

ANY QUESTION

ANSWERED ✓

If we don't know the answer, we'll find the person who does

OWNING & RIDING

Q Can I use tubeless tyres with tubes?



My Honda CB1100 has spoked wheels and tubed tyres and needs new rubber, but the OE Dunlop D205 Sportmax are out of stock in the UK. I've also been told that using tubes in tubeless tyres is not recommended due to the raised pattern on the inside surface of the tyre chaffing the tube and possibly causing a puncture. Dunlop told me the speed rating is reduced by putting a tube in a tubeless tyre, so I am erring towards the other OE tyre, the Bridgestone BT45G. Paul Bredael, Leigh

Answered by Bryn Phillips, Cambrian Tyres
Your choice is limited as both the tubed and tubeless D205s are on back order with Dunlop UK as we speak. With regards to tubes not being permissible in a tubeless tyre because of the internal ribs, I've just been down to our warehouse and I have found tubed-type tyres with just as prominent ribbing as any of the tubeless tyres. Manufacturer advice for using

tubes in tubeless tyres varies. Continental advises that when fitting an inner tube in one of their radial tyres the maximum speed is restricted to 130mph, effectively turning a V or W-speed rated tyre into an H-speed rated tyre. Metzeler and Pirelli advise that fitting tubes in radials is permissible in certain conditions

but they don't recommend fitting tubes in ZR radials. Even if we take a cautious approach with the BT45Gs and drop a speed rating from their original V (149mph) rating down to H (130mph) it won't be a problem for you because a CB1100EX only has a top speed of around 125mph!



ER6's plugs are accessible but take care

Q Why is my bike running so rough after recent plug change?

My Kawasaki ER-6n was due a plug change and as they are more accessible than most bikes I did it myself. But now it sounds flat and it's dropping down to one cylinder as soon as I get above 30mph. Matt Russell, Pudsey

Answered by Colin Barnes, Chas Bikes, London
I'm betting that one of the coil caps has cracked open when you removed it to replace the plug. Like a lot of modern bikes the ER-6 runs combined coil and plug caps or coil caps. But because annual mileages have dropped and modern spark plugs have a long service life, and manufacturers have made them harder to get at, the combination of time, water, road crud and engine heat 'bakes' the caps into position. They only come off on a lot of bikes when you are servicing the valve clearances. Even anti-seize spray has a limited effect, so when you try and prise them out it's all too easy to crack one.

A decent-quality pattern replacement is typically about £60. My advice whenever you change bikes is that you set aside some time to free them off gently and reinsert them with some high-temperature grease around them.

Q Is there a quick fix to my quirky bike's mystery misfire?

I've got an oddball Honda NX250 from the late 80s; a half-supermoto, half-trials bike grey import that I am oddly fond of. But it's got some electrical gremlins; misfiring and cutting out randomly. I've checked all the connections and the charging figures are good. What next? Henry Welch, Zeals

Answered by Tony Greenslade, Gibson Exhausts
Intermittent faults are the hardest to track down, but the fact that it is coming up for 30 years old could work in your favour. Bikes of that vintage can develop dry joints in the CDI unit and the solution is often simply a case of tapping the CDI with a screwdriver handle to get the internals back in line and online. It certainly worked on a 1985 Yamaha RD125LC we had that had a misfire at the top end.



NX250's CDI could be showing its age

Q I need to see the light in Spain to stay legal

I've got a 2015 BMW K1600GT and a tour around Spain lined up. I know the Spanish have made daytime running lights compulsory and I am worried that my LED running lights won't pass muster and I can't override the light-level sensing option to turn on my main lights? Tom Holohan, email

Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN
I checked with BMW GB they don't see any issue with the LED Corona ring riding lamps. In general the bike conforms to ECE standard apart from the UK headlamp dip beam which can be adjusted in the dashboard menu as shown on page 61/62 of the rider's manual. Enjoy your trip.



K1600's ring lights are legal in Spain

TRAVEL & TOURING

Q How do I choose a round-the-world motorcycle?

Answered by Robert Wicks – adventure motorcycling author

I am certain of one thing – there is no 'perfect' overland bike. What's good off-road isn't necessarily good on-road and what is right for one person is not necessarily right for another. So choose the bike that is the best compromise. What's most important before making a choice is what you are going to use the bike for, not the quality

of the glossy brochure in the dealership. But here are some key factors to look think about. Really expensive bikes will put a huge dent in your budget and can seriously affect your Carnet de Passage. Tank range is an important factor, but how important depends on where you're headed, so figure that out first and take into consideration the bike's consumption figures. Can the motorcycle carry everything you need – including

a pillion, and can you manhandle it with all that extra weight? You'll want a bike that suits the terrain you're riding through and one which is reliable and easy to get spares for in difficult places. Mechanical knowledge on your chosen machine is also important as you may have to deal with issues from time to time. So opt for a bike you will be comfortable working on and happy enough to carry out a basic service.

No bike is the ultimate adventure machine, it's all about what's right for you



TECH WATCH

Q What's all the fuss about twin-tube shocks?

If your bike used only springs in its suspension, just a single bump would cause it to keep bouncing up and down after hitting it. To stop this happening, the springs are accompanied by damper units, which force oil through small holes as the suspension moves. This takes energy out of the system (converting it to heat) and puts a stop to that bouncing.

But there's more to damping than just forcing oil through holes, and the latest development in shock design is the twin-tube. Where other shocks force the oil one way through the damping valves under compression then 'suck' it back up again, a twin-tube design circulates



Öhlins TTX have a twin-tube design and have damping adjusters on top of the shock

the oil along an inner tube and up through a concentric outer one. As the shock is compressed, oil beneath the piston is pushed down the inner tube. At the bottom it flows around the edge and up in the opposite direction, sandwiched between the outer tube and the inner one. Then it flows through a valving system at the top of the shock, which features one-way valves to ensure it flows through one set of valves under compression and another set on the rebound stroke.

There are several benefits. One is that all the damping adjusters can be sited together at the top of the shock, making adjustment much easier. Also, by flowing through a circuit this way it's easier for the oil to shed unwanted heat, so it tends to stay cooler. But the main advantage is that it prevents cavitation, which is a process whereby bubbles can form within the oil due to excess heat and movement. It's a problem designers of ships' propellers are well aware of because when bubbles appear because of large pressure drops it not only reduces performance, it can also cause major structural damage to the propeller. Cavitation doesn't cause damage in a shock, but it does cause the oil to lose almost all of its damping and you end up effectively with only springs in your suspension, and the bike will bounce all over the place. With a twin-tube shock, this is a lot less likely to happen.

Q Which is the best sporty, textile jacket at a sensible price?

I'm after a sporty, mid-range, waterproof, armoured textile jacket. What do you recommend? Peter Bartlett, West Kingsdown

Answered by Keith Roissetter, Infinity Motorcycles
There's a wide choice on the market which may tick your boxes and what I've listed here is just a small selection. As with everything fit is a very personal thing so popping into a dealer to try these on while sitting on a bike

is the best way to get what you're after. These all have CE approved armour and a pocket for a proper back protector.

The RST Pro Series Sport 2 looks good at £149.99, and the Alpinestars Gunner at £169.99 is a good quality choice as well. The Held Yamoto is excellent quality for £159.99, the Rev'IT Shield has some good features for £189.99, whilst the Alpinestars T GPR WP is probably the sportiest of this bunch and costs £229.99.



MCN LAW

Your legal questions

Q It's daylight robbery

My son recently bought a 2013 Fireblade from a dealer. He paid £9000 for it. He thought it was a reasonable price as it had only done 100 miles and was one of only five limited-edition bikes. He insured it for £9000. The broker did not query the value and charged an appropriate premium. The next day the bike was stolen from his work. He has just received an offer for £5000; this will not be anywhere near enough to put him back on an equivalent bike. He has a £1000 excess on the policy which he accepts. I have found 23 Fireblades for sale with less than 1000 miles from £9800 to £12,500. Should he employ a loss assessor to recover as much money as he can? Name and address supplied

My reading of this is that the bike was stolen the day after it was purchased and as such, assuming your son has proof of the purchase amount, this is excellent evidence of the bike's actual market value.

I suggest your son contacts his insurer with the evidence he has as to value

Your son doesn't need a loss assessor. I suggest he contacts his insurer (not broker) with the evidence he has as to value (price paid and comparable prices) and ask them to reconsider and pay him the £9000 he paid, less the excess.

If the insurer does not respond favourably then your son can raise an official complaint with the insurer, which they must investigate. Failing that, your son may refer the matter to the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) asking them to investigate. Should the FOS not agree to deal with the matter then it would also be possible for your son to consider a claim against the insurer for breach of contract.



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