

Bike maintenance guide



Just like we would need to service, check the oil and keep the tyres properly inflated on a car to make sure that it stays safe and reliable, we need to do the same for a bike. There are many moving parts on a bike so keeping them moving smoothly helps the bike to be safer and a lot easier to ride.

There are four main elements of bike maintenance that we're going to look at that will keep your riding safe and easy, as well as possibly save you some money.

Cleaning the bike

Dirt particles can get into the moving parts of your bike which can cause them to seize up and wear down over time.

Wiping it down with a rag, especially after riding in wet or dirty conditions, is an easy way to protect your bike and save you headaches in the future.

How to clean your bike

1. Wipe down the surfaces of your bike with a rag. Use a damp, clean rag to clean the dirt and grit off your bike.
2. *(Optional)* Hose down your bike. If your bike is particularly dirty you can hose it down, washing off the dirt before drying it with a clean rag.



Cleaning and oiling the chain



The chain has the most moving parts so it is the most susceptible to break due to dirt and grit.

It can also attract the most dirt since it can often stick to the oil, which lubricates the chain.

How to clean and oil the chain

1. Use a lint-free cloth or toothbrush to clean the dirt from the chain. Using a degreaser can help, as it will remove the dirt and dirty oil from the chain. Use your hand to pull the pedals to access the whole length of the chain.
 2. Apply the chain oil to lubricate the chain, allowing it to move smoothly. Hold the oil nozzle 1cm from the chain to oil it.
- * Whilst applying the chain oil, use your other hand to pull the pedals to move the chain and lubricate the whole length of the chain.



Adjusting the seat



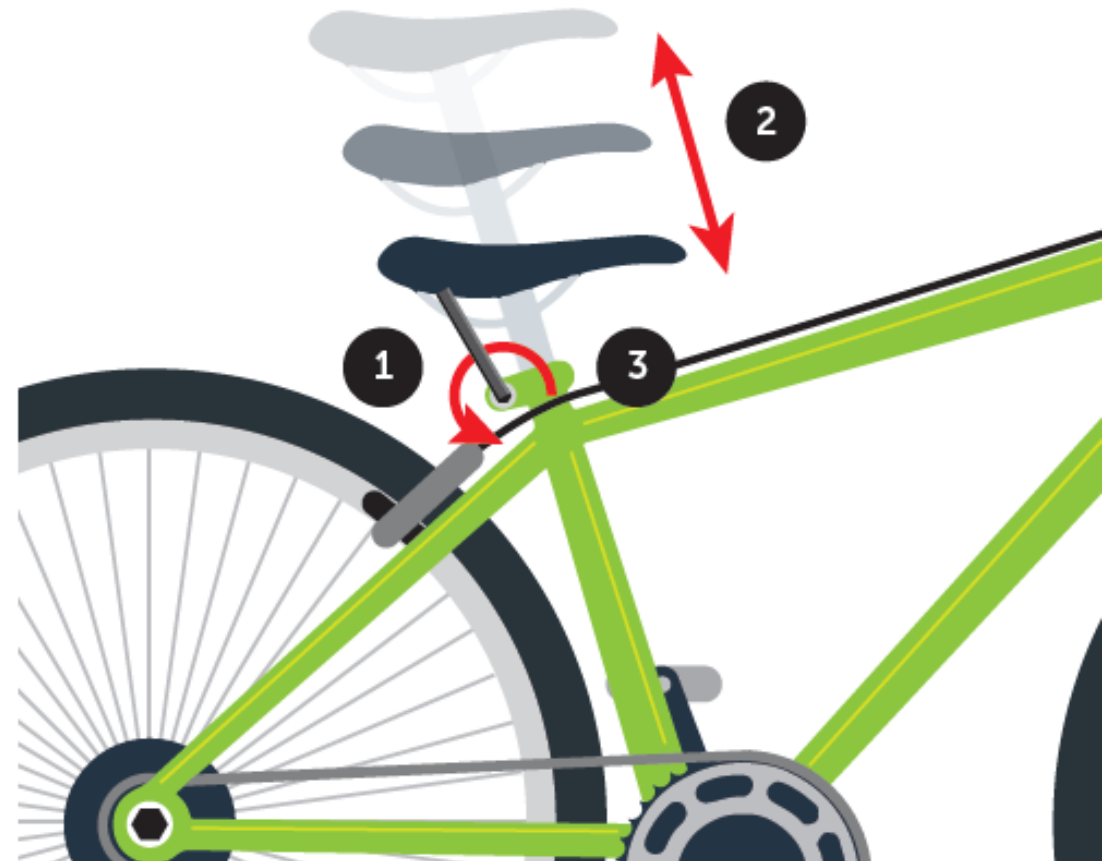
A badly sized bike makes riding less safe and a lot more difficult.

One of the most important adjustments you can make is to the height of the seat.

How to adjust a bike seat

1. Loosen the quick release lever by first lifting the lever up, and then rotating it in an anti-clockwise direction until the seat post can move.
2. Slide the seat post up and down until the seat is at the correct height.
3. Tighten the quick release lever by turning it clockwise until there is some friction, but it can still move freely. Then close the lever by pushing it down, which will fasten the seat post tight.

Note: If your bike does not have a quick release lever, use the correctly sized hexagonal ('Allen') key to loosen and tighten the seat post by inserting and turning the key.



Checking and inflating tyre pressure



Tyres need to be inflated to the correct pressure in order for the bike to be safe and easy to ride.

If the tyres are not inflated enough then the bike will be difficult to control and very, very tiring to ride. If they are inflated too much then they may burst, which means you'll need to replace the inner tube inside it.

How to check and inflate the tyres

1. Check for the correct tyre pressure. This is different for each tyre and is written on the tyre wall. It will be measured in *kPa* or *PSI*.
2. Unscrew the cap to the tyre valve. Some valves (Presta) will also need to be opened, whilst others do not (Schrader).
3. Attach the nozzle of the pump to the tyre valve and fasten it by pulling the lever on the pump nozzle.
4. Check the tyre pressure on the pump's gauge. This should match the recommended pressure you read on the side of the tyre earlier.
5. If the pressure is below the recommended range, pump more air into it until it reaches it. Place your feet on the pump's foot stands, hold the pump handle with both hands, and raise and lower the pump handle in a controlled manner until you reach the correct tyre pressure.
6. Finally remove the pump nozzle from the valve, screw tight the valve (if needed) and screw tight the cap.

