

Off-Road Riders Bike Preparation List

*Courtesy of RawHyde Adventures

Below are some of the items you should consider when prepping yourself—and your motorcycle for riding off-road. ***Note that while these items have proven invaluable to us in the world of off-road riding, there is no type or amount of equipment that will fully protect you or your machine from everything.*** It is, after all, an adventure!

- **Engine Protection Bars**

Let's face it; Bikes that go in the dirt occasionally fall. It's not a big deal, and is usually followed a thumb's up and continuation of the ride. A great way to mitigate falls is with a robust set of Engine Protection Bars. Once installed, they will help keep your machine in running condition and get you back on the trail.

- **Skid Plate**

Like Engine Protection Bars, the Skid Plate protects the underside of your machine from unexpected contact with terra firma. This well placed aluminum plate is a small price to pay when compared to the expensive - and otherwise exposed - power plant it protects.

- **Hand Protectors**

Most hand Protectors are designed to protect the rider from exposure from the elements as well as passing tree branches and brush. The more robust versions are reinforced, protecting the motorcycle from falls. Either are good ideas in the Adventure Touring world.

- **Bar Risers**

When riding off-road, it is important to learn how to stand up on your motorcycle. When doing so, it becomes critical to have a loose, relaxed reach and grip on the handlebars. Bar Risers help by bringing the handlebar closer to the rider, making it easier to stay loose and actuate controls. When properly installed, there will be little to no need to adjust Bar Risers for on-road to off-road use.

- **Wide Foot Pegs**

On most Adventure-Touring motorcycles, the stock foot pegs are narrow and slippery, making it difficult and uncomfortable to stand, maneuver, and actuate controls. Wider, studded Foot Pegs promote a better grip to your riding boot, and make your off-road experience much more comfortable.

- **Dual-Sport & Knobby Tires**

A key element when identifying a "Dual Sport" and "knobby" tire lies in the name. Where the Knobby offers robust square tread meant for aggressive off-road riding, the Dual-Sport is more streamlined, making it useable for both on and off-road applications. Both will perform on just about any surface. And while the knobby will offer advantages in the dirt, it is not necessary to install a set for the purposes of the clinic. A basic set of dual sport tires will be fine, so long as they have at least half of their tread-life remaining.

- **Model-Specific Tool Kit**

During the clinic it will be necessary to make adjustments to your motorcycle for off-road use. Handlebars, brake / clutch levers, etc. may need to be set to accommodate dirt riding. It is important that you have tools on hand so that these adjustments can be made as necessary. This is especially important when considering any after-market items you may have installed that must be temporarily removed to make adjustments.

- **Tire Repair Kit**

Easily the most common issue you will face in the dirt is a flat tire. It is simply a reality of off-road riding. As such, a good tire repair kit is essential. And since we will be making adjustments to your tire pressure during the clinic, **it is good to have one that includes a tire pressure gauge and a portable compressor.**

- **Hydration Pack**

When compared to street riding, taking your machine in the dirt can be quite physically demanding. It's easy to become dehydrated out on the trail without even knowing it's happened. Keeping fluids flowing is essential, and a Hydration pack (such as a CamelBak or Kriega) is a great way to do it.

- **Protective Gear**

We all know and riding a motorcycle comes with inherent risk. Wearing proper riding gear is imperative to your safety, and more often than not will protect you from injury. There are certainly benefits to wearing protective riding gear designed for "Off-Road" use, as it is engineered to protect from the specific types of falls one sometimes will experience in the dirt. While off-road gear is ideal, street gear is acceptable, so long as it is designed for motorcycle use and is armored to shield you from injury. These items include:

- **DOT approved Helmet.** Ideally this will be $\frac{3}{4}$ face, flip or full face, with eye protection.
- **Motorcycle Jacket:** Your jacket should be abrasion resistant and have shoulder, elbow, and back armor.
- **Motorcycle Pants:** These should be abrasion resistant, have knee armor and, preferably, hip armor.
- **Motorcycle Gloves:** These should be abrasion resistant and designed for on or off-road motorcycle riding.
- **Motorcycle Boots:** A good motorcycle boot will be made of abrasion resistant material and protect you to at least the mid-to-upper shin. When properly laced, they will fit snugly and resist easy removal.
- **Other items to consider**
 - Food / snacks as needed to sustain you throughout the day
 - Chap Stick
 - Sun Screen
 - Bug Spray
 - First Aid Kit
 - Cell Phone

- Camera
- GPS / Paper Maps
- Sun Glasses
- **Full tank of fuel.**

You can learn more about off-road riding preparation or anything Adventure Riding related, by contacting Shawn Thomas at [RawHyde Adventures](#), (831) 419-5965, ShawnWorks@sbcglobal.net.