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.

Frame is rock solid
Inspect the frame for cracks, especially on older bikes.
- Pay extra attention to all the joins.
- Tip the bike upside down and check it from both sides.
- If you spot a crack, don’t ride.

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.

Tyres pumped
Push the tyres hard with your thumb.
- If they’re too hard to make a dent – that’s perfect.

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.

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.

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.

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