



2007 Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ WHEELS

General information for all road and mtb wheels.
See Mag FAQ's for specific information on magnesium wheels.

Why are wheels bought on online auctions, such as eBay, not warranted?

All people selling American Classic products on online auctions like eBay are not authorized American Classic dealers. American Classic does not know where wheels sold on online auctions originate, whether they are in fact American Classic wheels, and therefore can not guarantee their quality.

Why do your wheels have weight limits?

We have different recommended weight limits for each model of wheels. These are recommendations only as there are many other factors involved which stress the wheels including; road quality, how much power a rider puts out, and how well a rider finesses a bike. American Classic road wheels are designed for use on smooth asphalt roads. American Classic MTB wheels are designed for cross country application only, no free riding. Increased stress on the wheels will reduce the lifespan of any wheel including American Classic wheels.

Do you make both Shimano, SRAM and Campagnolo compatible wheels?

Yes, our Shimano/SRAM free hub bodies are 8-9-10 speed compatible, and our Campagnolo free hub bodies are 9-10 speed compatible.

I have an American Classic wheel with a Shimano free hub body. I am switching to Campagnolo group set and want to know if the free hub bodies are interchangeable?

Yes they are interchangeable. The wheel will have to be redished by an experienced wheel builder. The cost of a new free hub body is \$79.00 plus shipping; this included 2 new bearings installed inside the body and a cam plate. You can order one through your local American Classic dealer or calling American Classic direct. An easier fix is our American Classic conversion cassette (\$95 plus shipping) which is a 10 speed cassette designed to fit a Shimano 9-speed cassette body but spaced for Campagnolo 10 speed and you do not have to redish the wheel. We offer the following sizes in steel: 11-23 and 12-25, and in limited supply limited: 12-23 and 12-28.

Do American Classic conversion cassettes work on Power Tap hubs?

Yes, our conversion cassettes work on Power Tap hubs. Our conversion cassettes do not work on older Power Tap hubs (more than 5 years old).

Do your wheels come with lock rings?

No, please use the lock rings provided with the cassette you are using. Our hubs fit the Shimano 9-10 speed lock ring and the Campagnolo 10 speed lock ring. Please note there are various sizes with Campagnolo lock rings. American Classic Campagnolo type cassette bodies take a 27.0 OD size lock ring. Lock rings need to be tight so please make sure you use a cassette tool and tighten your lockring.

After removing my cassette I have noticed that my cassette body splines are damaged from the individual cogs indenting the splines. This has made it hard to remove and remount the cassette. Do I need a new cassette body?

Many times you can save your cassette body by using a file to smooth-off the tops of the scuffed splines making the cogs easier to mount. We use aluminum free hub bodies on all our wheels to save weight. Aluminum is softer than steel and will naturally display marks from the splines over time. To limit this from happening, make sure your cassette lock ring is tight and that there is not play in your cogs (see next two questions). When loosening the lock ring always place the chain whip on the smallest cog. Failure to do so may result in stripping the cassette body which is not covered by the warranty.

I have noticed a lot of play in my Shimano 10 speed cogs when mounting them loosely on the free hub body, is this normal?

Yes, shimano changed the shape of the inside of their 10 speed cassettes by removing contact points. We have designed special clips or pins which fix the play and protect the body and these come standard as a kit with our shimano style road wheels. You do not need clips/pins for Shimano 9 speed, SRAM 9 or 10 speed or Campagnolo 9 or 10 speed cassettes. The kit contains 10 speed



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Ultegra clips, 10 speed Dura Ace clips and 10 speed 105 pins. The pin/clips are placed under the free standing cogs and will not only reduce the play but are designed to protect your free hub body from being damaged by the cogs. It is important to use these clips in conjunction with the 0.5 mm American Classic spacer (provided with wheels) and the silver Shimano cassette spacer so that you do not damage your free hub body. The 10 speed clip/pin kits are available for sale for \$14.99 plus shipping.

Do I need to use the 0.5 mm cassette spacer provided with the wheels before mounting my cassette cogs?

For Shimano 10 speed, you need to use this spacer in conjunction with the Shimano spacer provided with all 10 speed cassettes. The black American Classic spacer goes on first. For Campagnolo 10 and Shimano 9 speed you only need to use this spacer if the chain touches the spokes when in the easiest gear or once you have tightened the cassette cogs with the lock ring there is still some movement among some of the cogs.

Is maintenance really important?

Maintenance is a key factor in prolonging the life of your wheels.

Can I find more information regarding maintenance?

Yes, the Technical section on the American Classic website has information regarding repairs and maintenance.

How often do I need to have my wheels serviced?

American Classic recommends a professional bike mechanic perform a service for all wheelsets after the first 100 miles to check spoke tension and axle adjustment. Thereafter, every 2000 miles is the recommended service interval for your American Classic wheels which includes; truing and retensioning, application of grease to bearings and free hub mechanism, inspection for any wheel and tire damage (see next 4 questions). More frequent servicing may be necessary if the wheels are ridden in the rain or if the wheels are ridden on poor road surfaces. MTB wheels may require more frequent servicing depending on the amount of water the wheels go through. When cleaning your wheels avoid spraying water directly into the hub mechanism. It is important to service your products before putting them away for the winter and to inspect them again in the spring.

What is the correct tension on your wheels?

It is very important that your wheels are at the correct tension.

Here are the recommend tension ranges for American Classic Wheels:

For Alloy and Magnesium wheels: 90-110 kgf (front), 90-120kgf (rear, drive side)

For Carbons: 80-100 kgf (front), 80-100kgf (rear, drive side)

As required for dishing (rear, non-drive side).

See the support tab for further details on wheel tension.

Can I perform small repairs myself?

Many wheel repairs require specialized knowledge, tools, and experience. General mechanical aptitude may not be enough to repair your American Classic wheels. Improper repair may result in accident and injury. It is therefore important to have your American Classic wheels repaired by an American Classic authorized dealer who has experience with our wheels. Also, American Classic offers service provided by our highly qualified Technical Staff and Wheel Builders. Services include wheel rebuilds, hub maintenance, hub cassette body and bearing changes, and general repairs. 90 day guarantee on all work. Call our sales department for estimates on parts and service work. Our sales team will take your order and issue a return authorization (RA) number.

What is the purpose of using a "Twist Resist" spoke clamp tool when truing American Classic wheels?

A "Twist Resist" spoke clamp tool ensures that the spokes do not twist when tightening the spoke nipples. Failure to use this tool leads to the spokes twisting or winding up, which in turn lead to the wheel coming out of true (spokes untwisting) on your first ride. Using this tool is a key in the proper maintenance of your wheels. Please see the Technical section for a detailed description and photo of this tool.



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What kind of grease do you recommend for wheels?

We recommend synthetic grease. Please avoid white lithium grease. Some good grease manufacturers are: Pedro's, Finish Line, and Dumond Tech.

What type of bearings do you use in your wheels?

All new American Classic wheels come standard with Stainless Steel fully sealed cartridge style bearings. This is an excellent quality bearing chosen for its anti corrosion properties and smoothness. Both the bearings and the bearing race are manufactured from 440C stainless steel.

Are the bearings standard or custom bearings?

Our latest model Ultra-Light 205 cassette rear hub takes a standard 6803 C3 bearing. Please note it must be C3 because C0 type bearings may run tight. Our original style Ultra-Light 220 cassette rear hub (pre December 2003) takes a custom rear 15267 bearing, which is available from American Classic. Our latest model Micro 58 front hub takes a 688 bearing and our original style Micro 68 front hub takes a R4 bearing. All bearings are available from American Classic for sale. See the support tab to determine which front micro or rear cassette hub you have so that you can order the proper bearings and parts to fit the hub.

What is the life expectancy of the bearing in my wheels?

This is impossible to answer as there are many factors that can reduce the life of the bearings. Some of the factors include; riding in the rain, bearings that have not been regreased regularly, and the biggest factor, too tight an adjustment on the bearings.

I have been told that there should be a small amount of play in my bearings, is this true?

We recommend a very small amount of play be present when the quick release is loose for our rear wheels. Once the quick release is tight in the frame there should be no play (a whisper of play is fine). The purpose of having this play is to extend the life of your bearings and reduce friction in the hubs.

What are the advantages of going with the Ceramic bearing upgrade?

Ceramic bearings have greater hardness than steel bearings which results in longer ball life. Ceramic balls have a smoother surface finish than steel balls which means less friction when your wheel is spinning, this can translate into increased performance. Ceramic bearings require less lubrication and exhibit less lubrication degeneration, which results in increased bearing life. Our Ceramic bearings are ABEC-5 and use Silicon Nitride (Si₃N₄) ceramic balls with 440C stainless steel races. There are minimal if any weight advantages in using Ceramic bearings. A set 6 ceramic bearings (2 front and 4 rear) costs \$199.95 for road or MTB and comes standard in the magnesium wheelsets. See the support link to determine which front micro or rear cassette hub you have so that you can order the proper bearings to fit the hub.

Can the Ceramic bearings be installed in my older AC wheels?

The Ceramic bearings come in two sizes. Ceramic 688 for micro 58 hubs and Ceramic 6803c3 for all 17mm hubs. The Ceramic bearings do not fit in the older style hubs that use R4 bearings or 15267 bearings. See the support tab to determine which front micro or rear cassette hub you have so that you can order the proper bearings to fit the hub.

If I use Ceramic bearings not sold by American Classic, do I have a warranty for the product?

There are many Ceramic bearings on the market not sold by American Classic. If these bearings do not function properly in your hub or bottom bracket, American Classic can not warranty the bearing and any damage the non-AC bearings may cause to the AC product.

My clincher tires are rated up to 180 psi but I noticed on your website that you recommend a maximum inflation of only 120 psi, can I still put in 180 psi?

No. We use light weight clincher rims that can not take extreme tire pressures, even if the tire can. We recommend not going higher than 120 psi. Remember that your risk of blow-out or rim damage is increased significantly by inflating to extreme pressures. Rolling resistance of a tire on the road has been shown to actually increase with an increase in tire pressure (115 psi was found to be the optimum). There is really no good reason to inflate road bicycle tires higher than 120 psi. Harder does not equal faster.



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I want to ride low tire pressure on my MTB wheels. How low can I go?

We recommend that your tire pressure on MTB wheels does not go below 35 psi to avoid damaging your rims.

I want to ride my mtb wheels with slicks on the road. What is the maximum inflation for slicks on mtb wheels for use on the road?

120 psi or below if the tire is not rated that high.

Are the American Classic mtb rims UST rims?

No, they are clincher style rims. They can be made into a tubeless system with the use of a Stan's kit for 22mm wide rims. You can use UST tires on our rims with a tube or Stan's kit.

What brake pads do you recommend for road and mtb wheels?

We recommend a soft brake pad compound such as the kind found in all weather or wet weather pads made by Kool Stop or Swisstop. These pads are less abrasive. For carbon wheels, we recommend carbon specific brake pads, also less abrasive. We do not recommend the shimano pads that come standard on bikes.

How wide should my rim tape be on my road wheels?

Rim Model Maximum Width
420 16mm
MAG 300 16mm
SPRINT 350 16mm
VICTORY 16mm
HURRICANE 18mm
MTB 18mm
TERRAIN 20mm

Too thick a rim tape, too wide a rim tape, rim tape overlap, or rim tape that is incorrectly installed and curls up the sides, all these factors can cause the tire to pop-off the rim and/or cause a tire puncture which may lead to a serious accident.

I have been in a minor accident and my wheels seem to be fine. Are they okay to ride?

No, you should have a professional bicycle mechanic check them over to make sure there is not damage that may not be at first obvious. This includes accidents like falls, slamming your wheels in a car door, hitting pot holes, or running your bike into the garage roof.

I have crashed my wheel. Does American Classic offer a Wheel Rebuild Program?

Yes, American Classic offers service provided by our highly qualified Technical Staff and Wheel Builders. Services include wheel rebuilds, hub maintenance, hub cassette body and bearing changes, and general repairs. 90 day guarantee on all work. Call our sales department for estimates on parts and service work. Our sales team will take your order and issue a return authorization (RA) number. American Classic does not sell rims.

Can my valve stem damage my rim if I pull my hand pump off to the side?

Yes, always pull your hand pump or foot pump off gently and directly down, never to the side.

FAQ MAGNESIUM

See the Wheel FAQ's for additional information that also applies to Mag's.

Why is American Classic innovating magnesium rims?

It's about the rims. Lighter rims means reduced rotational weight resulting in overall higher performance for the cyclist. Bike companies constantly strive to reduce rim weight, a feat difficult to achieve because there must be a balance between lightness and strength. With the use of engineering, research, testing and creativity, Bill Shook, American Classic's engineer and company president, successfully brought the lightest aluminum clincher rims to the marketplace. Always forging ahead with new ideas, Bill is



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making strides with magnesium as a new rim material. Magnesium is treasured in the automotive and aerospace industries for its lightness, strength and ductility. Magnesium is lighter than aluminum and withstands impact damage better than carbon fiber. Companies have tried to use magnesium for bicycle applications but could not figure out how to work with the material. After studying the metallurgy of magnesium and using his engineering know-how, Bill successfully developed the bending technology to create the mag rims. The result is 280 gram rims that are stiff, strong, accelerate quickly, corner hard and naturally dampen high frequency road vibration for a smooth ride.

Are the 2008 mag 300's available in clincher and tubular?

Yes, the mags now come in both clincher and tubular models.

What is the difference between the 2006 and 2008 Mag 300 wheels?

The 2008 Mag 300 wheels have several improvements and new features. Through product development, Bill Shook was able to design brake tracks into the 2008 Mag 300 rims. Although brake tracks are not a new idea, Magnesium is a new unique material for making rims and each advance is a design breakthrough for the material. Further, the 2008 Mags have a wider rim profile for added stiffness and stability. All 2008 Mags come standard with AC ceramic bearings, titanium quick release skewers and wheel bags.

Do I need special brake pads with the Magnesium wheels?

Yes. The new 2008 Magnesium wheels include Kool Stop salmon color all weather brake pads. The 2006 Magnesium wheels (without brake tracks) require ceramic brake pads because the 2006 mag's had a ceramic coating over the brake tracks.

How does American Classic prevent corrosion of the Magnesium rims?

There are two protective coatings on the Mag 300 rims. Bare magnesium can corrode, so protective coating is necessary. First, the entire rim is ceramic coated, inside and out. The ceramic layer is long lasting. Then, the rim receives a matte black paint coating that soaks into the ceramic layer.

I have noticed that on my older 2006 Magnesium wheels the brake surface is wearing through. Are there any corrosion issues and Does this affect the integrity of my wheels?

There are two protective coatings on the Mag 300 rims. Bare magnesium can corrode, so protective coating is necessary. First, the entire rim is ceramic coated, inside and out. The ceramic layer is long lasting. Then, the rim receives a matte black paint coating that soaks into the ceramic layer. When you ride the 2006 Mag 300 wheels, your ceramic brake pads will wear through the paint layer, exposing the ceramic layer. This is normal and does not affect the integrity of the wheels. Any discoloration due to braking is cosmetic in the 2006 Mag 300.

Are the 2006 Mag 300 and 2008 Mag 300 wheels durable? Do they require special care?

Mag 300 rims have proved to be durable. Mag 300 wheels do not require much special care. They do require regular maintenance and service, like any American Classic wheel, to keep them in top working order (please review the previous maintenance and service FAQ's). Our only special suggestions are regarding salt and cleaners. Salt can be the most corrosive factor on the Mag 300 rims and we recommend wiping them off with a towel after rainy or wet rides. Also, if you decide to clean your Mag 300 rims, wash them in mild dish soap such as Ivory liquid and water, rather than using harsh cleaners containing ammonium or caustics.

FAQ SEATPOST

See the Support tab for information on additional products.

Are the new American Classic seatposts available?

Yes, the new AC seatposts are available in matte black in either the short length for road bikes 27.2 x 235mm or long length for compact frames, triathlon bikes or mtb's 27.2 x 350mm. 31.6 diameter will be available in 2008.

What is the torque spec for the new American Classic seatpost?

The torque spec is 94 foot pounds. See the New Seatpost installation instructions on the support link. Failure to use a torque wrench and follow the torque spec may void the warranty on your new post.



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Are the new American Classic seatposts adjustable?

Yes, they can be adjusted for and aft, side to side. The seatpost may be turned around to accommodate the forward position required for triathletes and time trialists. The saddle can be tipped slightly side to side to for riders with leg length and hip discrepancies without shimming shoes.

Are the original American Classic seatpost available?

Yes, there are some 2 piece aluminum posts still available in a variety of diameters and lengths. There are no more 27.2 2 piece posts available. These original 2 piece posts are no longer being manufactured. Please email American Classic for availability.

I have an original American Classic seatpost and need new parts. Are they available?

Yes, we have top block kits available for the 1 piece and 2 piece posts. The top blocks are sold as a kit only, not as individual pieces.

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American Classic 10 Speed Clip Kit is designed to help relieve the gouging of a cassette into an aluminum freehub body. The kit works with Shimano 10 speed cassettes only (105, Ultegra, Dura-Ace).

Note: Dura-Ace 7900 / Ultegra 6700 / 105 5700 cassettes are not compatible with this product.