

Maintenance Guide



When to maintain your chain?

Maintenance depends very much on the conditions you ride in, obviously wet, off-road, dusty or muddy conditions require a more intensive schedule than dry and smooth roads.

Signs to look for:

- Increased noise level (dry rattling chain)
- Reduction of shifting function;
- Chain-Suck (chain sticking to the small/middle front chain ring);
- Squeaking noises from the drive-train.

For road use, inspect your chain at least once every month or every 250 kilometres (150 miles).
For off road use, inspect your chain at least once every 100 kilometres (60 miles).

Cleaning

- Clean your chain after every ride, especially after riding in wet conditions.
- Always use a piece of dry cloth to clean the chain.
- Do not forget the sprockets, front changer and derailleur pulleys.
- To remove mud or sand, use the bristle brush (which comes with every 120ml packing of KMC's chain lube Pro), use light soapy warm water, if necessary.
- Do not use acidic or alkali based detergents (such as rust cleaners), these can damage the chain and may cause breakage.
- Do not dip your chain in (aggressive) degreasers - they remove the remaining grease from the chain's bearings, and may cause cracks. They are also bad for our environment.
- If the chain is really dirty and difficult to clean, besides using a brush for the inside, try putting some solvent on a cloth and use it to clean the chain's exterior.
- Try to avoid a so-called 'chain washing machine' in combination with solvent. This will instantly ruin your chain.
- Some lubricant brands advise you to completely degrease the chain, KMC does not recommend this

In general, one of our Long Life or Hi-performance (X and X-SL) chains will give you the best durability and performance.

We are often asked: "How many kilometres can I expect out of a chain?". Well, according to our road test results, there is a wide range of chain life varying from 1000 km (heavy duty MTB) to 17000 km (Road Racing).

Obviously chain wear depends on the individual circumstances:

- Usage (performance, shifting frequency, chain line)
- Conditions (terrain, wet, dry, mud, water, salt)
- Rider's strength
- Degree of maintenance

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Lubrication

- Lubricate the chain whenever necessary and after you clean it.
- Before lubricating, make sure the chain is dry.
- Use a lubricant which initially penetrates the chain's bearing. In this way you can reach the chain parts which are most sensitive to wear.
- Make sure you are using the appropriate lubricant - if using an aerosol you should test it by spraying some on your hand - first it feels like water (penetration), after some time it should become sticky or dry (durable lubrication), KMC recommends it's Chain Lube Original.
- In order to avoid a build-up of excess grease, apply it to the critical places only, like the rollers. This helps to reduce chain wear and noise.
- Apply just a little grease on the rest of the chain to prevent rust.
- Remove excess grease from the outside of the chain by using a cloth, this prevents a build-up of dirt and dust.
- Prepare for wet and muddy, or dry and dusty conditions, by applying some wax after lubricating the chain.
- In the case of derailleur bikes, use the same principle as above for maintaining and lubricating the derailleur pulleys, chainrings and cassette sprockets.

Before re-connecting your chain, clean the chain ends inner bearings to make sure no dirt remains, then apply some grease inside and on the connector's pins.

Finally test the chain by running and shifting the gears, to make sure the system functions perfectly.

