

Press Release

DEKRA experts offer tips as the motorcycling season gets under way

Be well prepared – technically and mentally

- Warm up in familiar surroundings
- Many car drivers don't expect motorcyclists yet
- Train your mind to react properly in dangerous situations

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When the sun comes out again in spring, riders can't wait to get their motorbikes out of the garage. Now that the season is here, it's time to think about road safety. Here are some key tips from the experts at DEKRA Accident Research.

There are several things to check before you get out on the road:

- **Tires:** Although laws in some countries stipulate a minimum tread depth of just 1.6 millimeters, a much deeper one is advisable. Of course, the right tire pressure is also important. "Inadequate tire pressure causes significant changes in handling, especially on corners," says DEKRA accident researcher Luigi Ancona. If the tires have visible defects, such as damage or cracks, punctures, or dents, or if they are more than six years old, consult an expert.
- **Brakes:** For a safe ride, the brakes must also be in perfect condition. As well as checking the brake system, take a look at the brake fluid, too. It is well worth changing the brake fluid at least every two years. Some manufacturers even stipulate an annual change. On a test drive in safe surroundings with sharp, yet controlled braking maneuvers, you can tell whether the system is working reliably or not. Also remember to look in your rearview mirror before braking, not only on a test drive but always.
- **Lighting:** Prior to the start, check headlights and taillights as well as turn signals and license plate light.
- **Fluid levels:** Before going out for the first time, it is also essential to check the engine oil and coolant levels.
- **Electronics:** If the battery is reinstalled after the winter, when starting up the on-board diagnostics, you must make sure that important safety systems such as traction control and ABS are working properly. Contact your specialist garage if the vehicle electronics show any error messages.

Motorcyclists account for around 18% of all traffic fatalities in the European Union. In the USA, the figure is around 14%. The risk of being killed in a road accident is

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much higher on a motorcycle than in a car. For instance, taking into account of the number of registered vehicles, deaths of motorcyclists are around four times higher than those of car occupants in Germany. This makes it all the more important to pay special attention to safety when riding a motorcycle – right from the start of the season.

The DEKRA expert believes that **safety training** is the ideal way to prepare for the new season. This helps riders to get a feel for their bike and reacquaint themselves with the physical characteristics. For example, it teaches them to judge the right speed for approaching a bend so that they stay in the right lane when braking.

Even without safety training, DEKRA accident researcher Ancona advises bikers to **take it steady** at the beginning of the season, starting off by riding in familiar surroundings until their sense of the bike's weight and handling is back. "Of course, motorcyclists don't really lose their ability over the winter, but even an experienced biker needs time to warm up after a lengthy absence."

Motorcyclists getting back in the saddle in the spring also need to get used to **judging speed** again. "There's a difference between accelerating from zero to a hundred kph in ten seconds in a car and doing it in three seconds on a bike," says Ancona. "Sometimes, you can be shocked by the speed you're doing." That's why mental preparation is also important.

Car drivers need to adjust, too: many of them don't expect to see motorcyclists at the start of the season. That makes the risk of failing to spot a motorcyclist or misjudging distance, speed, and acceleration even higher than usual. "All road users should pay special attention to bikers. And motorcyclists themselves should beware of other people's mistakes, especially when overtaking, changing lanes, and turning."

More information on biker safety can be found in the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2020 exploring two-wheeled modes of transportation, which is available online at www.dekra-roadsafety.com/en/home/.

Caption

At the beginning of the motorbike season, DEKRA experts are calling on bikers to thoroughly prepare – technically as well as mentally.

About DEKRA

DEKRA has been active in the field of safety for more than 90 years. Founded in 1925 in Berlin as Deutscher Kraftfahrzeug-Überwachungs-Verein e.V., it is today one of the world's leading expert organizations. DEKRA SE is a subsidiary of DEKRA e.V. and manages the Group's operating business. In 2020, DEKRA generated preliminary sales totaling 3.2 billion euros. The company currently employs more than 43,000 people in approximately 60 countries on all six continents. With qualified and independent expert services, they work for safety on the road, at work and at home. These services range

from vehicle inspection and expert appraisals to claims services, industrial and building inspections, safety consultancy, testing and certification of products and systems, as well as training courses and temp work. The vision for the company's 100th birthday in 2025 is that DEKRA will be the global partner for a safe world.