

ANY QUESTION

ANSWERED

If we don't know the answer, we'll find the person who does
Send your questions to: advice@motorcyclenews.com or 01733-468002

Q How can I break the bead on Tiger's tyre

I picked up a puncture in one of my Triumph Tiger 800 XC's tubed tyres in Normandy, and as I change tyres on my Yamaha TTR250 all the time, I invested in tyre levers, a repair kit and spare tubes for the next time. But, when I got another flat on a weekend tour recently, try as I might I couldn't break the bead, so I still lost a day trekking to a suitably-equipped dealer. How do those Dakar riders do it?
Philip Hore, email

A Answered by Dylan Jones, Yamaha Off-Road Experience
Off-road tyres tend to be softer than

road-going rubber, so we find that a firmly applied boot heel will work with the wheel well supported. But, if that doesn't shift, to pop the tyre off the bead you can tilt your bike while carefully positioning one of the sidestand or centrestand legs over the tyre wall, but not bearing down on the tyre rim. Then allow the stand leg to bear down on the tyre and use the weight of the bike to break the bead. If we are going to be riding on rocky terrain we sometimes 'skin' one tube with another, by cutting the valve off an old tube and splitting it so it wraps around to give more protection.



Don't be left feeling deflated on your adventure

KIT CHOOSER

Q Which are the best biking jackets for women?

It's my girlfriend's birthday and I'm thinking of getting her a waterproof jacket to use on her bike. We're both new to riding and I've no idea where to start.
Jon Newstead, York

A Answered by Keith Roissetter, Infinity Motorcycles
There's a wide range of women's clothing these days, but there's a wider range of tastes, so choose something from a shop that has a good selection and make sure you can exchange it if it's not right. Most of the jackets I'm listing here have matching trousers that zip together with the jacket, so that's Christmas sorted as well. The Oxford Dakota range is well made and comes in a good selection of colours as does the RST Gemma. The Spada Lula is the same sort of money. The well styled, Alpinestars Andes V2 Drystar is very popular, as is the wax cotton Oxford Bradwell, which looks very good off the bike as well.



Fine in the dry but things are less bonnie when the weather turns dismal

Q Knock, knock... Who's there? It's my MT-07!

When I'm braking gently on my Yamaha MT-07, I can hear a slight knock and when the wheel is off the floor there's a slight fore-and-aft movement. I can't see a bush in the parts diagram, so I'm wondering where the wear is?
Brian Forrester Cheadle.

A Answered by Charles Marvell, Flitwick Motorcycles
The slight knocking is almost certainly slack in the steering bearings. The movement felt in the forks with the wheel jacked up is normal as the forks are fully extended and the bushes are thus closer together so the working clearances in them is magnified. Get the steering bearings adjusted and all should be good.



Your front-end knock is most likely steering bearings out of adjustment

Q Who does my Bonnie hate the rain so much?

When I'm out in wet weather my 2012 Triumph Bonneville T100 splutters to a halt after four or five miles. When it does finally restart it only runs for a couple of miles before stopping again. I suspected the HT leads as it would splutter when I was hosing it down after a wash, and it certainly behaved itself when I fitted all-in-one sealed leads – that was until I went out in the rain again!
Ralph Stoddard, Heanor

A Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN
The Bonnie uses a secondary air valve system to inject air into the exhaust pipe and clean up emissions more effectively. The pipe that carries this airflow runs very close to a plug cap and a clip that holds the pipe can end up touching the plug cap, allowing the spark to track across instead of firing the cylinder. I'd make that the first port of call for your investigations.

MCN LAW

Your legal questions

Q Am I barking up the wrong tree with claim?

I came off my Aprilia RS125 when I had to avoid a fallen tree in the road. I ended up with some pretty painful injuries although nothing too bad. My insurer appointed solicitors to act for me and they have said they cannot take the case further because there is no evidence that the council knew the tree was rotten before it fell. The council also claim they do not have any inspection records, which seems suspicious to me – any ideas on next steps?
Giovani Berni, email

“The relevant consideration here is did the tree have external signs of rot?”

A The council are under a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that trees overhanging the highway are safe. This includes periodic checking for signs of disease, which can lead to trees falling. Clearly if a tree is healthy and falls due to say a lightning bolt or storm winds, then the council cannot be held liable unless they knew the tree had fallen and failed to clear it up for an unreasonable time.

The relevant consideration here is did the tree have external signs of rot? If so a tree expert will be required to give evidence on how long that external evidence would have been visible on inspection. The answer to this could be the key to a successful claim in your case.

Importantly, it is not a defence to say they have no records of inspection but they would have inspected regularly. If the council has failed to keep proper records the court should judge the Claimant's evidence generously and the council's critically.

Andrew Campbell
Solicitor and author of the MCN Law column for the last five years

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Motorcycle Accident Solicitors

EXPERT'S GUIDE TO BRAKE DISCS

Why they're so much more than bits of metal spinning round and round



THE EXPERT

Jon Wright
Jon is the Motorcycle Data & Technical Manager at EBC Brakes based in Northampton. Still privately owned, EBC Brakes is a world leader in the manufacture of brake components and its brake discs are all manufactured in the UK.

The basics of brake discs

Most motorcycles use disc brakes, which use calipers to squeeze pairs of pads against a rotor or disc mounted on the wheel. This causes friction, which slows the wheel. Disc brakes are more efficient than drum brakes as they are more easily cooled and thus less likely to fade. Due to this friction, however, disc wear can occur.

It's all very well having a fast bike but not if you can't stop it just as rapidly



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW...

What's the metal?

Discs used to be made of low carbon steel, which were prone to rust. Today it's different. We now use a hardened, 420-grade, stainless steel. That's what 90% of our discs are made from. You need to beware of some companies that merely state their product is stainless steel. Some of these are not hardened and, of those that are, some are hardened to excess and can crack between the holes and edges.

To float or not to float

Discs can be non-floating, or full-floating. Non-floating types are usually flat, solid, one-piece discs with no moving parts. Some are little more than rings that bolt directly onto the wheel – this is particularly true with rear discs. Floating discs, however, are comprised of three main components: an inner, separate ring carrier, which is solidly fixed to the wheel; an outer ring, which

acts as the friction surface and a series of buttons, which connect the two. Floating discs tend to dissipate heat a lot better than non-floaters and centralise themselves between the pads better. The downside is they're more expensive because there are more components involved, making them more difficult to produce.

Do not confuse floating

discs with discs that feature loose rings or buttons, which are sometimes called fully-floating. You should not be able to move either the buttons or disc from side to side, if you can, it is likely that pad 'knock back' will occur and you can end up with spongy brakes.

What are the holes for?

Holes drilled in the discs are mostly for cooling, but

also for the dissipation of water off the braking surface when you are riding in poor conditions. They also help clean the pad surface and they save a little bit of weight – although you have to be careful not to have too many holes or there won't be enough contact area.

Wavy discs look cool, are they any good?

It's more of a fashion thing. Again, it saves weight and it also provides extra scraping edges so they can clean the pad but it's down to personal preference. Kawasaki went down the road of using wavy discs but with some of their models, such as the ZX-10R, they've now gone back to a standard round disc. Our 'V' rotors are available in different colours but are also floating and are our lightest discs.

How do I care for them?

Most manufacturers put minimum wear thickness

indicators on their discs – usually about 4.5mm. Otherwise, it's mostly about keeping them clean. You need to make sure all the bolts are tight and you need to keep them clear of any contaminants or oils on the braking surfaces for obvious reasons.

Do pads need to be matched to discs?

Ideally, yes. But most friction materials today are pretty good so you shouldn't have too many problems.

Next week

Why bike keys are so last year



Your brake discs are capable of massive stopping power