

THE BARE ESSENTIALS

In days of old,
When bikers were bold
And electronic ignition
was not invented,
Bikers carried extra plugs
on their lead slugs
And breakdowns were prevented.

This old rhyme has been replaced by today's vastly improved quality. Despite the reliability of current motorcycles there are some things which remain outside of the manufacturer's control: flat tires, running out of gas, ever changing weather conditions and the remote possibility of an accident. For these and many other unforeseen hazards it is best to mimic the Boy Scout motto and "Be Prepared".

The most frequent encounter will probably be with the weather. What should you carry in addition to the basic rainsuit? For those without a full face helmet a clear Faceshield can prove handy when facing a day long deluge. "Playtex Gloves" will keep the fingers warm and "Totes" will keep the toes toasty. A Scarf and Helmet Liner will keep the draft off your neck and head while holding in body heat should the temperature fall unexpectedly. Put all this stuff in a easy carry bag so you can "grab and run" when the weather threatens.

On the road, several obstacles may threaten the traveling motorcyclist. Batteries have been known to "dump" at the most inconvenient times, so packing a pair of Battery Cables will allow you to jump start your bike in an emergency. (You can jump off a car battery, but a bike battery is always the safer bet.) Can't get it started? How about that Tow Rope you've been carrying all this time? It should be long enough and just strong enough to tow another bike. If it is too strong it can damage both bikes if either rider screws up. "Classic" Gold Wings have plenty of exposed frame work to attach the rope to.

Newer 1500's are covered with plastic so the choices are limited and extreme caution must be used when attaching to both the towed bike and the towing bike.



Flat tires are a hazard no matter what you ride. A good Tire Plug Kit can get you back on the road in no time. They are simple to use and they work on most punctures. Just remember that once you have fixed the flat you have to re-inflate the tire. Most Gold Wings have the air pump for the air shocks, but you still need an Air Hose to get the air to the tire, front or back, or to the trailer and/or sidecar. Add a good Tire Gauge to check pressure once you have inflated it.

Extra Tools are also a good idea. Long nose pliers, a magnetic rod for picking up those little dropped parts and perhaps a set of sockets, with an extension prove valuable at times. An adjustable wrench is indispensable, especially if you've added any non-metric chrome pieces. Throw in some extra fuses and don't forget the Flashlight, as breakdowns are not confined to daylight hours.

One final thing that all bikes should carry is a adequate First Aid Kit. We are not talking band-aids and some aspirin, a real and functioning first aid package, and know how to use it. Ride Safe,

LIST OF BARE ESSENTIALS

Left Pocket:

___ Emergency Card
___ Kickstand Foot
___ Swiss Knife

Side Pocket:

___ Chapstick

Left Saddlebag:

___ Tool Kit*
___ Radio Cover
___ CPR Mask
___ Gold Book
___ First Aid Kit

Trunk:

___ Tow Rope
___ Owners Manual
___ Maps
___ GWRRA Applications

Right Pocket:

___ Flashlight
___ Tire Gauge
___ Loose Change

Side Pocket:

___ Sunscreen

Right Saddlebag:

___ Tire Repair Kit
___ Rainsuit Bag*
___ Battery Cables
___ Air Hose
___ Umbrella

___ Bungee Cords
___ Sun/Driving Glasses
___ Towel
___ Matches

* Tool Kit-extra tools you may want to carry include Allen Wrenches, Magnetic Pickup, Long Nose Pliers, Sockets (Drive and Extension for same), Extra Fuses, Extra Wrenches (both American and Metric size), and a Rag.

* Rainsuit Bag-should include a scarf, faceshield (if not wearing a full face helmet), Leather Gloves, Playtex Gloves, Totes Boots, and a Helmet Liner for those chilly nights.

Note-somewhere on the Motorcycle, cleverly hidden, should be a spare key. The key should not require tools to access and should not be held on with a magnetic key holder.