

How To Get Your Motorcycle Ready For Spring

BY DAVID J. JENSEN

As the winter starts winding down and the days get longer, you're probably getting eager to don that leather vest and your motorcycle chaps and get out on that first spring road trip. If you live in a place where the

winter months are spent under a blanket of snow, then your motorcycle and motorbike gear has likely been sitting dormant for a few months. Just as it is hard for you to put your bike away for winter, the inactivity can be equally taxing on your bike. Rather than revving it up

and hitting the road at the first sign of warm weather, you will enjoy safer and more rewarding rides as well as prolong the life of your motorcycle if you properly prepare your bike for the riding season.

A lot of what you do to get your bike and motorbike gear ready for spring depends on what you did to prepare it for winter storage. Your owner's manual has a check list of tasks to complete before you store it. Performing these tasks will make your spring preparation easier and less expensive. You can do much of the maintenance yourself or have a qualified mechanic prepare the engine for use.

During the winter, condensation can build up in your fuel tank and carburetor. This can cause rust and corrosion in your fuel system. Before you put your bike in storage, you probably filled the tank



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and turned off the petcock (if it has one). Before you turn on the petcock, disconnect the fuel line and drain all the fuel from the tank. Clean the fuel filter and inspect the tank and the carburetor float bowl for rust or corrosion. Replace the fuel line and then fill it with fresh fuel.

If you changed your oil and filter before storing your bike, the oil should be fine. Check the oil to make sure it's clean and free of moisture. Water gives oil a milky appearance which can eventually cause corrosion. If moisture did get into your oil, change it again and

replace the filter—even if you changed it right before storing it.

This is a good time to put fresh fluid into the brake master cylinder and check the condition of your brake pads. If they worn or thin, replace them before you go riding very far. Also check the lubrication and the condition of the drive-line, chain, and sprockets. Check and change your fork oil if needed then look for any leaks wherever there is fluid—even minor leaks should be fixed.

Whether you do your own maintenance or use a

mechanic, make sure you check the plugs, air filter, carb synch, wheel bearing, spoke tension, tire pressure, and make sure all plugs and fasteners are tight.

Finally, washing and applying a fresh coat of wax to your bike not only keeps it looking good, it can also prevent rust and corrosion from occurring. Thoroughly clean and dry everywhere moisture accumulates.

In addition to your bike, you might want to give your motorbike gear, leather vests, and motorcycle chaps some attention. Properly caring for your leather maintains that classic motorcycle leather look and feel as well as extends the life of your apparel.

If you take the time to properly prepare your motorcycle for riding after storing it, you will enjoy safe and worry-free season of riding. Regular maintenance will also prolong the life of your motorcycle.

About the Author David Jensen is a content contributor for jacketsforbikers.com. To view and comment on this article, see www.jacketsforbikers.com.

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