

My theory on packing for Adventure Motorcycle Riding

Rider: Doug Printz, El Dorado Hills

Motorcycle: R1200GS

Every Ride

I never know where I'm going to wind up when I take off on a motorcycle ride, so at a minimum, I pack enough gear to take care of any common problems I could run into. I run with a set of 28 liter tank panniers made by a company called Mountain Sun Touring Company, a medium MotoFizz seat bag and a small tank bag.

I carry most of my tools and repair equipment in my tank panniers – the contents of each side is shown after this discussion. Fully loaded as shown, these panniers weigh a total of 30 pounds, 16 pounds for the left pannier and 14 for the right. My thinking is that this isn't much more additional weight than the extra fuel carried by a GSA. Additionally, the weight is forward and not too high.

In my tank bag I carry very little – a case for my glasses, maps, spare headlight bulb, rag and small spray bottle to clean my helmet visor, a couple of energy bars, maybe some other misc. stuff.

In the side pockets of my seat bag I carry a few small tools I don't want to dig for every time; a tire pressure gauge, small crescent wrench for mirrors which seem to get knocked loose a lot, side cutters, a pair of pliers, and a Leatherman utility knife. The top flap has a pocket that I use to keep my paperwork: BMW user's manual, registration, and proof of insurance. In the bag itself, I carry my extra gloves (light or heavy), coat liner, rain gear, and controller for my Gerbings gear. When I stop to eat or leave my bike for some other reason, I use the seat bag to stash my GPS, SPOT, and other gear I don't want some bozo walking off with. Except for the shortest of rides, I carry a couple of 16 oz water bottles in the holders on the MotoFizz seat bag.

On my person I carry my cell phone, camera, Swiss Army knife, wallet, my Camel Back except for very short rides, and my SPOT. I want the SPOT where I can reach it if I happen to crash when I'm alone and can't get to my bike. I also wear a whistle on a chain around my neck which also has a card containing my vital information.

I also carry a 30 foot, 800 lb test, tow rope under the seat where the stock tool kit was originally stored.

I consider all of the above gear to be essential and this is the minimum amount of gear I carry.

Overnight Trips

The only thing I would add is a change of underwear and socks, a toothbrush and my cell phone charger to my seat bag. If I was going to shoot some movies, I would also put my movie camera in the seat bag.

Multi-day Trips

I put my Jesse Bags on for the additional clothing and gear required for several days. I usually pack my laptop to download any video I might shoot together with the cords required to charge it. I would also carry all the battery chargers for my cell phone, camera, and movie camera. I also bring a quart of oil in case I need to top it off.

Multi-day Trips – Camping

If I'm planning to camp, I add a dry bag to pack my sleeping bag, a pillow, towels, tent poles, Kermit chair, and maybe some odds and ends. I strap my tent, ground cloth, and cot onto the top of my Jesse Bags. I also carry a shovel and a hatchet when I'm camping – in my Jesse Bags.

Added Thoughts

If I'm headed on a self supporting trip, expect to do much technical riding, and I'm going to pack all my gear all the way, I'll try to minimize what I'm carrying. For example, I wouldn't pack my Kermit Chair, or extra Levis, or extra shoes. I'd also get along with wearing the same shirt for a couple of days and trousers for more than a few days to minimize clothing.

If I'm going to something like a Rawhide Rally or Death Valley where I plan to do day trips out of a central location, I'll bring everything I can carry to make things comfortable. When it comes time to go on the rides, I'll ride with my bike set up as described in the **"Every Ride"** paragraph and stash everything else in camp or motel room.

This is how my motorcycle looks when I'm carrying the minimum amount of gear I think necessary.



This is a close up view of my 28 liter tank panniers from Mountain Sun Touring Company



CONTENTS OF LEFT TANK PANNIER



Row 1 – from left	Row 2 – from left	Row 3 – from left	Row 4 – from left	Row 5 – from left
-Siphon Hose	-Gorilla Tape	-Tool Bag	-Tool Bag	- 3/8" Ratchet
-First Aid Kit	-Matches	-Torx Set	-Metric Wrenches	- 6" extension
-Voltmeter	-Rubber Bands	-Hex Set	17,16.,15,14,13,	- 4" extension
-Leather Shoelaces	-Toilet Paper	-Electrical Tape	12,11,10,9,8, 1/4"	- 1/4" Ratchet
-Fuel Pump Bypass	-Tube Patch Kit	-Duct Tape	- 8" Zip Ties	- 4" extension
-Water Filter	-Steel Stick	-Screwdriver	- 4" Zip Ties	- Hex Sockets
-Insect Repellent		-Wire		10,8,7,6,5,4
		-Side Cutter		- Torx Sockets
		-Needle Nose Pliers		55,50,45,40,
		-6" Vice Grips		30,37,25,20
		-8" Crescent		- Metric Sockets
		-Pliers		19,15,14,13,
		-Coil/Spark Plug tool		12,11,10,9,8
		-Front Wheel tool		- Adaptor 3/8" - 1/2"
		-15 amp fuses		- Adaptor 3/8" - 1/4"
		- Oil Filler Wrench		- 3/8" Universal tool
				- 1/4" Universal tool
				- Mag Lite
				- Headlamp

CONTENTS OF RIGHT TANK PANNIER



Row 1 – from left

- Stock BMW Toolkit
- Front preload adjuster
- Torx set – 30,25,20
- 14 mm wrench
- 8 mm wrench
- Bead Breaker
- 12" Tire Irons
- 10" Tire Iron
- Jumper Cables

Row 2 – from left

- 2 Tie Downs
- Tie Down Straps
- Ratcheting Tie Down
- 19" Inner Tube
- Cable Lock

Row 3 – from left

- Tire Pump
- Hand Chainsaw
- Nuts & Bolts
- 2 Pulleys
- Tire Repair Kit
- String plugs
- String plugs

Row 4 – from left

- Xtreme Tape
- Extra Fuses
- Cell Phone Battery
- Camera Battery
- GPS Battery
- AAA Batteries
- AA Batteries
- SD Cards
- Credit Card
- Spare Keys
- Space Blanket
- Locking Carabiner