



The Bicycle Safety Checklist.

Any bicycle that is to be used on a Life Cycle training course must pass all of the following safety checks. If the instructor or course leader deems a bike to be unsafe then your place on the course is forfeited and no money can be refunded.

Bicycles are complex machines: if you are not able to carry out the checks and adjustments yourself, we recommend that you take your bike to a reputable cycle shop.

What to check	Pass? Fail?
a) Fitting:	
Frame size: Can the rider stand over the bike (just in front of the saddle), with their heels flat on the ground and with a least 30mm clearance between top tube and crotch?	
Saddle height: When the rider sits on the saddle, can they reach the ground (with their heels flat on the ground if a non-rider, on tip-toe other riders). Reach: When seated on the saddle can the rider reach the handle bars and brakes without feeling overstretched?	
Saddle height: The rider should sit on the saddle and put their right foot on the pedal. When the pedal is at its lowest point there should be just a slight bend at the knee.	
b) Tyres:	
Inflation: Are both tyres pumped up? You should barely be able to squeeze the tyre's side-walls in between your finger and thumb. If you can noticeably squeeze the side walls they are too soft.	
Condition: The tyres should have at least 3mm of tread and they should not be cracked or split.	
Obstructions: Nothing should rub against the tyres when the wheels turn.	
c) Wheels:	
Quick releases and wheel nuts: Quick-releases must be firmly closed and the lever not exposed. Are the wheel nuts tight? Wheels should be centralised in the fork and the frame.	
Bearings: Grasp each rim and rock it from side to side. Play at the rim must not exceed 3mm (2mm for small wheeled bikes).	
Rims: Spin the wheels. The rims should not touch the brake blocks or the tyre touch the frame.	
Defects: Check wheel rims for defects (dents etc.) that might cause the brakes to grab.	
Spokes: Spokes should not be corroded or loose. Missing spokes need to be replaced.	
d) Handlebars and saddle:	
Stem: Check the maximum extension height mark has not been exceeded (the mark should not be visible). Turn the bars gently side to side. The stem must stay aligned with front wheel fork.	
Saddle: Grasp each end of the saddle and try to rock it. It should not move, either up and down or side to side. The saddle should be level or point slightly downwards.	
Seat post: Check that the maximum height mark on the seat post has not been exceeded.	

Continued overleaf...

e) Frame and forks:	
Headset: Apply the front brake and rock the front of the bike. There should be no more than a hint of rocking movement between the headset parts (i.e. between top of fork and bottom of frame, and top of frame and adjusting races). Lift the front end of the bike and turn the bars slowly. There should be no more than the merest hint of 'notching'.	
Forks: There must be no signs of accident damage such as wrinkled paint near the top of the forks.	
Alignment of forks: The forks should follow the same line or appear to travel forwards of the head tube.	
Frame: Look for obvious defects including wrinkled paint around where the top tube and down tube meet the head tube. On folding bikes, ensure frame clamps are firmly closed.	
f) Chainset:	
Bottom bracket: Try to rock the cranks from side to side. Any play at the ends of the cranks should not exceed 4mm.	
Pedals: Check that the pedals are complete (no missing rubbers, no excessive wear). Check they are fastened tightly to the cranks.	
Cranks and chainrings: the cranks should be tight on the bottom bracket axle.	
g) Mudguards and racks:	
Attachment: Check mudguard and rack stays are complete and attached firmly.	
h) Lights:	
Attachment: Check that lights (if fitted) are firmly attached and cannot jump off or swing into a wheel. Pay particular attention to lights fitted to the front forks.	
i) Brakes:	
Levers and cables: Apply the brakes, pulling the levers back hard ten times making sure nothing 'gives'. Cables must not be frayed.	
Adjustment: Brakes must make contact with the rim before the lever is pulled back more than one third of its travel.	
Reach: Can the rider reach and apply both brakes comfortably? Excessive effort should not be required.	
Attachment: The brake levers should be attached firmly to the handlebars. The brake units should be attached firmly to the frame or fork.	
Alignment: Apply the brakes firmly and rock the bike backwards and forwards. Ensure that the brake blocks will not touch or travel under the wheel rims.	
Wear: Check that the brake blocks are not excessively worn. The metal shoe must not touch the rim.	
j) Gears and chain: Go through the gears and ensure that the derailleur does not foul the wheel.	
Chain: Check the chain will not come off the front chain wheel(s) or come off and jam between the smallest rear sprocket and the frame.	
Hub gears: Check that the gears do not slip.	
Chain tension: Chain play should not exceed 25mm at its mid-point between front and rear sprockets.	
Chain lubrication: The chain should be lightly lubricated. A very dry or rusty chain or one with stiff links is likely to break.	

Note: Carrying out these checks does not guarantee that a bike is safe, only that it is in an acceptable condition for a short ride. We recommend that you have your bicycle serviced and maintained by a properly qualified professional.

