

Here is a pictorial reminder of all the aspects to be checked in a good, systematic POWDERY drill for a typical modern motorbike.

0. Know your motorbike

We use POWDERY to remind ourselves of the topics comprising the systematic drill:

- Petrol,
- Oil,
- Water,
- Damage,
- Electrics,
- Rubber
- Yourself.

The pictures and instructions are typical for current motorbikes with hydraulic brakes. We recognise there are a multitude of bike designs but you should use the principles and order given here, where possible.

For example, some bikes may still use cable operated clutch or throttle so best to check the cables aren't sticking. (Check the bike's handbook for the cable lubrication frequency).

1. P - Petrol



Either briefly switch on to check the fuel gauge **OR** simply take a peek in the tank. Ensure you have enough fuel for the journey.

2. O - Oil



Check the sight glass or dipstick that the motor has oil and that engine casing, gearbox and final drive has no weeps or seepages.

3. O - Hydraulic Fluids



While you're checking for oil seepages, you can also check the brake / clutch fluid reservoirs and lines for integrity.

4. W - Water



On water-cooled bikes, check the radiators, fans and associated hoses are free from damage or water leak.

5. Air Cooled?



If your bike is air cooled, check the fins and oil cooler radiator matrix are not clogged with debris.

6. D - Damage



Check all round the bike for damage and loose or broken parts.

7. D - Damage Chain wear



Check the chain for wear, damaged teeth and that it is being properly lubricated.

8. E - Electrics



Turn on the Ignition to activate all the electrics but you don't need to start the bike yet.

9. E - Instrument warnings



Have all the instrumentation warning lights illuminated to show that they are working?

10. E - Indicators



Check left and right, front and rear Indicators flash when selected. All lights flash together when hazard warning switch is selected.

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11. E – Lamps & Horn



Check daylight running and headlamps, including full beam, are working. Check the horn.

12. E – Brake lights



Check that the stop/brake light comes on when either front or back brake is deployed.

13. E – Start up



With ignition on and the engine started, all the warning lights apart from ABS should now be off. ABS goes out after rolling on.

14. R - Rubber



Check front and rear tyres' tread for wear, cuts, nails, squaring off, and side walls for the whole 360° circumference. Check pressures.

15. R - Rubber



Check the hand grips are intact, securely attached and don't rotate due to the glue deteriorating.

16. Y – Your safety



Wear the appropriate protective gear, helmet, gloves, suit, boots and ensure that it is fitting securely and comfortably.

17. Y – You being seen



Motorcyclist accidents are dramatically reduced by wearing a high visibility vest or jacket. Strongly recommended.

18. Y – Your Journey



Weather conditions, good route planning and all aspects of the wider environment will affect the enjoyment of your journey.

19. Mirror check & signal



Check for traffic in mirrors before getting ready to move off. Only indicate, if required.

20. Move off



Complete a life-saver over the shoulder check and if safe, face forward and accelerate into the traffic.

21. Moving brake check



If you haven't ridden the bike recently, check your brakes work effectively by stopping from about 30mph in a non-retarding gear in a place clear of traffic, soon after you set off.

You should brake gradually and progressively but not harshly to check that the bike slows evenly without any vibration or strange noise which may indicate a brake calliper is binding. Release the brake levers before coming to a complete stop to ensure the front and rear brakes also release correctly.