

Maintenance Information

I have owned about 40 Honda, Suzuki and Yamaha scooters over the years. Given basic maintenance I've generally found them to be quite reliable. Scooter owners tend to be more hands off than motorcycle owners, which is fine as long as the maintenance still gets done. A well maintained scooter may go 50,000 miles or more before a major rebuild. A poorly maintained scooter won't even last 5000 miles.

Basically it's RTFM. Read That Fine owner's Manual, and follow the maintenance schedule.

Generic maintenance information

Your engine and transmission will love regular oil changes!

The most important thing to do is regular oil changes for four stroke engines. Two stroke engines consume their engine oil, so you don't have to worry about changing it. Our scooters only hold about a quart of engine oil. The bigger Yamaha scooters have oil filters, but the Hondas do not have filters (just a small screen). Given the small displacement (engine size) of most scooters, they tend to get run hard. The small amount of oil, lack of oil filter and high rpm usage leads to oil breakdown much quicker than you'd find in an automobile. I change my scooter oil every 1000 miles. This may sound extreme, but consider two points:

How long does it take you to go 1000 miles? Unless you are riding a 250cc scoot on the highway, it will probably take you a few months. It's not like you need to change it every week. If you are putting on a lot of highway miles, the engine is probably not being stressed with a lot of stop-and-go riding. You also are less likely to run the engine through a lot of hot/cold cycles. In this case you may be able to extend the oil change time. But I wouldn't :->

Given that most scoots only take a quart of oil - what is the cost of a quart? Even the very best synthetic oil is only \$5 a quart. If you have a 125/180/200cc Yamaha, you will also need a ~\$6 oil filter. That's only \$10! Is that cheap or what? As for oil, use a top quality oil made for smaller engines. I use a top quality synthetic oil (Castrol or Mobil One for instance). Remember that changing your oil is WAY cheaper than replacing your engine.

Note that the 80-125-150-250 Honda's have a small window in the speedometer. The window changes color from green to red every 1000 miles. It's to remind you to change the oil. After you change it, just place the key into the slot on the lower left side instrument panel and push. This will reset the indicator back to green.

What's with the transmission oil?

Believe it or not, your Honda and Yamaha scoots do have a small transmission. It's hidden away in a small area near the rear wheel. Don't forget about the tranny oil! There is only about 200cc of oil here - a very small amount. Most scooters use standard high quality engine oil and some take gear oil. If your scooter takes engine oil, it should be changed fairly frequently. The gears put a lot of shear stress on the oil, reducing its effectiveness over time. It is definitely a pain to change this oil and add the new oil, but it must be done. If not, the oil will eventually turn to a thick dark, molasses like stuff. Your bearings and gears will be very unhappy, and they will eventually fail. I once bought a Elite 150 from a nice lady who didn't change the tranny oil. The tranny on this scooter sounded horrible when it

was ridden. She was lucky it had not locked up the rear wheel when she was riding, which would have probably caused a big crash. I bought it for \$20 because she didn't want to have the tranny fixed. When I took the transmission apart, it was really in bad shape. Several gears and a few of the bearings were destroyed. I got it going again, but the cost of labor and parts was over \$200. All because \$0.25 of oil had not been changed...

Generic maintenance schedule in a nutshell:

Every 250 miles or 1 month:

- Check engine oil and battery levels. Add the proper fluid if necessary.
- Check and adjust tire pressure.
- Check all lights and horn to be sure they are working, and replace bulbs as necessary.

Every 1000 miles or 6 months, in addition to the above:

- Change engine oil on four stroke models (and oil filter if applicable).
- Check tires for wear and cracking.
- Check for smooth operation of brakes and throttle. Lube cables and pivot points as necessary
- Check all fasteners/fittings and tighten as necessary.
- On the two stroke scooters check for proper operation of the oil pump, and adjust if necessary

Every 3000 miles or 1 year, in addition to the above:

- Change the transmission oil.
- Clean out the air cleaner and dampen the foam filters with motor oil (as appropriate - foam filters only)
- Replace the spark plug (not really needed on the four strokes, but it's cheap).
- Check brake and clutch shoe linings.
- Check/clean/lubricate brake and throttle cables.
- Check drive belt for wear and cracks. Replace as necessary.
- Drain the crankcase breather tube (4 strokes only, if so equipped)

Every 5000 miles or 2 years, in addition to the above:

- Change the radiator fluid for 125, 150, 250 Hondas (Yamahas are air cooled).
- Check/adjust the valves of 4-stroke Hondas (The 125-200cc four stroke Yamahas have hydraulic valves that don't need adjusting).
- Inspect the variator (front shieve) and rollers. Clean out the old grease and re-grease.
- Inspect the clutch (rear shieve) and rollers. Clean and re-grease as needed.
- Check battery connections to make sure they are tight. Clean connections as necessary.
- Check all hoses (vacuum, fuel, oil). Make sure the connections are all still tight. Look for cracks or leaks.
- Check the steering head bearings and wheel bearings for play and wear. Adjust or replace as necessary.
- On the two stroke scooters, decarbonizes the cylinder head, cylinder, piston and muffler. Inspect the piston, rings, and