from rolling forward when pushed. Check the rear brake in the same way. Check for broken or frayed cables and replace as necessary.
3. **(L)**ights – Check your headlight, turn signal lights, brakes lights and passing lamps, if you have a touring model. These are your best way of being seen not only at night but also during the day as well. Keep a constant check on your lights as this is a very important part of your safety as a rider for being noticed by other vehicles. Loud pipes may save lives but bright, properly working lights can ensure you are noticed by drivers as well.
4. **(O)**il and Fluids – Check your fuel supply first, can't go far on low fuel and this is not the way to start a ride out. Check engine oil level according to the owner's manual. Check your battery water level on a regular basis, you can extend the life of your battery by doing this simple check. Give the cases and lines and once-over for any leaks or seepage.
5. **(C)**hassis – Inspect for any cracks at gussets and accessory mounts. Check the steering head for smoothness by turning the handlebars through the full operating range. Test the suspension and damped movement and adjust according to the load you are carrying and your riding style.

6. **(S)**ide stand – Check for cracks or bending in the metal and make sure there is enough tension in the spring to hold it up and out of the way when riding. A dangling stand is a real hazard when riding. Remember, your side stand can easily sink into soft soil or hot asphalt. To avoid a potentially hazardous situation, consider carrying a small flat object of some sort to place under the side stand when parking your bike on dirt or asphalt.

Also sit on the bike and make sure your mirrors are adjusted properly, you need to see what is behind you as clearly as possible.

Remember, as always, to ***Ride and Have Fun.***

Don Light
VFWR Safety Officer