

## Seven point safety check

A pre-ride check can make your ride safer and more fun.

Not sure what to do?  
Most bike shops will do a quick safety check for free.

### Helmet safe

In New Zealand, you have to wear a safety standard approved helmet – look for the sticker.

- Make sure the straps are firm - slide one finger under the chin strap.
- The helmet should be on straight.
- Make sure the front sits no more than 2cm above your ears and eyebrows.
- If there's any strap damage, or cracks in the shell or cover, it's got to go.



Helmet safe

### Frame is rock solid

Inspect the frame for cracks, especially on older bikes.

- Pay extra attention to all the joints.
- Tip the bike upside down and check it from both sides.
- If you spot a crack, don't ride.

### Tyres pumped

Bike tyres lose air over time.

- Push the tyres hard with your thumb. If they're too hard to make a dent – that's perfect.
- If you can make a dent, they're too soft to cycle on - soft tyres can roll right off.
- Ideal tyre pressure is printed on the side of the tyre.

### Gears are working

Lube the chain. Look for:

- Rough or no gear changing.
- Broken teeth on the gear cogs.
- Frayed gear cables.
- Wobbly derailleur (the gear changing device).

Clunky gear changing can see you pitched off your bike. This test is easier with two people. Lift the back wheel and turn the pedals while you change gears.

### Handle bars are tight

Rattling handlebars can mean they're loose.

- Make sure the handlebars turn freely from side to side.
- Handlebars shouldn't pivot up and down.

### Brakes are working

Working brakes are essential.

**Brake pads:**

- Ensure brake pads are more than 3mm thick.
- Pads should touch the rims fully when the brake levers are squeezed half way.
- Replace frayed brake cables.

**Disc brakes:**

- Check that the lever isn't 'spongy' and that the brakes actually work.
- Disc brake fluid degrades over time, so check the brakes before you need to stop.

### Wheels attached and safe

Tip the bike upside down and set it on the ground

- Check both wheels are attached tightly to the frame.
- A quick release lever should swing through 180 degrees, and begin to get tight from 90 degrees. Close it all the way.
- Spin the wheels. There should be no sideways wobble. If they wobble, it could be one of several problems so take it to the bike shop.



New Zealand Government

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