

A Daily, Weekly, Monthly and Yearly Bike Maintenance Checklist

Most people who buy and ride bicycles want to keep them in good shape, but first they need to know where to begin. The following list of necessary maintenance items and recommended frequency of maintenance is designed to give a recreational, club cyclist, or a commuter an outline for a schedule.

Those who often ride in rain and mud, or who put on very high weekly mileage, will need to perform routine maintenance more often to keep their bikes in optimal condition. Conversely, those who ride relatively little can use a somewhat more relaxed schedule.

Before Every Ride:

- Check tire air pressure
- Check brakes and cables
- Be sure quick release hubs are tight

After Every Ride:

- Inspect tires for glass, gravel shards, and cuts on tread and sidewall
- Check wheels for true
- If the bike is ridden in the mud or wet it will need a quick clean and dry to prevent rust. The chain will need lubrication to prevent extra wear.

Every Week:

- Clean and lube the bike's mechanical parts as necessary; Once a week or every 300 kilometers, including lubricating the chain with specific bicycle chain lube.

Once a Month:

- Completely clean the bike, including the drivetrain if necessary
- Inspect chain and freewheel. Measure the chain for wear, check for tight links and replace the chain if necessary
- Inspect and lubricate brake levers, derailleurs and all cables
- Inspect pedals and lubricate SPD style cleats. Inspect tires for wear; rotate or replace if needed
- Inspect and check for looseness in the:
 - Stem binder bolt
 - Handlebar binder bolt
 - Seatpost binder bolt (or quick release)
 - Seat fixing bolt
 - Crank bolts
 - Chainring bolts
 - Derailleur mounting bolts
 - Bottle cage bolts
 - Rack mounting bolts
 - Brake and derailleur cable anchors
 - Brake and shifter lever mounting bolts
 - Brake mounting bolts



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Every Three Months:

- Inspect frame and fork for paint cracks or bulges that may indicate frame or part damage; pay particular attention to all frame joints.
- Visually inspect for bent components: seat rails, seatpost, stem, handlebars, chainrings, crankarms, brake calipers and brake levers.

Every Six Months:

- Inspect and re-adjust bearings in headset, hubs, pedals and bottom bracket (if possible; some sealed cartridge bearings cannot be adjusted, only replaced).

Annually:

Disassemble and overhaul; replace all bearings (if possible); and remove and if necessary replace all brake and shift cables. This should be performed at 4,000 kilometers if you ride more than that per year. If you often ride in the rain or mountain bikers who get dirty should overhaul their bicycles more often.

How The Effort Pays Off

Following through with even some of these simple steps will help you become a safer, more aware, and more in touch cyclist. Cycling is a perfect bond of man and machine, even in its most simple form. So doing your own basic maintenance can help you feel confident out on the road or trail.

This peace of mind in knowing your bike won't fail you, will let you concentrate and enjoy the ride. And knowing more about how your bike's state and function may even help you one day when you're stuck needing some trailside repair!

Importantly, this regular maintenance will end up saving you money in the long run by not having spend extra on expensive repairs when things go wrong. So you save money that you can put towards another bike trip, or some cool new gear! Love your bike and it will love you back.

