

Pre-ride checks

Before setting off on any journey, it is important to ensure the machine is safe to ride and all systems are operating correctly. This handout describes how to conduct a pre-ride check, how to go through a systems check and then the start up procedure to be used prior to riding off.

Visual examination of the machine for:

1. Damage (Dents and scratches, wheel rims etc) Where did it happen?
2. Defects (wires hanging down, exhaust loose, fairing plastic insecure)
3. Leaks (fluids under the machine, what are they, you may not want to touch them. You can see the brake calipers, is there fluid on them)
4. Luggage and straps (is the luggage secure, are the straps fouling any moving parts)

Tyres

1. Condition (no cuts or bulges)
2. Tread (1mm across the central $\frac{3}{4}$ around the whole circumference is legal. More tread is safer). Mopeds need a visible tread pattern.
3. Pressure (check cold if possible with an accurate gauge, the recommended pressure will be found in the handbook and also on the frame or swinging arm somewhere.

Mechanical Checks

1. Oil (does the oil require a physical check using a dipstick or is it checked via a computer or sight glass. You need to know the checking process as some machines are very easy to overfill)
2. Engine coolant if used (visual inspection of the header tank, if it is below the level required add the correct mixed coolant. Modern cooling systems contain a chemical mix which is more efficient than water alone and has corrosion inhibiting properties). If it has lost fluid why, this may be a problem.
3. Brake fluid (a physical check of the reservoir will show the level) If the level is low why? Could it be the brake pads are close to the wear limit, or do you have a leak?
4. Clutch fluid (As above)
5. Drive Train (chain, belt or shaft. Check as per handbook instructions)
6. Is everything as you expect it to be, no loose items or leaks visible.
7. Levers and pedals (do they move freely)

Lights/Electrics

1. Check operation of all lights, remember that some lights will require the ignition to be active. If possible get help to operate or check the lights, if this is not possible you may be able to see reflections in windows or may have to walk around. Check brake light operation from all brake levers or pedals (some modern machines will check bulbs automatically and display a warning if any are faulty)
2. Check horn (be aware of not sounding it between 11.30pm and 7am)

Systems Check and Start Up Procedure

- Check machine is in neutral
- Make ignition live
- Check warning lamps:
 - What is on?
 - What should be on?
 - What goes out?
 - What doesn't?
- Is everything as it should be?
- Are you left with the lights that should be illuminated?
- Operate clutch lever as this guards against false neutral and reduces strain on the starter motor. Most modern machines won't start without the clutch being operated.
- Ensure the machine will not roll, engage a brake if necessary. Ensure kill switch is in correct position



- Press starter and start engine.
- All warning lights should now extinguish except for ABS and Traction Control lights on certain machines, which require information from the sensors as the vehicle begins to move.
- Gauges should read as you expect.
- The rev counter (if fitted) should respond to the throttle.
- The fuel gauge should show sufficient fuel for your immediate journey.
- Before moving off, ensure the side stand is fully retracted.
- As you move off slowly, the remaining warning lights should extinguish. If they fail to do so, stop and re-assess.

Moving Brake Check

Check your brakes in a safe environment before getting into a situation where you really need them..

Ideally achieve 30mph in a non-retarding gear and apply the brakes in a progressive manner.

The machine should pull up evenly and as expected, you should now know the required pressure to slow and stop your machine.

If it is not possible to conduct this check due to traffic conditions or other factors, you must ensure you introduce the brakes early for a hazard until you are satisfied with their performance.

