

Newark Castle Cycling Club – Bike, Helmet and Clothing Check

BIKE – THE ‘M’ CHECK

The M-check is an easy way to make sure that your bike is safe to ride. It involves following an M shape to check five points of your bike.

What you need	Adjustments
<p>If you are going to do your own basic repairs, tools you may need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• allen keys• screwdrivers• spanners• a pump• lubricant• puncture repair kit	<p>The M-check should be done on a regular basis, and when you get used to it, it won't take longer than a few minutes to do.</p> <p>If you spot a problem while doing the M-check then tighten it, adjust it, lubricate it or pump it up... but if you are unsure how to fix it or don't have the tools, visit your local bike shop who will fix it for you and ensure that your bike is safe to ride.</p>



1. Front Wheel

- a. Is the front wheel secure? Is the quick release lever or wheel nut firmly tightened?

- b. Lift the front of your bike and spin the wheel to check that it is straight and not rubbing the brake blocks.
- c. Is the tyre inflated to the recommended pressure written on the tyre wall?
- d. Check that the tyre tread isn't worn and inspect for damage and bulges.
- e. When squeezed, are the brake levers effective?
- f. Are the brake pads worn or the cables frayed?
- g. Make sure that the brake pads line up with the metal of the wheel rim and don't scrape the rubber of tyre.
- h. If you've been using your bike for a long time, especially with lots of hills or in gritty conditions, the wheel rims can become worn out by the brake pads making your bike unsafe to ride.
- i. Is there any damage or wear to the rim or tyre?
- j. Are the spokes tight / free of defects?

2. Cockpit

- a. Hold the tyre between your knees and try to move the handlebars from side to side to check that everything is correctly tightened and nothing creaks.
- b. Is the handlebar stem correctly aligned with the front wheel?
- c. Are the stem and handlebars fully secured? Check that the handlebar stem isn't raised above the height limit mark.
- d. Hold the front brake on and try to push the bike backwards and forwards. Any knocking or ticking indicates a loose headset which will need tightening (a bike shop will do this for you).

3. Front Derailleur / Frame

- a. Inspect the frame to check for cracks or blistered paint that might indicate damage. Damaged frames need replacing. This is especially important if your bike has been in an accident. If you suspect there is a problem, take it to a bike shop.
- b. Are both pedals and the chain set moving freely and smoothly?
- c. Have a short test ride and run through your gears. Does each gear click in smoothly without the chain skipping or falling off?

4. Saddle and Seatpost

- a. Is your seat height correct? Your legs should be able to extend when pedalling but your hips shouldn't be stretching to reach the pedals. Make sure the seat post isn't raised above its height limit mark. Is the seat firmly secured (hold the front and back of the seat and wiggle it – if it moves, it needs tightening).
- b. Do your knees bend comfortably? If not, slide your seat backwards or forwards.
- c. Are your handlebars in the correct place? If not, adjust them so that you can reach them comfortably.

5. Rear of the bike

- a. Now do the same to the back wheel as you did to the front. See step 1.

If in doubt, then you can view the 'M' check video on the British Cycling website at....

<https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/knowledge/bike-kit/article/izn20131111-The-M-Check---Full-Film-0>

HELMET CHECK

All cyclists participating in a coaching session conducted by a British Cycling licensed coach must wear a cycling helmet.

The helmet should have a CE mark and conform to an appropriate standard such as BS EN 1078:1997 or SNELL B95.

Check that the helmet is fitted and worn correctly:

- Make sure it is the right way round – this is particularly important with children
- It should be placed on the top of the head with the straps unfastened. Hold your hand over your head and lean your head forward so it is nearly upside down. If the helmet is too loose it will fall off and your hand will catch it and prevent it hitting the floor and being damaged. If loose, then tighten around the head using the mechanism at the back of the helmet.
- Now fasten the strap under the chin – you should be able to put 2 fingers between the strap and chin without causing discomfort.
- The front strap should be as vertical as possible and the rear strap should join the front strap just below the ears (forming a 'V' just under the ears)
- The helmet should fit comfortably on the head – if you try to move the helmet there should be very little movement
- If you can slide the helmet off the head either backwards or forwards you need to tighten the straps – always get the cyclist to take the helmet off before adjusting their straps

CLOTHING CHECK

Look out for:

- Baggy clothing – this can get caught in moving parts.
- Trousers and tracksuit bottoms should be tucked in to prevent them becoming entangled in the chain.
- All cyclists must wear shoes, with shoe laces tucked in
- The clothing must be appropriate for the weather and environmental conditions, e.g. warmth, waterproof etc.