

## Guide to buying a motorcycle

**If you have been thinking about buying a new motorcycle, 2012 could be the year for you to make it happen.**

Commuters fed up with public transport, raising rail fares and traffic jams are increasingly turning to two wheels for congestion-busting, efficient and environmentally friendly transport. It is a quicker commute for the riders, and as a bike occupies far less space on the road than a car, it reduces congestion. With motorcycles and scooters typically being far more economical than a car and with fuel and insurance costs rising, it is also a cheaper option.

London based commuters who switch to bikes also have the extra advantage of being exempt from the central London Congestion Charge, as well as much cheaper parking. In central London it costs just £1 per day to park a motorcycle.

So maybe it is time you got on your bike. If you are looking to buy a bike, or just advice prior to making a purchase, make sure you visit a motorcycle dealer that belongs to the Motorcycle Retailers Association (MRA), a part of the Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMI). An MRA dealer will be able to advise you on the best bike for your needs.

**If you are new you motorcycles on just thinking about giving it a go, log onto [www.geton.co.uk](http://www.geton.co.uk) for advice on getting started.**

### ***What to look out for***

A newly registered motorcycle is sold with a warranty, usually for at least one year and often with an option to extend it for a further period. But do read the small print. On used vehicles it is the dealer that provides the warranty, probably between three and 12 months depending on the age and general condition of the bike. MRA dealers are obliged to provide a minimum level of warranty as a condition of their membership.

When comparing deals, use the on-the-road price. This is made up of the basic ex-works price, VAT, number plate, delivery and registration charges and Vehicle Excise Duty (VED).

When exploring the market for a new motorcycle always take advantage of dealer offers of free test rides and consider the following worthwhile check-list before and after purchase to make sure you have not overlooked anything.

### ***What sort of motorcycle do you want?***

- A moped?
- A scooter-style machine with a small or large engine?
- A larger, more powerful bike for longer distances?
- Will you want to carry passengers?
- Will you need to carry any goods or luggage and therefore need panniers or other carrying boxes?
- How often will you use your motorcycle?
- Do you feel comfortable when stationary? Do your feet reach the ground?
- Will you have somewhere safe to park or garage it, at work or home?

The choices can be baffling, but most motorcycle magazines, the internet or your chosen dealer should be able to answer any questions you have before you take the first step to look at and possibly test ride a motorcycle.

### ***Before purchase***

- Know the style, size and engine capacity of the bike you want

- Confirm insurance class and area cost
- Check that the price you see is the price you pay
- Fully understand the deposit terms, conditions of sale, any finance agreement including interest charges and the trade-in price on your existing motorcycle (if you have one) and how long that price can be maintained

### ***Take a test ride***

Ask for a test ride - many people do not. If you are not a motorcycle expert, take a knowledgeable friend along with you.

- Is the seating position comfortable?
- Do you feel well balanced when riding the machine?
- Are you comfortable with all the controls and switchgear?
- How are the road handling and the brakes?
- Does the engine feel and sound smooth and responsive?

Ask the dealer about a helmet, boots, gloves, protective clothing and security devices. It makes sense to invest in good quality protective clothing that will keep you safe in the event of an accident and keep you comfortable throughout the year. If the motorcycle you have tested and the advice you have had from the dealer fulfils your requirements you should feel confident about buying the bike.

### ***Buying the motorcycle***

Before buying decide how to pay.

- You can usually pay by cash, cheque, bankers draft, or on your credit card
- Finance deals let you pay by instalments, spreading the cost over a number of years after which you can trade or keep the motorcycle. Your dealer may be able to offer you other payment options and access to special finance offers so it is worth checking what is available before you decide

### ***At delivery***

- Ensure you are given full familiarisation of the vehicle controls
- Get a copy of the pre-delivery inspection form
- Make sure the vehicle is taxed
- Check rider's instruction book
- Check for any scratches or small dents
- Check for any tools that should be included
- Check lights, steering lock, and security (if supplied or fitted)
- Check tax and insurance documents
- Check invoice is completed correctly
- Check the insurance cover note if required

Remember that your new acquisition will eventually need a service, and it is vital when having a service or any form of work carried out on your bike to use a reputable dealer. It is your choice whether to return to the dealer who sold you the bike or use a local independent garage. If you have a warranty, particularly an extended warranty, check the small print to ensure it is not invalidated by using a different dealer.

If you have access to the internet, you can search for a member at [www.rmif.co.uk](http://www.rmif.co.uk), and by clicking on Find A Service.

You can also log on to the website if you are looking to buy or sell a new or used motorcycle or a car, get a vehicle serviced or repaired, attend a vehicle auction, find a petrol retailer or a cherished number plate dealer.

Shop around and you will be sure to find an outstanding deal on a new motorcycle for 2010. Don't miss out.