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The tires on your motorcycle are the most important single piece of safety equipment...So it is imperative that you keep your tires properly inflated.

Ken "Hawkeye" Glassman | *Posted June 05, 2012* Arlington Heights, IL

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The tires on your motorcycle are the most important single piece of safety equipment. Everything is riding on a contact patch that in most cases is smaller than the palm of your hand. So worn or improperly inflated tires can adversely affect the handling of the bike, and in severe cases, be downright dangerous. I remember a Dunlop tire tech telling me that whenever they go to events like Sturgis or Daytona with their service truck, 85% of the thousands of motorcycles tires that they check or service are under-inflated. That means that tires will run hotter, will wear out much faster, and can possibly cause catastrophic failures and accidents.

So it is imperative that you keep your tires properly inflated . . . and that starts with a quality tire pressure gauge. I have two models from Bikemaster because I wanted to test their ease of use on a variety of bikes.

The Bikemaster 2 in 1 Gauge not only measures the tire pressure up to 60 PSI, but has a tread depth indicator that measures the depth of the sipes of your tires. Those are the grooves that are cut into the tires, which help to disperse water on the road, and aid in traction. When they get too worn down, it's time for new rubber. So the depth gauge lets you know when your tires require replacing. The gauge's rugged rubberized construction also features a braided steel hose and a red anodized collar. It sells for 35.95

The Digital Tire Pressure Gauge has a range from zero to 100 PSI. It's a simple one-button operation – just push the button, and take the reading. The numbers are easy to read in all but the darkest conditions. The read out is in ½ lbs increments, and it automatically shuts off in 15 seconds to save the battery, which they say is good for 3,000 measurements. It sells for \$17.95

So which one should you buy? Well they both took accurate pressure readings, but for older eyes like mine, the Digital Gauge made it easier to see the readouts. . But the tilt angle of the head of the gauge made it difficult to get it onto the front tire's valve stem on my Ninja 650 R because of the dual disc brake rotors being so close to the edge of the wheel. It was hard fitting the gauge in there at an acceptable angle. But the rear tire has a valve stem which comes up and has a 90-degree bend, so it

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The 2 in 1 Gauge, has its head attached to the red anodized collar at a right angle, so it was much easier to get to the front tire valve stem on the Ninja. And it was also easier to get to both the front and rear tire stems on my Triumph America.

I also had no problem working either gauge on a variety of automobile tires. So all I can tell you is that both work well to give accurate tire pressure readings, but the 2 in 1 Gauge will be easier to use on almost every motorcycle tire, and it includes the tread depth gauge. The Digital gauge may be more difficult on some bike tires, especially fronts with dual discs, but it costs half the price. One thing I have decided is that the next time I have new tires put on ANY of my own bikes, I will ask for the right angle valve stems to be installed to make it easier every time I check tire pressure.

BikeMaster products can be see on their web site at www.bikemaster.com and are distributed through Tucker Rocky, so they can be ordered at virtually all motorcycle dealerships.


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