

What Gear Oil to Use for Motorcycle Chain? (Complete Guide)

As a motorcyclist, you know how essential chain lube is. Regular lubrication and maintenance of motorcycle chains ensure that you have a trouble-free, smooth ride.

Chain lube helps avoid minor as well as considerable problems with the chain. It will increase the life of the chain, giving the desired performance without causing an unstable riding experience.

The best chain lube for your bike will depend upon your motorcycle and its chain requirement.

However, choosing the right chain lube plays a critical role in maintaining the long-term condition of your bike's chain. But is it efficient to use gear oil to lube your motorcycle chain?

This article discovers what gear oil to use for motorcycle chains. Read on to find the most suitable gear oil for your bike's chain.

How to Choose Chain Lube for a Motorcycle?

Mainly there are two types of chains that require different chain lubes for their lubrication.

Modern motorcycles have O-ring chains, whereas old motorcycles have standard chains with simple roller chains.

O-rings are sealed chains, and their inner and outer plates have a row of tiny circular seals between them.

Older chains are unsealed without rubber rings, much like a high-strength bicycle chain. O-rings chains need good coating, while standard chains require good soaking. Hence, we have to choose the lube according to the chain requirement.

What Defines Gear Oil?

Motorcycle chain lubricants are of different classes, including paste, wax-based dry, and liquid. Gear oil, engine oil, and motor oil fall in the liquid category.

They go on wet and stay wet without any drying or thickening agents. Gear oil was recommended for standard chains for decades before the O-ring chains became popular.

Modern bikes also need the care you grew up providing the older bikes. Hence, you can also apply gear oil on O-ring chains.

Is it Ok to Use Gear Oil Instead of Chain Spray?

Yes, it's fine to use gear oil instead of chain spray. Gear oil lubricates the chain, inside and outer plates, and rollers. It has high lubricative properties and prevents rust on all these parts.

It's a quality high-pressure viscous chain lube and does not contain detergent additives like engine oil. This makes gear oil unresistant to water washout.

Unlike chain spray, it doesn't carry aerosol making it unharmed to chain rubbers. Gear oil of 75-90 grade does not splatter at a high rate because of its thickness.

You must clean it every 300 miles/500 kilometers to make it last longer on your motorcycle chain.

Best Gear Oil for Motorcycle Chain

90 grade is the preferable gear oil to keep the chain lubricated for roughly 500-700 kilometers if the chain cover is on. You can also use 140-grade oil to lube every 800-1200 km.

It properly sticks to the chains because of its thickness. Clean the chain when it appears greasy, sticky, and dry.

There's no specific need to clean it every 500km. You can check out the following options available in the market:

- Motul
- Dupont
- Yamalube
- 3M
- BEL-RAY

- MAXIMA

Best Way to Lubricate the Chain

Follow these steps to ensure proper cleaning of your motorcycle chain:

- Before applying gear oil, clean the chain with diesel and wipe it with a cloth.
- To penetrate the lubricant to all parts of the chain, you need to remove the chain and dip it in a pot of 90-grade oil.
- Keep the chain inside the pot for 10 minutes.
- Take it out and hang for half an hour to ensure all the excess oil drips out.
- Lastly, put the chain back on.

You can simply put the oil with the help of a brush if you don't want to lubricate using the above-mentioned steps. To avoid rusting, ensure to apply a coat of oil on each side of the chain.

Alternatives to Gear Oil

If you are unable to find 90W gear oil, then you can opt for the following options:

WD-40:

It is a lubricant spray that is easier to use than gear oil. WD-40 protects the chain from corrosion and rust.

However, the downside is it is expensive and requires a lot of WD-40 spray to clean the entire chain.

stroke oil:

It is also the best option to lubricate the chain. But it is only good enough for 400-500 kilometers.

FAQ's

Can I use Gear Oil on Motorcycle Chain?

Yes, you can use gear oil on a motorcycle chain depending upon its type and condition.

Which Oil is Best for Motorcycle Chain?

These are some of the best oils you can use:

- Motul
- Dupont
- Yamalube
- 3M
- BEL-RAY
- MAXIMA

How do you Lubricate a Motorcycle Chain with Gear Oil?

You can apply the coat of oil on every side of the chain with the help of a brush. Moreover, you can also use the method that we have discussed before.

Is Dry Lube Better than Gear Oil?

Dry lubes are low viscosity lubricants. They result in attracting fewer contaminants and lower friction while giving greater efficiency. Dry lubes are often easily washed off by puddle sand rain which is the only disadvantage.

Can I use gear oil on my chain?

I don't have any chain oil right now, but I have some gear oil left over from working on my car. Would it be an effective chain lubricant? It's listed as 80W90, but reading the Wikipedia article suggests that that's not equivalent to motor oil viscosity ratings.

asked May 29, 2012 at 17:34



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Short answer: No, you shouldn't. Heavy oils attract too much dirt, grit and grime which will damage the useful life of your chain.

You need a light lubricant which will wick it's way into the internals of the chain, rather than simply coating the external portion of the chain.

A good Teflon carrier lube like the Finish Line Teflon works well, lasts a good while and doesn't pick up dirt when properly applied. Using something like that will extend the useful life of your chain.

Gear oil is too thick, and designed for a higher heat production than you get on a pedal driven bicycle. It relies on engine heat, and the gears moving at high speed to produce enough friction to reduce the viscosity of the oil enough to be thin enough to flow as a good lubricant.

It would be better than nothing, but hardly a good choice.

answered May 29, 2012 at 19:09



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Short answer: yes, you can. I've been doing it for years and my chains are lasting very long compared to ancient times when I used other stuff. Only potential caveat is that it is not the cleanest oil you'll ever use, but neither are the similar, much more expensive "wet" oils in the market (namely FinishLine Green). One liter of gearbox will cost a few bucks and last for the rest of your life.

Long answer:

- Who said motor oil is good for chains? ;o)
- The owner's instruction manual from my former motorcycle (a Honda 200cc one) said explicitly to use gearbox oil on the chain. I suppose that either applications are similar (weather-exposed roller chains on two-wheeled vehicles), and if the oil is good for motorcycle, with larger torques and speeds, it should be good for bicycles too;
- Looking at the heart of the problem, roller chains need fluid, high-viscosity lubricants due to high pressure between metal parts. That's what happens on chains, that's what happens on gearboxes too. That's why FinishLine wet is viscous, and gearbox-oils are viscous too. Motor oil has a different application (hi-speed, combustion-chamber exposure).

Hope this helps!

answered May 29, 2012 at 18:18



heltonbikerheltonbiker

18.6k8 gold badges48 silver badges85 bronze badges

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You can use gear oil if you want to, it will lubricate your chain. Some thinner motor lube will tend to spray off the chain when pedaling.

I did an experiment and used chainsaw chain oil on my own chain on my fixed gear bike. It did a good job of lubricating the chain. However, it tended to pick up a lot of dirt and grime. It was also much harder to totally clean off unless I used really harsh solvents (like paint thinner).

So, I'm going to recommend buying bike specific lube. It is easier to strip and re-apply using citrus degreasers or other products (simple green) and will not pick up gunk as quickly (especially dry lubes).

However, I'm not going to convince everybody. Chain maintenance is a religious issue and everyone has their own set of beliefs about how to do it properly.

Lot's of esoterica and info about chain maintiance here: <http://sheldonbrown.com/chains.html>

answered May 29, 2012 at 19:08



BenzoBenzo

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If you have some automatic transmission oil around the garage, especially the newer transmission oil, that would be better than a heavy oil on the chain. The heavier oil will pick up and hold all kinds of dirt from the road. Even some Marvel Mystery Oil (remember that red stuff you could use for anything around the garage?), would work well on the chain.

answered Dec 13, 2012 at 3:07

Of course you can use gear oil on your chain. It's an extremely good high pressure viscous lubricant, and unlike engine oils, it does not contain detergent additives which make engine oil less resistant to water washout. And its not too thick - grease is used as factory lube on all new chains, and this is way thicker than oil and is an extremely good lube.

Yes, applying too much will attract dirt, but you can avoid this. Gearbox oil is my lube of choice - but with the following method:

-I thin it out 50% with paint thinners. This allows it to penetrate extremely well into every link and roller, and once dry, results in only a very thin application of the oil

-After lubing and running the chain through the gears for a minute or so, I give the chain a good wipe to remove any excess oil. Wipe again after the first ride.

I get over 500 km between re-lubes, and over 8,000km out of my chains with this method. And its dirt cheap.

answered Jan 22, 2019 at 5:02



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I have use automatic transmission fluid (ATF), over the last 20 years, and it works. A Few drops of ATF can do magic on your bearings specially with the almost dry ones. Its not for a long term use, carefully use at your own risk. I usually put 2 or 3 drops over the new grease. And reaply once a month 2 drops on bearings. For the chain (pivots, calipers, pedals inside covers, etc) it can last over 3 months. With a clean chain apply and take the exceed with a towel.

Now I use the chain waxing tecnic is better for me, less cleaning.

You can Make a test, 2 drops on your bearings,(start with the pedals) be carefull when test it, because will fly like new ones.

answered Jul 4, 2019 at 8:57



Motor oil is as good as any other fantasy chain lubes.

What should be kept in mind is the motor oil is fresh and not leftover extract while servicing a vehicle. If the instructions are to re-lube (after cleaning) after every few rides, then there will not be a problem with motor oil even.

If one wants to keep the lubrication longer, the thicker the better. It however becomes heavier as time passes. so, clean more often the old lube and re-apply at shorter intervals. the motor oil gives quite a smooth ride.



andy256

17.1k4 gold badges50 silver badges81 bronze badges

answered Jun 30, 2016 at 9:36



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[:en]What is Gear oil for chain lube and How To Apply It[:] - Industrial Maintenance Chemical Supplier In Saudi Arabia

What is Gear oil for chain lube and How To Apply It?Gear oil is a type of lubricant specifically designed for use in gearboxes and other mechanicalparts that experience high levels of friction. Gear oil is usually thicker and heavier than othertypes of lubricants, and it contains special

additives to protect against wear and tear. Gear oil chain lube is essential for keeping your gearbox running smoothly and reducing wear on the gears. Gear oil typically needs to be changed more frequently than other types of lubricants, so it's important to check your owner's manual for the recommended interval. You can usually tell when your gear oil needs to be changed because it will start to look dark and dirty. Gear oil is used for many applications including:

1. The gear oil helps to keep the chain lubricated and prevents it from rusting.
2. Reducing friction.
3. Preventing wear.
4. Gear oil chain lube helps in extending the life of chains and gears by providing a lubricating barrier between the two surfaces. This prevents metal-on-metal contact, which can wear down both surfaces over time.

How to apply gear oil for chain lube? You will want to apply the gear oil to the inside of the chain, using a clean cloth or brush to spread it evenly. Once the oil is applied, you will need to rotate the chain a few times to work it in and then wipe off any excess gear oil from the side of the sprockets. Applied, you will need to rotate the chain a few times to work it in and then wipe off any excess gear oil from the side of the sprockets.