

Looking after your bike

Keeping bikes in tip-top condition is The Bike Repair Man's thing. Regular servicing keeps bikes working well and bikes that work well are much more fun! Bikes that work well are usually easier to ride - and that makes a difference if you've got a train to catch! A few DIY tips to aid in looking after your bike:

Show it the love

Just like you, your bike needs a little love and care. Therefore please keep it well cleaned and lubricated on a regular basis. Use a recommended bike cleaner and follow the instructions. Don't just wash the frame. That's not the important part...

Focus on the drivetrain: that is the chain, front chainrings and rear sprockets (cogs), not forgetting the jockey wheels (small cogs) on the rear derailleur mechanism which can get very clogged up. After washing, allow to dry and then lubricate cogs, chain, brake pivot points. Wipe off excess oil from chain. Wipe all cables with an oiled rag.

Finally, check your tyre pressures; they should give you the "feel" that is good for you. Road bike pressures are usually set high (80-120psi). Mountain bikes have lower pressures: 40-65psi. You should ensure the ride is firm, but comfortable. Always check on the tyre wall for the maximum recommended pressure.

Now you are ready to ride again! Happy cycling....

A few words about chains

The chain on your bike is the main component taking all the strain of your exertions and translating them into movement. Over time all chains wear. They stretch and effectively become longer, they also can get bent and damaged, especially if they are not regularly cleaned and oiled. Your chain also becomes "worn-in" with the rear sprockets (cogs), they wear in synchronism with the chain.

A chain-checker, a measurement device, reveals the extent of wear on your chain. When the chain is replaced, it may be that the rear sprockets also need to be replaced; new chains and old sprockets are often a recipe for slipping, jumping gears.

Symptoms of chain wear problems can be that the chain keeps coming off or that the gears do not change smoothly and are difficult to adjust. We will always perform a chain check (with that special tool) as part of our services and, where necessary, recommend a change of the chain and rear sprockets.

**Call Dave, The Bike Repair Man
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