



NEXT GEN E-RIDES

YOUR GUIDE ON HOW TO TEST RIDE AN EBIKE LIKE A PRO



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INTRODUCTION

Test riding is a crucial step in the buying process but for some reason is neglected all too often. The reason this step is so important is that there is only so much you can gain from photos and product descriptions. The true test is when you hop on that bike, feel the weight, how it handles and whether you get that feeling that you and the bike were meant to be (ok maybe a little dramatic but you get the picture).

It's one thing to test ride the ebike, but you also need to know what it is that you're looking for. This guidebook should help you turn up ready to test ride with a purpose. Remember this ebike needs to be right for you. It's a personal choice and only you can decide if it's right. So, let's hop on that saddle and get started cowboy! Yeehaaa!!



PREPARATION IS EVERYTHING

So, you've found the ebike of your dreams and you're booked in for a test ride. Great work but before you get too excited there are a few things you need to make sure of before you head over to ride that bad boy. Too many times I've seen people show up without the necessary equipment. It puts both parties in an awkward position. To ride or not to ride, that is the question. So, to avoid any awkward silences or potentially not being able to legally ride your ebike some prep is key.

01 BRING YOUR ID

Almost anywhere will require to be able to identify who you are. Why? Put bluntly they don't want you to ride off with their expensive ebike never to be seen again. If you show up without any identification, it's unlikely you'll be taking any ride other than straight back from whence you came! I know this is unlikely as most people carry their driver's licence with them in their wallet or purse but there are always the few who forget.

Some stricter suppliers may require you to pay a deposit which is usually refunded when the ebike is returned. I think that is a little harsh but be prepared that no test ride is the same so best to bring along the credit card with you just in case. Or better yet check with them prior to the ride so there are no nasty surprises.



02 DRESS FOR SUCCESS

No, it's not a job interview but the same principle applies, dress appropriately for your test ride. So, what do you need to wear to the test ride? Here is a short list of must have items:

- Appropriate shoes (sneakers are good but no high heels)
- A jacket if it is cold or might rain
- Comfortable clothes (shorts or tracksuit pants) – avoid any clothing that could get caught in the wheels i.e. long flowing dress or MC Hammer baggy pants
- A bike helmet – this is a legal requirement for QLD
- A water bottle – riding is thirsty work!
- Bring your mobile phone just in case you get lost or don't know the area (take down the shop address and phone number before heading out on your test ride)



03 BRING A FRIEND ALONG

There are a few reasons to bring a trusty companion along not least of all is for your safety. With more and more sellers now online, it might be that you're not test riding a bike at a store so be safe and have a friend come along. The other benefit of bringing a friend is it's way more fun going on a test ride with company and it's always good to get another unbiased opinion on the bike. Sometimes when you're caught up in the excitement you can forget to ask the right questions or remember the main reasons why you want to buy an ebike. This is where your friend can step in and ensure your head is not in the clouds and you are sticking to the plan.

If your friend is also interested in buying an ebike it could also help in obtaining a higher discount off the price. This is obviously of benefit to both parties so don't be afraid to use this to your advantage. The seller will love an extra sale and will be more than willing to discount or throw in some extras for double the sales.



04 PRE-RIDE CHECKS

Once you've provided your ID, selected the ebike you want to test now it's time for the fun to begin! However, there is one more thing you need to do before you hop on your ride. It's important to understand that it's highly likely that the demo bike will not have been serviced immediately preceding your test ride. This means that you need to do a few safety checks before hitting the road. Here is a list of important checks you should do prior to setting out:

- Are the handlebars firmly in position?
- Do both the front and rear brakes work correctly?
- Are the pedals firmly attached (there is nothing worse than having to walk your ebike back because you can't pedal your bike)
- Is the saddle/seat on the ride angle so you can comfortably ride?
- Is the saddle/seat height right for your height so you can safely stand when stopping without your feet dangling in the air?
- What is the current pedal assistance level – this is important as too high a setting could cause you to lose control and crash on take-off?
- Are the tyres adequately inflated (low tyre inflation levels will affect the comfort of your ride and slow you down)?
- How do you operate the lights, do they work – this may not be important for a day ride but late in the evening or on a cloudy day this is vital?
- How much charge is in the battery – the last thing you want is to run out of battery on your test ride?

If you have any concerns about any of the above let the seller know and if not satisfied request either another ebike to ride or for the issue to be resolved prior to setting off.

05 BIKE CONTROLS OVERVIEW

Request a rundown on how to operate the ebike. Even if you have ridden an ebike before it's worth knowing what all the buttons do so you can get the most out of your test ride. Each model is different so don't assume anything. The key controls to understand are:

1. On/off button for LCD display
2. Run down on LCD display settings (speed, battery life, pedal assist gear etc.)
3. Key ignition – normally located on battery
4. Pedal assist control settings
5. Gear lever settings (if applicable)
6. Throttle-assist lever or throttle (if applicable)
7. How to adjust seat/saddle angle and or height
8. How to adjust handlebars to suit your height (if applicable)
9. Front suspension adjustment (if applicable)
10. Brakes (front and rear)

If you are a first time rider, just take a little more time getting familiar with the bike and ensuring the set up is suitable for your needs. When taking off take particular care as the thrust of the bike may take you by surprise at first. Ensure you select a low pedal assist setting to minimise the initial acceleration. Also ensure that the gear is not too high or too low so that you don't either pedal like you're in quicksand or have to stand up to gain any speed.



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THE TEST RIDE

Some sellers may request to accompany you on the ride. This may either be a company policy or to help you navigate unfamiliar surroundings. This can alleviate a lot of stress if you are nervous about riding the bike or not sure which direction to take. If you feel safe, then it may be a chance to really test the bike to the fullest and ask more questions as you ride along.

The key to the test ride is to understand how the bike performs going up a hill and equally importantly going down a hill. Some ebikes will slow you down on the downhills and some will act just like a standard bike and allow you to coast down the hill at an uninterrupted speed. It's important that you get the desired ride to suit your needs. Don't settle if you aren't happy with how the bike performs.

The key things to test out on your ride are:

- Riding uphill
- Riding downhill
- Riding with no pedal assistance (this will help you feel the weight of the bike, the motor should not slow you down or resist your pedalling)
- Test the throttle-assist (if applicable)
- Test the stopping time of the brakes (this is important to understand for your own safety)
- Listen for brake noises
- Listen to the sound of the motor
- Listen for any noises of the bike components, does it rattle?
- How comfortable is the seat/saddle?
- Do you enjoy riding the bike, does it bring you joy?



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THE DEBRIEF

When you return from the test ride don't give the game away. Even if you loved this bike you need to get yourself composed and put on your game face. Even if it's hard wipe the smile of your face and get serious.

Maybe even sit outside the store for a while before walking back in. It's also important to remember any questions or concerns you had that may have come up on the ride.

If you can't remember what to ask here is a short list of questions that should be addressed by the seller so that you have a full understanding of what you are getting so that you can ensure you can make an informed decision:



- What is the expected range of the bike (based on moderate pedal-assist setting)?
- How long does the battery take to charge?
- How easy is it to replace the battery?
- What is the warranty for this bike – note this may be different for certain bike components (i.e. frame, electrics, battery)?
- What accessories do I need that aren't included on this bike?
- Is there any model you sell that you think is more suited to me?
- How much does the bike weigh?

It's important that you have all the facts prior to negotiating a price so you have a thorough understanding of what you're buying. Which leads us to the final step in the process...

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THE NEGOTIATION

There is an old saying, “if you don't ask, you don't get”. If you enjoyed the ride that will also be uplifting for the seller. At the end of the day, we're all humans and seeing someone enjoy themselves should also bring joy to the seller (unless they are a grumpy pants). After all that's what ebike riding is all about, bringing some much-needed happiness to someone's day.

Don't be afraid to ask what their best price is. Some retails may have fixed pricing and little room to move but it won't hurt you asking. If you get a negative on the price then see if they can throw some much-needed accessories in, maybe some rear-view mirrors, a helmet, or a bike lock.

If you love the ebike, there's also no harm in committing to buying it. Waiting around for the ebike to come down in price may not be the best tactic given how low stock is currently. Don't be afraid to just go for it. Be brave and join the ebike revolution!

Should you choose to keep researching, take this experience and use it to narrow your search down further. Sometimes you don't know what you want until you find out what you don't want. Most of all enjoy the experience and stay safe!

