Checklist for Buying a Second-hand Motorcycle!

Often when you move to a new city/country you feel the need to buy a motorbike for your travel needs, buying a new bike is an ideal option if you are moving permanently. However, if you are unsure of your duration or just visiting to travel and explore the places around, getting a second-hand motorcycle would be better.



18 Things To Do Before Buying a Second-hand Motorcycle

- [ ] First look: Is the bike clean and shiny? It's usually an owner who takes care of this but you must look closer to check if it's a shady job and the owner just made it up for selling.
- [ ] Touch the engine and check if it's cold or warmed up. Sometimes bikes make noises when cold and to trick that they let run it warm so you can't hear anything.
- [ ] Have a look to see and check if there any oil leaks at the engine or gearbox? Check and have a look at the oil level along with the colour of oil. Pitchblack means that it's time for an oil change. Low oil level would mean that the engine is not well maintained. A careful owner ensures that oil is always on the right level.
- [ ] Check the papers if the frame/chassis number and the engine number is the same as in the papers as it might have been stolen or fishy.
- [ ] Then ask if he has bills for regular services or if he never serviced the bike. Ask for when was the last service done? If there is a service coming up soon, it will cost you money. This is one of the basic rule that you should not ignore while buying a second-hand motorcycle.
- [ ] How are the tyres? Well, for the ones who buy second-hand motorcycles in Europe, we have a dot number on it which say the year of made. Old tyres tend to get cracks; they get very hard and the grip is not as good as it is with good tyres.
- [ ] How is the chain? Is it tied? Is it well oiled (if not, the owner did not care and it will cost you money)? Is it worn? You can see if you can lift the chain from the sprocket. A good chain should stay, a worn chain will lift. Also, if the sprocket looks more like a saw blade than a sprocket, it will be replaced soon. Check that the teeth of the sprocket are not broken.
- [ ] Check the bearings of the wheels by moving the wheel sideways (it should not move at all). Also, you should check the swing-arm.

- [ ] Check the bearing of the head-steering, you can that check by putting the bike on the main stand and just slightly moving the handle to the side. There should be no resistance or hard point. Then you hold both fork bottoms and try to move forward and backward. There should be no play.
- [ ] In the same time, you can look if the fork is dry and no oil around the seal rings. Press it a few times into the springs in case the owner cleaned it before.
- [ ] If the bikes have spokes take a spanner and just glide softly over them. If they make a very high noise “Ping” they are okay. If they are more a deep “dang” they may be loose.
- [ ] Check the brakes: Disk brakes- If the brake disc has is deeper inside the the outside its worn, If the back of the brake pad, (you can see looking on the caliper) is very close to the disk they are worn.
- [ ] With drum brakes, you may see on the cable if there is still a way to adjust the cable. If not the brake shoes might be worn.
- [ ] Check both brakes on a test ride (which is always necessary before buying). Brakes should work normally and shouldn’t make any weird sounds.
- [ ] Check all the lights, whether they are working or not, and don’t forget the horn!!!
- [ ] Look at the cables if there are loose ends coming out –so that’s a sign it will snap soon.
- [ ] Then it’s slowly time to start the engine. Does it start with the starter? Does the starter make any strange noise? If it won’t start maybe the battery is dead or the starter is dead. If it has the kick-start, does it start easily?
- [ ] Next will be a test-ride; here’s what you should check in a test-ride: 1. Does the clutch work properly? Does it come sudden or like it should?, 2. Do the gears change without noise?, 3. Does it smoke badly or normal (oil is slightly blue smoke, petrol more black, with water-cooled bikes white smoke would be water in the engine) But remember if it’s cold it will smoke for a while until it´s warmed up –that’s normal!, 4. If you feel with the finger at the end of muffler there should be no oily fingers!, 5. Does it accelerate properly if you open the throttle?, 6. Does it make no noises and clutch not slips if you rev up to hard (Sometimes brackets are broken or tank vibrates), 7. Are all the Instruments working?, 8. If you brake is there movement in the steering?, 9. If you skilled enough, leave the handle for a second and look if the bike stays in line or starts wobbling. Only do this test if you know how to do it, please wear proper gear before checking that!

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