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# After Washing A Dirt Bike

## It just looks so much better.... by Stuart Kaufman

In the midst of washing a dirt bike, how many times have you heard; Why are you even washing it? All you're going to do is take it out and get it all dirty again. It's alright, they just don't understand.

I am going to show you the best tips for washing a dirt bike that I have learned through the years that will get your dirt bikes clean and looking all sporty again in no time so you can get on with the maintenance and making sure everything is the way it is supposed to be.

You may be thinking that you don't need any help on washing a dirt bike but I promise you., if you review this article carefully you may just find out that there are a few things you probably have not thought of.

Below I have broken this down into a few sections;

"Before things get wet" is where I am going to give you some tips on keeping water out of the intake and keeping the silencer packing dry as well as what to bring with you when washing a dirt bike. Then you have...

"Once you turn the water on" Well, this is the stuff to know that will get it clean in all the areas that still have dirt lurking from the last cleaning attempt and lastly;

"After you turn the water off" is what to do after washing a dirt bike so as to prevent corrosion of electrical connections and tips for keeping everything lubricated and in check.

Alright, Ready to do this? lets do it!!

Before things get wet:

First, A pressure washer is perfectly alright to use when washing a dirt bike, contrary to what you may have heard. As long as you plan on using common sense with the pressure and performing periodic maintenance on your swingarm pivot and linkage bearings as well as your steering head bearings you will be alright. Due to the fact that pressure washers have a tendency to force dirt and grime past the seals that are keeping the lubricant inside these pivot areas the need for more frequent maintenance will become necessary if using a pressure washer.

Before you start spraying water everywhere there are some things you need to cover such as the intake tract and exhaust.

First, access and remove the air filter while ensuring no dirt or particles fall into the intake tract during the removal of the air filter. Then stuff a clean rag inside the air tract. Next, using a clean rag, wipe the grease or dirt and other contaminants away from the sealing area where the air filter flange seals to the air box then install an air box cover to cover the opening.

Once you have the air tract into the engine sealed it is important to keep the water out of the exhaust and from ruining the packing.

There are a multitude of silencer plugs available to cover the opening at the rear of your silencer while washing a dirt bike. Problem is that most will still allow water entry during washing so I have found it convenient to use duct tape to cover the exhaust while washing a dirt bike and this works best by "doubling-up" the tape using two layers effectively ensuring water does not penetrate the tape and absorb into the silencer packing thereby ruining the packing. The duct tape may look "ghetto" but it is only for washing purposes and is effective.

For a cleaner I use "Simple Green" which is a commonly available concentrated cleaner available at most home improvement stores as well as auto parts outlets and does not tarnish aluminum the way that other "purple cleaners" do. In addition to the cleaner chosen you will also need a sponge, a variety of brushes and 3M Scotch brite for the tough areas and aluminum to achieve beautiful results.

Once you turn the water on:

Begin washing a dirt bike with first wetting everything down and trying to dislodge a majority of the built up mud and grime with water pressure alone using care not to force dirt into the swingarm bearings, linkage bearings, steering head bearings

or axle seals. Then use the simple green in full concentration (or the cleaner of your choice) applied from a hand held pump sprayer and apply it liberally all over the bike focusing on the areas you will need it to soak in such as the swingarm and linkage, crankcases in the area of the countershaft sprocket, radiator shrouds, air box area and under the fenders.

Next, using your brushes, sponge and scotch brite begin cleaning by scrubbing the areas of the dirt bike that have dirt remaining rinsing with water occasionally.

A few common areas that are not generally thought of or addressed are: Under the fuel tank, between the radiator shrouds and tank or frame, underneath the rear shock bump rubber as well as the underside of the bike near the area where the carburetor and crankcase vent tubes exit and mud generally accumulates due to the presence of fuel or oil mist escaping from the vent hoses attracting dirt or other particles which accumulate in this area creating a type of fuel / oil / mud mixture.

While washing a dirt bike be sure to clean the inside and outside of the air box and ensure the drain at the bottom is clear. Be sure to exercise caution during cleaning of the outside area of the air box though as to not direct the high pressure of the power washer directly at the air box to boot seal as this could dislodge the seal here leading to the introduction of dirt or other fine particles to be drawn in to the air flow, bypassing the air filter and causing engine damage or other future costly repairs.

During rinsing of the areas you are cleaning it is a good idea to use a lower water pressure than that of a power washer and force the water through the radiators from the opposite direction of normal airflow to remove any "roost" or other build up that may be obstructing air flow through the radiators diminishing their cooling capabilities.

Once your finished cleaning the dirt bike it is time to get to the next step "After you turn the water off"

After you turn the water off:

Once your done with washing a dirt bike and the water is turned off it is important to start immediately displacing some of the water you just got everywhere.

It is critical that all the electrical connections and related components are dried to prevent corrosion of electrical connections causing excessive resistance and possibly resulting in the premature failure of expensive electrical components or possibly leaving you stranded on a trail or left sitting at the gate when it drops, either of which can be rather embarrassing.

I do this with compressed air in the following manner: Begin with directing the air at the electrical connectors on components such as the CDI unit (black box), kill switch, ignition coil and related connectors (usually near the steering stem). Next, remove the ignition cover (two-strokes) and dry the magneto and pickups of moisture with compressed air while also ensuring the breather / drain hole in this area is unobstructed (not clogged with dirt).

Note; Removal and re-installation of the ignition cover will likely require the use of a hand impact driver if secured with "Phillips" type screws and it is very important to be removed on bikes with a plastic cover due to a majority of these covers being distorted allowing easy water entry.

While the ignition cover is removed it is a good idea to look for any visual indications of a leaking crank seal (oil residue) and check for any play in the main bearings by grabbing the flywheel with your hand and feeling for any movement in any direction. You should not feel any movement using this technique, If any movement is detected using this technique it is an indication that the main bearings are worn and need replaced.

Next, using compressed air, focus on displacing water from other areas such as around the throttle housing, carburetor, pivot points and air box.

Once most of the dirt bike is dried it is important that the cover over the intake tract as well as the rag (If inserted) are removed and the intake tract / boot inspected for any dirt that may have fallen in when removing the air filter or cleaning the sealing

flange. Once the intake tract is clear of any dirt or other particles a fresh air filter should be installed and the engine should be started and ran for a few minutes so as to blow out any water that may have crept inside the engine past the air intake cover or exhaust connections.

After following the above recommendations it is strongly recommended that the oil is changed, the drive chain is lubricated and adjusted, control cables are lubricated and the throttle housing is cleared of any moisture followed with being lubricated by using a dry graphite powder and ensuring proper return / closing of the throttle when released as I have detailed in the articles under dirt bike maintenance.

Finally; when finished with washing a dirt bike, application of an automotive style protectant such as "Armor-All" or its equivalent on the plastics will give them a renewed look as well as making dirt less susceptible to sticking and making the dirt bike easier to clean after your next ride.

It should look so sweet now I think you should roll it into the living room!

Visit <http://www.YourAdrenalineFix.com> for more **Motocross, Off-Road and FMX Information on the Web.**

## 2010 FTR Election Results

### Office Candidate / Votes

#### Vice President:

Jack Terrell / 230  
Rocky Gavins / 166  
Allan Santor / 11

#### Treasurer:

Jonny Simpkins / 254  
Don King / 157

#### Area #1:

Will Hardin / 27  
Rocky Gavins / 1

#### Area #2:

Ragan Dickson / 13  
Gary Wyatt / 9  
Jeremy Powell / 4

#### Area #3:

Dylan Galbreath / 16

#### Area #4:

Brooks Tomblin / 16

#### Area #5:

Sam Mento / 43

#### Area #6:

Kerri Chambers / 22  
Mike Riddle / 2

#### Area #7:

Daniel White / 25  
Sandy Moss / 16  
Keith Finnerty / 12

#### Area #8:

Deborah Broderick / 31  
Phil Jordan / 7  
Jimmy Pitts / 1

#### Area #9:

Ford Snodgrass / 43  
Richard Ralston / 11

#### Area #10:

Rick Bertine / 8  
George Pollard / 2  
Thad Kolanko / 1

#### Area #11:

Ed Lukosavich / 5  
Keith Larson / 1

#### Area #12:

Frank Campbell / 6  
Duke Barwick / 4  
Ryan Mieszczeni / 1

#### Area #13:

Randy Rash / 11

## Did You Know? by AJ Davis

- 1- Jeff Ward is the only rider to win the AMA 250 Supercross and the 125, 250 & 500 National titles.
- 2- Black leathers used to be against AMA rules.
- 3- Broc Glover beat David Bailey and his water cooled works RC500 on a production based and outdated YZ490 to win the 1985 500cc National Title.
- 4- Kawasaki's works bikes are called SR's
- 5- Jean-Michel Bayle is the only rider to win the AMA 250 Supercross and the 250 & 500 Outdoor National titles in the same year.
- 6- Danny LaPorte was the first American to win the 250cc World MX Championship
- 7- Brad Lackey was the first American to win a World Motorcross title.
- 8- The first dirt bike to come with disc brakes was a Rokon. They were mechanical.
- 9- Maico once made a 760cc dirt bike. It had a red line of 5400 rpms.
- 10- Former MX Champ Jeff Ward was the 1997 Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the year.