



BIKE CHECKS

INTRODUCTION

1

The ABCD bike check is a series of quick basic safety checks you can use before a ride.

It's not comprehensive and assumes your cycle is generally in a decent condition. If you're riding something that's new to you or hasn't been used in a while, consider giving it a more thorough check or taking it to a mechanic for a service.

(A thorough check, once or twice a year, can be a good idea anyway.)



The M Check is another series of checks you might encounter. It's a bit more detailed than the ABCD check. In both cases you'll find variations in what goes on the list!

To help you remember these ABCD checks we've woven them into a journey with five checking check-ins. Ride the journey, working your way through the city and the checks. Make some memories along the way and use these to help you remember the checks when you need them.

RIDE INFORMATION

2

You might find it useful to take a multitool or some allen keys with you so you can make minor fixes and adjustments as needed.

This ride is at least 3 miles long (you can choose to make it longer). It is mostly on cycle paths or low-traffic roads.

There are no toilets on the route, but there are supermarkets with toilet facilities nearby with a small diversion.

This version of the zine is for Lancaster, UK.

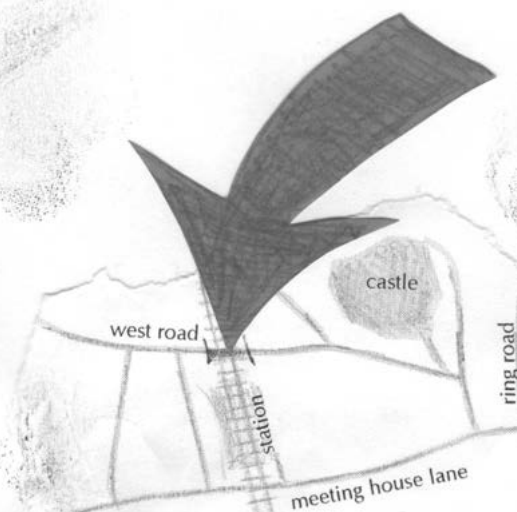
This zine is available to download from www.everydaysuperpowers.org.uk/zines/abcd-checks

Here you can also find any related zines and a blank template so you can create your own for the place where you live.

START

3

Start on the section of West Road behind Lancaster railway station (the bridge over the railway lines where it is closed to motorised traffic).



PRELUDE

4

Oh hai!

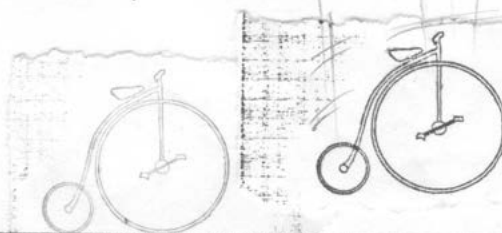
thanks for dropping by...



DROP TEST

5

This is a good way to identify any loose bolts or components that need securing.



Lift your cycle off the ground by about 10cm and allow it to drop back to the ground. Listen for any rattles or other noises that don't sound quite right.



NO MUDGUARDS

NO CHAIN

NO PROBLEM!

Mudguards might go ptwang a bit and, depending on what gear you're in, your chain might slap on the chainstay (the part of the frame between the pedals and the rear axle). This is normal.

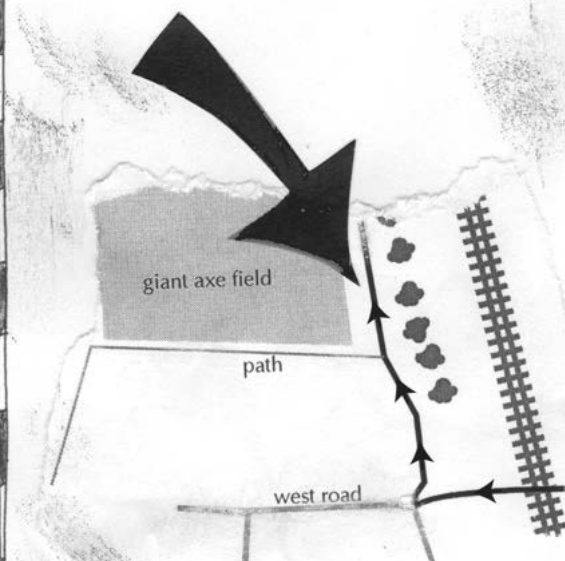


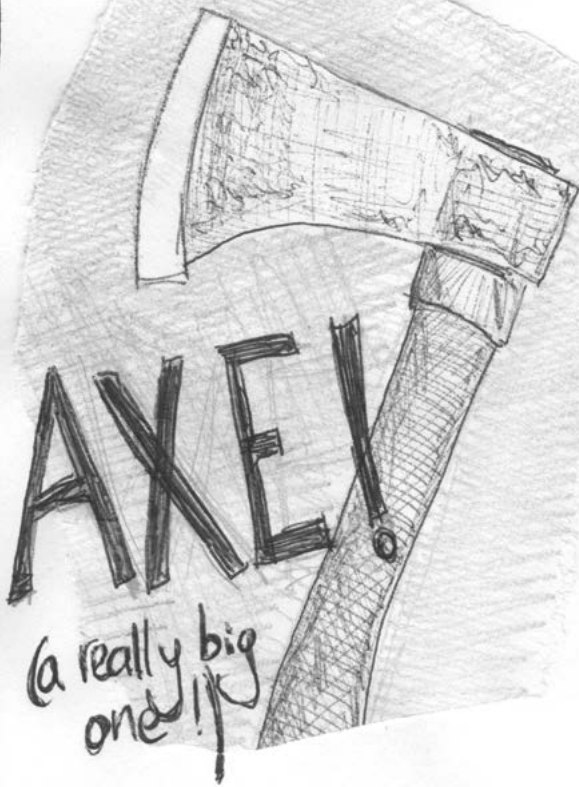
A

7

Start moving along the bridge away from the castle.

When you get to the bollards at the corner with the road, turn right along the cycle route and go down to the playing field. Find a good place to stop.

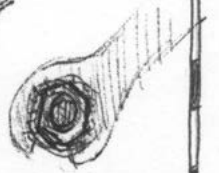




air

Squeeze your tyres to make sure there is enough air in them.

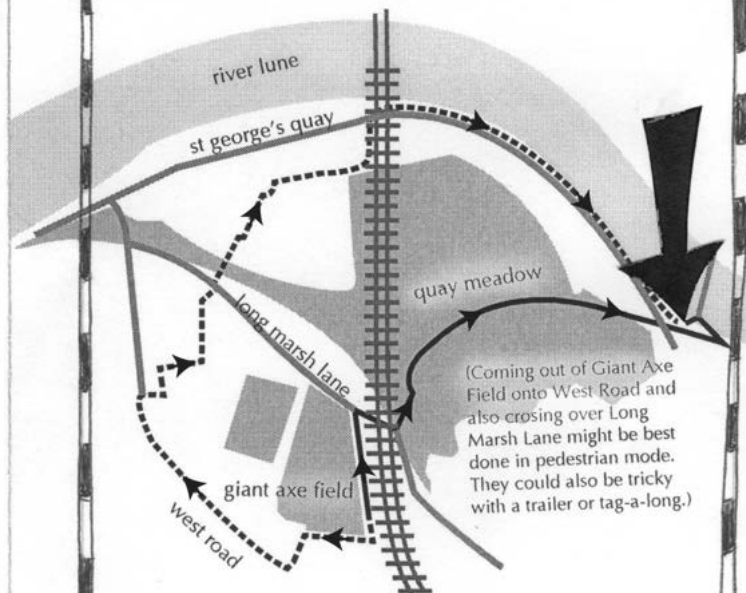
If you have a pump with a gauge, you can inflate your tyres to within the range specified on the side of the tyre. For most purposes the tyres should be hard enough that you can't push the tyre in.



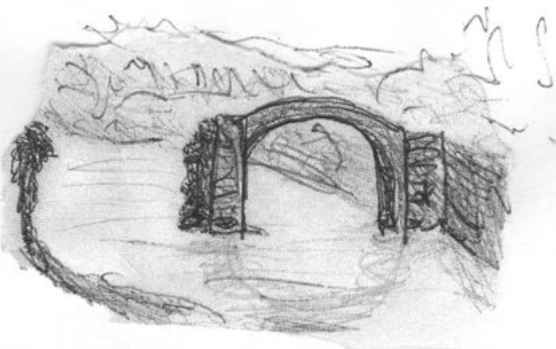
While you're looking at your wheels, make sure the quick releases or nuts at the axles are done up tight and that the wheels are spinning freely.



Either continue on the cycle path (solid line) along the edge of the field, under the railway bridge and around the base of the castle's hill through Quay Meadow to Millennium Bridge, or head back out onto West Road, turn right into Marsh Street and wiggle through the residential areas along the ropewalks to St George's Quay and along the river to Millennium Bridge.



BROCKBANK AND HIS BROKEN BRIDGE



Check out the information panel for the story of the boatbuilder who broke the bridge so he could get bigger boats through.

brakes

Test your brakes work effectively by standing next to your bike and checking each in turn.



- 1) Squeeze the lever for the front brake and push your bike forward. The front wheel should stay where it is and the back wheel should lift up in the air.
- 2) Squeeze the lever for the back brake and pull your bike backwards. The back wheel should stay where it is and the front wheel should lift up in the air.

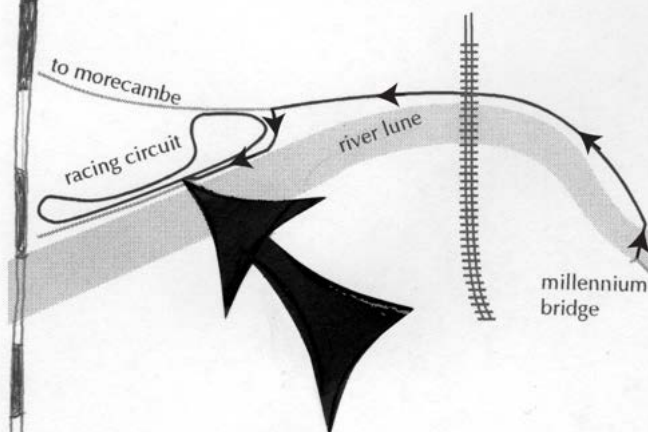
You might need to adapt this technique if you have a different style of cycle...

Bonus checks:

Make sure the brake pads aren't worn down and that rim brake pads are secured firmly and not rubbing on the tyre.



Go over Millennium Bridge to the other side of the river, turn left and follow the cycle path under the railway bridge. Take the first left and then make your way onto the cycle racing circuit.



(Be careful on the leaf mulch and uneven surfaces of the cycle path, especially by the crossing and the turn to the circuit. The bridge can also be slippery in wet weather.)

Do a lap (or more!) of the track.
It doesn't matter what speed you go at.

We'd love it if you did a photo
finish of some sort and shared it
with us. Be creative!



CIRCUITS!

If the track is being used for training (usually on
Saturday mornings), just find a quiet spot under
the trees somewhere.

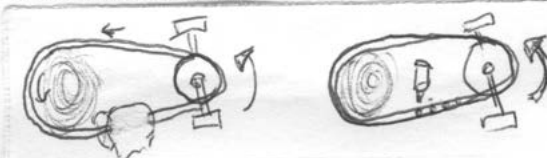


chain

Some hundred moving parts that
benefit from being looked after.

Have a look at the chain.

If it's dirty or looking really oily, turn the cranks
backwards and pull the lower run of the chain
through a cloth to clean it up as much as you can.
Chains only need a tiny amount of lube inside each
roller. If the outside bits are oily then crud will stick to
them and the chain will wear faster, causing more
serious issues later on.



If the chain looks dry or makes a squeaky chattering
noise, give it clean as above, then add a drop of chain
lube to each roller. Leave it for a while if you can, then
wipe off any excess lube with a cloth.

Chain care can be messy and take a bit of time, so is not
always best left until immediately before you plan to go for a
ride! Spare a thought for your chain when you return from a
ride instead, and try to develop some regular chain care habits.

direction

You need a D location - you get to decide where.

Here are a few suggestions:



DANGER! Count how many
danger signs you can spot along
this section of cycle path. (Might
be a good task to keep chidlers
occupied!)



DISTANCE! If you've got plenty
more miles in your legs take
yourself for a ride somewhere.

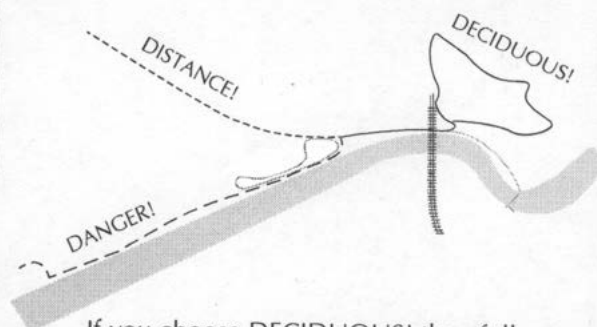


DECIDUOUS! Spend some time
with the big ol' beech trees in
Ryelands Park.

Once you've found a good, memorable,
location to stop for a bit, do the D checks
outlined on the next page.

If you choose **DISTANCE!** you can freestyle according to how far you'd like to go. If you don't know the area, or you don't want to be in with motorised traffic, then the cycle path out to Morecambe (3 miles) is a simple option.

If you choose **DANGER!** continue along the cycle path next to the river. Follow it for about 1 mile to the end at Oxcliffe Hill, then return the way you came.



If you choose **DECIDUOUS!** then follow the route back the way you came until you get to the crossing just after going under the railway bridge. Cross over into Ryelands Park and have a pootle around (~2 miles) until you find a good spot.

(Don't forget to factor in the length of the return journey!)

direction

Steering and stuff.

Stand at the front of the cycle facing back towards the saddle with the front wheel between your legs. Use your legs to hold the wheel still as you try and turn the handlebars in a steering motion. The bars shouldn't turn independently from the wheel.



Check the handlebar grips aren't loose and rotating around the handlebars and also that the ends of the handlebars aren't open. This is important to prevent nasty gouging injuries.

Is everything else on the handlebars firmly attached? You shouldn't need to check this before ~every~ ride, but it's part of generally being aware what state your cycle is in.

Bonus check: give your saddle a wiggle to check it's not slipping or tipping at the point where it clamps onto the seat post. Lean your weight on it to make sure the seatpost is not slipping or turning in the seat tube.

notes

Well done! You have worked through a series of useful safety checks AND been for a cycle ride!

Use this page to make any notes, sketches, lists etc that you want to follow up on later.



Made by Nikki Pugh in 2020 when we had to get creative about sharing rides and learning.
v1.0

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