

Pre-ride Inspections

Pre-ride inspections not only help ensure a trouble free ride they can provide confidence that your motorcycle will respond properly. The primary source for the information about how a motorcycle should be inspected/ maintained is your **Motorcycle Owner's Manual (MOM)**. A motorcycle will continue to ride like new if it is properly maintained and routine inspections become part of its maintenance cycle.

So make a pre-ride inspection of your motorcycle as routine and automatic as checking the weather forecast before heading out for the day. It is quick and easy to look over your bike and the convenient reminder is **T-CLOCS!**

What is T-CLOCS?

It is a mnemonic for the inspection of your favorite two-wheeler. T-CLOCS stands for Tires & Wheels, Controls, Lights & Electrics, Oil & Other Fluids, Chassis and Sidestand.

T = Tires and Wheels

Since this is where you and the road meet, tires are probably the most important part to look over. A problem here can affect handling - sometimes severely.

Check the **AIR PRESSURE** of the tires and the **TREAD** for wear or cracks. Confirm that you have plenty of tread left. You should have more than 1/16 of an inch, about the distance between Lincoln's head and the top of a penny. Remove foreign objects that may have lodged in the treads and make sure there are not any cuts in the tire. A scuff is nothing to worry about, but if it is a deep scratch, you may want to have it checked.

While down there, look at the rims for **CRACKS**, **DENTS** or **LOOSE SPOKES**. Check the **BEARINGS** to see if the seals are in place and are not leaking. Look at the **BRAKE** pads to make sure they are seated properly and there is sufficient pad left.

C = Controls and Cables

Check out your **LEVERS** they should operate smoothly (do not bind). Check the **CABLES** to make sure they are connected properly and not frayed. Move

the **THROTTLE/ CLUTCH**, do they function properly - snapping back when you let go?

Check all your **SWITCHES** for proper function. Inspect the **HOSES** (oil, brake & fuel) for leaks.

L = Lights and Electrical

Seeing and being seen are two great ways to avoid unwanted incidents on the road, making sure your lights work is important.

Are the headlights' high and low beams working? Does the taillight come on? Does the brake light come on when you are depressing the brake pedal and lever? Check left and right turn signals, front and back. Lastly, do not forget to check your horn and mirrors.

O = Oil, Fuel and Other Fluids

Running out of gas is a bummer, but since some motorcycles do not have gas gauges, it is a very real possibility.

Check the gas level in the tank and be sure your fuel petcock is not on "reserve" which could leave you with a nasty surprise if you roll to a stop thinking you have still got gas in reserve. Also do not forget to reset the trip meter every time you fill-up!

Running out of gas might be inconvenient, but running out of oil will ruin your bike so check this every time you ride. Even new bikes can use enough oil to be down a quart between oil changes, so check it before every ride!

LEVELS: Be sure to check ALL fluid levels.

LEAKS: Inspect for leaks by quickly looking over your bike and on the garage floor for any surprises.

C = Chassis

Though an improperly adjusted suspension may not seem critical, imagine your surprise as your bike behaves differently in the middle of a curve because you forgot to reset it after picking up your friend last night. Sit on the bike and rock it, making sure that everything moves smoothly and relatively slowly. If the front or rear end behaves like a pogo stick, a trip to your trusty mechanic should be in your immediate future.

DRIVE COMPONENTS (chain, belt or driveshaft) make sure they have the proper tension and do not show adverse signs of wear.

S = Sidestand

The sidestand is a handy little item - it is what keeps your motorcycle off the ground. Make sure it is not cracked or bent. Check the spring or springs. Are they in place and do they have enough tension to keep the kickstand safely up?

Do not forget to look at the engine cut-out switch or pad, if so equipped.

If everything is in place and operating properly you are done and you are good to go. So ride safe and enjoy the day!

Pre-ride T-CLOCS Checklist

It's worth 3 minutes of your time!

T = TIRES & WHEELS

Condition - Tread, Air Pressure *Front* _____
Condition - Tread, Air Pressure *Rear* _____
Rims - Cracks, Dents, Loose Spokes _____
Brakes - Bearings _____

C = CONTROLS & CABLES

Levers - Cables _____
Throttle - Clutch _____
Switches _____
Hoses _____

L = LIGHTS & ELECTRICAL

Low - High Beam _____
Left - Right Turn Signals *Front/ Rear* _____
Taillight - Brake Light _____
Horn - Mirrors _____

O = OIL, FUEL & OTHER FLUIDS

Levels _____
Leaks _____

C = CHASSIS

Suspension _____
Drive Components _____

S = SIDESTAND

Sidestand _____

Chapter Hand Signals



Left Turn



Stop



U-Turn

Left hand makes an "O" in the air overhead.



Hazard Left



Single Formation



Right Turn



Slow Down



Back Off - To Close!

Left arm is held at a downward angle, pushing motion toward rear of bike



Hazard Right



Staggered Formation



Pointing to the Tank or Mouth

If someone points to the tank/ mouth, they are telling those following them (especially the Sweep RC) that they need to **stop as soon as possible**. Because they need fuel; might need a "bio stop"; may have a mechanical issue; they or their co-riders are uncomfortable; may have a medical issue; or for any other reason at all. Such a signal will **try to be relayed to the Lead Bike**. If a convenient place is available, the Lead Bike may orchestrate a stop for the whole group. If not, the affected bike can count on the Sweep RC to stop to try to help him/her. **Important!** If you plan to leave the group early, notify the Lead/ Sweep bikes & your Ride Buddy beforehand. This way they will know that you DO NOT have a problem and DO NOT need assistance.

The Simple Stuff

1. Show up for rides 30 minutes before the pre-ride briefing. Be patient and give the briefing your full attention. This may not be your first group ride, but it could be the first group ride for someone else. Feel free to ask questions!
2. Have your gas tank full and your bladder empty.
3. Ensure you are in good mental and physical condition, suitable for riding.
4. Ensure your bike is properly maintained. Proper maintenance is a pre-requisite for safe riding. Check your bike thoroughly before each ride. Use **T-CLOCS** Tires, Controls, Lights, Oil, Chassis, Sidestand.
5. Have what you will need for the ride with you; water, snacks, proper clothing, etc. There's nothing more uncomfortable than being a long way from home without the proper gear - equipment. Come prepared!
6. Always wear All The Gear All The Time ATGATT (*Boots, Over-pants, Jacket, Gloves, Helmet*) including all legally required safety equipment.
7. Be familiar with all of the Chapter's group riding guidelines. (See Chapter Handouts)
8. Stay Alert. Ride Safe. Use Common Sense. Be Courteous. Have Fun!

The information and artwork presented in this guide are courtesy of MSF, AMA, SHC RC/RGs as well as from various other sources.



Got 3 Minutes?

T-CLOCS - ATGATT Hand Signals & Simple Stuff

Have you ever done this?



The weather is nice, you just got off from work and you jump on your Harley for a quick ride, thinking I'm only going out for a little while...

You have heard that most accidents happen very close to home. But did you know that many motorcycle breakdowns also occur on shorter rides? If you are riding cross country, you look over your bike very carefully and you make sure to put on all of your protective gear (*Boots, Over-pants, Jacket, Gloves, Helmet*) before you leave, unfortunately many riders are not as thorough when going on "shorter" rides.

We at the Sheboygan HOG Chapter encourage you to take 3 minutes before a ride to do a pre-ride safety review of your bike using what MSF calls **T-CLOCS**. And to *always* wear *All The (protective) Gear All The Time* (**ATGATT**) regardless of the temperature, distance to be ridden or peer pressures that may encourage you not to. **Remember** - the only thing between you and the road is your protective gear!

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Note: Do not perform or maintain any hand signal if safety requires both hands on your handlebars!