

8 Things to Do to Get Your Bike Ready to Ride

If your bike has been in storage all winter, it's time to get it rolling again. Follow these steps to make sure it's ready to hit the streets.

1. **Adjust Seat** – Make sure your bike seat is at the right height for you! You may have grown over the winter.
2. **Check Tire Pressure** - All bikes tires lose air pressure if they sit for a while, so it's likely you'll need to add air.
3. **Check the Spokes** - Wheel spokes keep your wheels true (straight), so you should occasionally check to make sure they are all tight. It's a good idea to check your spokes every few months, even if you don't notice anything wrong.
4. **Check Brake Levers** -Pull on your brake levers and make sure they engage both sides of the brake pads on each wheel. The brakes should not stick and should fully stop the wheel in motion.
5. **Check Brake Pads** - The length of your brake pads should press against your rim when activated, and they should not be loose. Replace worn brake pads immediately and adjust the cable if they are too far from the rim.
6. **Check Your Chain** - Check your bicycle chain tension by pressing your fingers against the top chain, it should not move more than 1/4 to 1/2-inch. If your chain is too loose it will come off while riding—a dangerous situation to suddenly find yourself in. If the chain is too tight it can bind and damage your gears. Over time chains can stretch, so replace your chain if needed.
7. **Check Safety Gear** -Check the condition and batteries of your bicycle lights and reflectors. If you don't have front and rear lights, it's time to get some. Do everything you can to make yourself visible to drivers.
8. **Check Your Bike Helmet** – Always wear a helmet when riding your bike. It is also very important to make sure you have a properly fitting bike helmet for the most protection.

