



**RIDE SAFE**

- PREPARING FOR A NEW RIDING SEASON.

# OVERVIEW

- **GETTING READY TO RIDE**

- GEAR
- MOTORCYCLE
- YOU
- SKILLS

- **ROAD HAZARDS**

- POTHOLES
- ROAD SURFACES
- MATERIAL SPILLS
- ROAD DEBRIS
- ANIMALS

- **EXTERNAL FACTORS**

- ROUTE
- TRAFFIC
- OTHER RIDERS
- WEATHER



**Covered at later date**

# GEAR UP !

Good motorcycle gear helps protect you from sun, rain, wind, noise, and debris, as well as pavement. It's designed for more than just crash protection: it's your second skin and protects you from sunburn, deafness from the wind, and anything that is flying through the air

- HELMET
- JACKET
- PANTS
- GLOVES
- BOOTS
- EAR PROTECTION (FATIGUE)

# HELMET

- Helmets have a five-year life. After that, adhesives and materials that provide impact absorption begin to degrade. Required by law if under 18 (21 in Ark & Ky)
- Helmets are designed to destroy themselves in a crash, it is the act of impacting a helmet with a head inside that crushes the foam, and it does not recover.
- The minimum legal standard for a street helmet in the US is a DOT rating. “ECE 22.05” is the European Union’s legal standard, and the Snell Foundation also tests US helmets.
  - Check shell and padding
    - Cuts, Cracks and Deep scrapes
    - Crushed interior foam
    - Torn foam or cloth liners
  - Visor
    - Broken or scratched
    - Firmly attached
    - Deteriorated or hazy
  - Straps
    - Torn
    - Clasps in working order
- If you choose to not wear a helmet, you must wear eye protection per state law. Ohio permits the presence of a windscreen. Protection must be shatter-resistant. Think shop safety glasses.

# JACKET AND PANTS

- Made of leather and/or textile.
- Textile jackets are often more affordable.
- Leather is more durable, but not as adjustable for comfort
- High-quality textile materials are able to resist abrasion as strongly as leather, and often include water-resistant membranes.
- Regular denim jeans will not protect you in a motorcycle accident. Cotton has less than a quarter of the abrasion resistance of leather or good textile riding pants. Kevlar-lined pants are available and a reasonable trade.
  - Verify seams are in good condition
  - Body armor properly installed
  - Zippers in good working order
  - Snugly fit so they don't flap around in high-speed wind, but leave your limbs free to articulate fully.
  - Consider the style of bike and riding position.
  - Think about what kind of weather you'll most frequently be riding in.

# GLOVES

- Hands are extremely fragile. They're likely the first thing to touch down in any crash.
  - Good gloves should cover your hands completely. They should be made of strong, abrasion-resistant materials and protected stitching. Shoddy, uneven stitching and thin leather is a sign of a glove that will give up on impact.
  - Make sure that the gloves feel snug and that they won't fall off while also making sure that they wouldn't roll into your palm on your grips or feel too tight.
  - Armor at the base of the palm is a great feature; this is where your hands will land in a crash. Make sure any glove you choose allows you to operate the controls on your bike unimpeded.
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- Verify seams are in good condition
  - Zippers, snaps and straps in good working order
  - Snugly fit with no torn fingers or palm surfaces.
  - Think about what kind of weather you'll most frequently be riding in.

# BOOTS

- Riding boots should extend from your foot to the shin. Not only do these boots prevent your leg from getting squished under the bike, but they also hold your ankle in place, preventing injuries to the joint
- Riding boots keep laces out of your rear break/gear shift, protect your ankles, they can prevent abrasions on your feet and they can significantly reduce impact damage.
- The point of wearing riding boots is to make sure that your feet and ankles are protected if you were to ever have to take a fall while riding. They are significantly safer than any type of regular shoe.

# OUTSIDE FOR A BIKE CHECK!

- **TIRES**

- ONLY A FEW SQUARE INCHES OF RUBBER KEEP YOUR MOTORCYCLE—AND YOU—ON THE ROAD. TIRE CHECKS ARE EASY, AND ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SAFETY CHECKS. GIVE THEM AT LEAST A VISUAL BEFORE EVERY RIDE.
- CHECK FOR TREAD DEPTH, EMBEDDED OBJECTS, BULGES, DAMAGE, AND CRACKS. TIRES THAT SIT IN THE SAME SPOT FOR A WHILE MAY DEVELOP FLAT SPOTS THAT CAN CAUSE HANDLING PROBLEMS.
- MEASURE THE AIR PRESSURE AND INFLATE BOTH TIRES TO THE MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDED SETTING. TIRES CAN LOSE AIR PRESSURE WITH TIME, ESPECIALLY IN COLD WEATHER.
- CONSIDER REPLACING TIRES NOW IF THEY'RE NEAR THE END OF THEIR LIFE.

- **BATTERY**

- BATTERIES LAST AN AVERAGE OF FOUR YEARS, IF YOU MAINTAIN THEM. IF YOU'VE KEPT YOURS ON A TRICKLE CHARGER OVER THE WINTER, IT SHOULD HAVE HELD ITS CHARGE.
- IF YOU HAVE A WET CELL BATTERY, CHECK THE ELECTROLYTE LEVELS AND TOP UP AS NECESSARY.
- BEFORE YOU START YOUR BIKE, CHECK BOTH TERMINALS AND LEADS TO MAKE SURE THEY'RE CLEAN, SECURE, AND FREE OF DUST, DIRT, AND CORROSION. MAKE SURE THE STRAP THAT HOLDS THE BATTERY IN PLACE IS SECURE.

- **FLUIDS**

- FLUIDS CAN DEGRADE OVER TIME. NOW'S A GOOD TIME TO CHECK THE RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE
- LOOK FOR CHANGES IN COLOR AND CONSISTENCY. REPLACE ANYTHING THAT LOOKS DIFFERENT THAN IT DID GOING IN.
- BRAKE FLUID SHOULD BE REPLACED EVERY TWO TO THREE YEARS. AS A MINIMUM, CHECK THE LEVEL IN YOUR MASTER CYLINDER
- CHECK COOLANT LEVELS ON WATER-COOLED BIKES AND INSPECT YOUR RADIATOR AND HOSES FOR LEAKS.
- CHANGE YOUR OIL AND FILTER UNLESS IT WAS DONE IN THE FALL.
- IF YOUR BIKE IS CARBURETED, TURN THE FUEL TAP TO THE ON POSITION BEFORE STARTING IT.

- **DRIVE TRAIN**

- WHATEVER THE DRIVE SYSTEM, MAKE SURE IT'S IN GOOD SHAPE AND SET TO THE CORRECT TENSION.
- CHAINS (AND SPROCKETS) SHOULD BE CLEAN AND WELL LUBRICATED. CHECK CHAIN AND SPROCKETS FOR WEAR. IF YOU HAVE A DRIVE BELT, INSPECT FOR SIGNS OF CRACKS OR TEARS.
- SHAFT DRIVE BIKES ARE LOW MAINTENANCE BUT THE GEAR OIL DOES HAVE TO BE CHANGED PERIODICALLY.



# BIKE CHECK

- **CABLES, HOSES, AND CONTROLS**

- CHECK CABLES FOR FRAYING, CORROSION, OR DAMAGED COVERINGS. MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO FOLDS OR KINKS.
- CHECK FLUID LINES FOR CRACKS OR SIGNS OF LEAKAGE.
- MAKE SURE THROTTLE, CLUTCH, AND BRAKE CONTROLS WORK PROPERLY, AND THAT YOUR STEERING MOVES FREELY

- **LIGHTS, HORN, AND WIRING**

- CHECK WIRING FOR SIGNS OF WEAR, CORROSION, OR DAMAGE.
- TEST HEADLIGHTS, BRAKE LIGHTS, TURN SIGNALS AND FLASHERS TO MAKE SURE THEY WORK.
- HONK THE HORN.

- **BRAKE PADS**

- LOOK AT EACH SET OF BRAKE PADS ON YOUR BIKE TO CONFIRM THERE'S LOTS OF WEAR LEFT. MANY BRAKE PADS HAVE WEAR BARS ON THEM JUST AS TIRES DO. IF YOU CAN'T SEE THEM WITH A FLASHLIGHT, REMOVE, INSPECT, AND CLEAN THEM.
- CHANGE THEM NOW IF NECESSARY. TEST FRONT AND REAR BRAKES SEPARATELY AND LISTEN FOR SQUEALS OR SCRAPING SOUNDS.

- **AIR FILTER**

- IF YOU PLUGGED YOUR AIR FILTER TO PREVENT CRITTERS FROM NESTING, MAKE SURE TO UNPLUG IT. IF YOU DIDN'T, CHECK FOR EVIDENCE THAT IT'S BEEN USED AS A WINTER HOME. ONE SEASON MINE WAS FULL OF SUNFLOWER SEED SHELLS. ALSO REMOVE ANY PLUGS FROM YOUR EXHAUST PIPES.

- **TOOL KIT**

- MAKE SURE THE TOOLS IT HOLDS ARE CLEAN, AND FREE OF RUST. DOUBLE CHECK TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS THERE AND REPLENISH AS NECESSARY. YOU MAY WANT TO ADD A FEW SMALL FREQUENTLY USED ITEMS THAT AREN'T STOCK, SUCH AS AN AIR PRESSURE GAUGE.

- **ONCE YOUR BIKE IS READY TO GO, START IT. LISTEN FOR UNFAMILIAR NOISES, CHECK FOR LEAKS, AND NOTE ANYTHING UNUSUAL.**

# YOU

- **PHYSICAL**
  - **STRENGTH**
  - **CO-ORDINATION**
- **MENTAL**
  - **SKILLS**
  - **FEARS**
  - **PRESENCE**
- **EMOTIONAL**
  - **FOCUS**

# PHYSICAL READINESS

- **Muscle Strength.** Riders need strong leg, core, back, and shoulder muscles. Legs help you change your body position and control the bike. Core muscles support your body and free up arms for steering and operating controls.
- **Bone Strength.** Bones are our framework. They protect our brain and other vital organs, and give us our shape. Strong bones are less likely to be injured while riding, or falling. Weight-bearing exercises and adequate intake of calcium and Vitamin D will keep bones healthy longer..
- **Weight.** Riding with excess weight of any type, means more load to manage, and more momentum.
- **Grip strength.** We make big demands from the small muscles we depend on for operating the controls. Our left hand is more prone to fatigue from frequent clutch use in urban riding, stop and go traffic, and trail riding. Grip will benefit from any weight training because you have to hold the weights.
- **Flexibility and Mobility.** Full range of motion helps us manage the motorcycle, react to changes, and maneuver while riding or moving it in your garage. Increasing flexibility means more mobility and free movement on our motorcycle.
- **Endurance.** Cardiovascular strength plays a role in our ability to ride well. Being fit reduces physical fatigue, which extends the length of time we can ride, and affects how we feel at the end of the day. Physical fatigue leads to mental lapses, which can be catastrophic on a motorcycle.

# MENTAL READINESS

- **SKILLS**
- **FEARS**
- **PRESENCE**
  - **NO ALCOHOL**
  - **NO DRUGS**

# EMOTIONAL READINESS

- **FOCUS**
  - **ENJOY THE VIEW**
  - **NO RAGE RIDING**

# SKILLS

- **STARTING**
- **ACCELERATING**
- **STOPPING**
  - **TYPICAL**
  - **EMERGENCY**
  - **BAD WEATHER**
- **TURNING**
- **PARKING**

**This section to developed in  
conjunction with “Safety Rodeo”**

# ROAD HAZARDS

# ROAD SURFACES



**Pot Holes**

Everywhere!



**Uneven Tracks**

Deteriorated pavement

Heavy Truck Traffic



**Uneven Pavement**



**Grooved**



**Contoured**

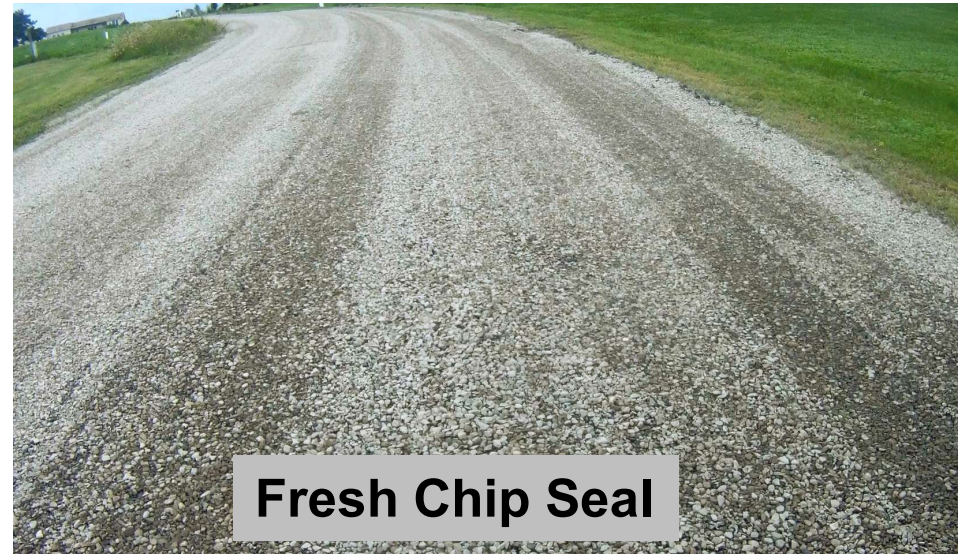


# ROAD SURFACES



**Roadway Slump**

Common near downhill side of roads



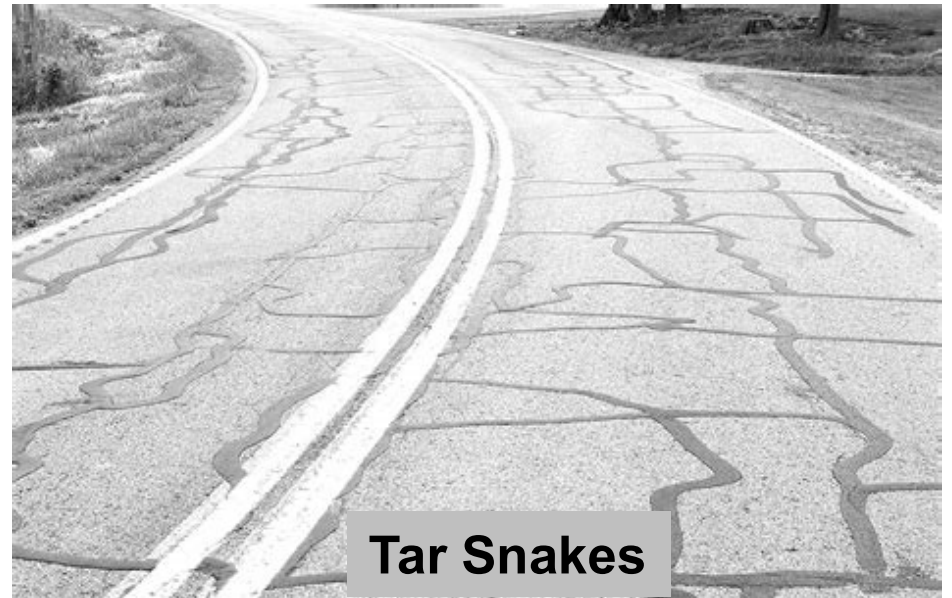
**Fresh Chip Seal**

Loose gravel and tar



**New Pavement**

Smooth, but watch for residual oils



**Tar Snakes**

Variable traction level, material slide



# ROADWAY SPILLS



**Fuel**



**Road Salt**



**Oil**



**Grain**



# GRASS AND LEAVES





# DEBRIS





# ANIMALS



**Wildlife**

Most active in Spring and Autumn  
Frequency more than one  
Often near treelines, creeks



**Carcass**

Be alert near small dips which  
may mask carcasses  
Watch for large birds



**Domestic**