

CHECK REGULARLY FOR:

MUD AND DUST

Clean them off, they're hugely abrasive.

FRAME DENTS AND DAMAGE

Get these checked by your local bike shop.

OIL

Check and lubricate wheel hubs, bottom bracket axle, steering bearings, pedals.

TYRES

Make sure there's sufficient tread and sidewall.

GEAR CHANGE MECHANISMS

Check that front and rear mechanisms are moving up and down smoothly.

SPOKES AND TENSION

Check for loose spokes and buckled wheels. Get them serviced if necessary.

BAR ENDS

Ensure you have bar plugs in your handlebar ends.

SERVICING

Service your bike regularly. It'll help keep you performing at your best.

BIKE FITNESS

BUYING AND SETTING UP YOUR BIKE

It's important to get a bike that's right for your body shape and the cycling you want to do. Ask an experienced dealer for help.

BRAKE LEVER POSITIONING

To reach them easily, line up the bottom of the levers with the bottom of the handlebar. You may need to adjust the position to suit your riding style.



SEAT HEIGHT
Set it high enough so your leg is almost straight when the pedal is lowest – that conserves energy, helps avoid knee and hip injuries. Keep the seat horizontal for comfort.

FRAME SIZE

Make sure you can stand over the frame with both feet on the ground and 25mm clearance to crotch level.

25mm

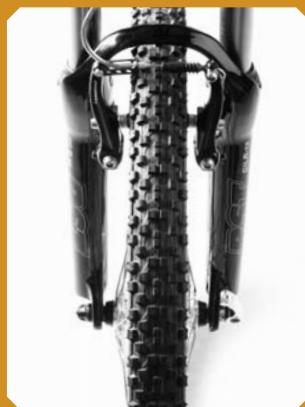
CLIP-IN PEDALS

If you have clip-in pedals, when first using them practise getting in and out before riding on roads or trails.



PRE-RIDE CHECKLIST

WHEELS Straight, not buckled.



FRONT AND REAR WHEEL QUICK RELEASE MECHANISMS Check they're in the locked position.



CHAIN Check lubrication.



HANDLEBAR/STEERING ASSEMBLY Handlebars loosen regularly. Ensure there's no loose play.



LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS Check they are working.



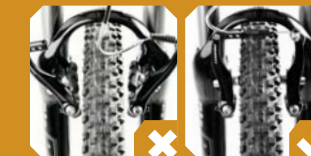
TYRE PRESSURES Tyres should be firm to touch.



ALL NUTS AND BOLTS Check they're tight.



BRAKES FRONT AND REAR Check brakes are set up correctly and work.



GEARING UP

As well as a good bike, you need the right gear:

- ▶ **HELMET:** Ensure your helmet is the right size and worn correctly. An approved helmet reduces your risk of a serious head injury. For more difficult trails, use a full-face helmet. Look for any of these standards: Snell (M 2000), European standard (ECE 22.05) or Australian standard (AS 1698).
- ▶ **GLOVES:** Full- or half-finger gloves will protect your hands in a fall and help to absorb vibrations.
- ▶ **PROTECTIVE GLASSES:** Keep dust out of your eyes and protect from branches.
- ▶ **SHOES:** Wear strong shoes with good grips on the soles. Tie laces back or tuck them away to avoid getting caught in the crank or chain.
- ▶ **PADS:** For more advanced trails, wear pads on your knees, shins and elbows.
- ▶ **ON-ROAD RIDING:** Reflective vest, wrist and ankle bands will help drivers see you.
- ▶ **CLOTHING:** Avoid anything baggy or loose – it can get snagged easily. Shorts with a padded seat make for a more comfortable ride – so do shirts that breathe and lightweight rain jackets.

MASTER THE BASICS

- ▶ Look ahead and anticipate what's coming up.
- ▶ Use the back brake when you're cornering, not the front one.
- ▶ Think ahead about gear changes and do them early.
- ▶ Going downhill or over small

obstacles, get your body weight behind the seat eg. by leaning back.

- ▶ Going uphill, sit slightly forward.
- ▶ Keep your elbows slightly bent, never locked. This helps your arms absorb the vibrations and shocks from the handlebars.

STAY FUELLED

Keeping your energy up stops you getting fatigued, which is when you're more likely to crash. On longer rides, take low-sugar energy bars or dried fruit. Keeping your fluids up is also important. You're often riding for long periods in summer heat when you sweat more. Take plenty of water with you and follow these guidelines:

TWO HOURS BEFORE

DRINK 500-600 ML

Dehydration can make you fatigued, affect your riding judgement, cause cramps, heat stress or heatstroke. Even low levels of dehydration can affect you.



WHILE RIDING

DRINK 120-150 ML PER 10-15 MINUTES

Never share drink bottles.

AFTER RIDING

1 LITRE PER HOUR FOR THREE HOURS

You continue sweating after you stop riding, so you need to keep your fluids up.



15 MINUTES BEFORE

DRINK 500 ML

EARLY STAGES OF YOUR RIDE

Warming up gradually increases blood flow through your muscles, makes them ready to respond and reduces your risk of injury. Hold back for the first and last 10-15 minutes of your ride to reduce stiffness and maintain flexibility.

TREAT INJURIES QUICKLY TO SPEED UP YOUR RECOVERY

USE R.I.C.E.D. (FIRST TWO DAYS)

REST: To limit further damage, avoid moving the injured part as much as possible.

ICE: For 20 minutes every two hours for the first 48 hours.

COMPRESSION: Bandage between ice treatments.

ELEVATION: Keep the injured area raised as much as possible.

DIAGNOSIS: If the pain or swelling hasn't gone down significantly in 48 hours, seek professional medical help.

AVOID H.A.R.M. (FIRST THREE DAYS)

HEAT: Avoid hot baths and showers, saunas, hot water bottles, heat packs and liniments.

ALCOHOL: Alcohol increases bleeding and swelling at the injury site, and delays healing.

RUNNING: You should not exercise for 72 hours unless approved by a medical professional.

MASSAGE: Massaging an injury in the first 72 hours can slow down recovery.

For more information about mountain biking visit:

www.bikenz.org.nz

For tips on sports performance and staying injury free visit:

www.acc.co.nz/sportsmart

SMART TIPS FOR PREVENTING MOUNTAIN BIKING INJURIES

FOLLOW THE OFF-ROAD CODE

EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW AND FOLLOW THE CODE FOR SAFE AND RESPONSIBLE MOUNTAIN BIKING

1 WEAR THE RIGHT GEAR. Make sure it fits correctly and always wear a helmet.

2 RIDE THE RIGHT BIKE. Some bikes are better for certain types of terrain.

3 MAINTAIN YOUR BIKE AND BE PREPARED. Always ride with spare tubes and basic tools (patch kit, adjustable crescent wrench and

pump). Carry spare clothing in case the weather changes.

4 NEVER RIDE BEYOND YOUR ABILITIES. Walk sections of a trail you're not confident riding – don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

5 CONTROL YOUR SPEED. Make sure you can adjust to sudden obstacles or trail changes.

6 SLOW DOWN FOR BLIND CORNERS.

7 NEVER PUSH THE LIMITS ON UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY.

8 RESPECT OTHER TRAIL USERS – BIKERS, WALKERS AND ANIMALS. Keep left and give way to uphill riders.

9 RIDE WITH A FRIEND AND CARRY A CELL PHONE. If you're riding alone, tell someone where you have gone and your expected time of return.

CONCUSSION

Wearing an approved helmet reduces the impact of a fall on your head and brain. You can still be concussed though, even if you haven't been 'knocked out'. If you have a suspected concussion, you shouldn't drive for at least 24 hours. Get a copy of the ACC concussion check card and carry it with you when you're out riding (call 0800 844 657).

ALWAYS ASSUME A SPINAL INJURY IF THE PERSON IS UNCONSCIOUS. GET HELP.