

a guide to fixing a puncture



Lift your back wheel and click your rear gears into the smallest cog at the back; this pulls away the rear mechanism and allows you to free the wheel from the chain.

Open the brakes so they don't obstruct the tyre: On a road bike there is a lever by the brake unit, on a hybrid or trail bike you need to squeeze the brakes together to release the cable, and on a mountain bike you need to slip the disc from the rotor. Don't compress the brake lever when you have removed the wheel as the disk pads may stick together!

Safely remove the wheel from the bike.

The first thing to remember is that the tyre brand (Continental, Michelin etc) should be lined up with the valve. As well as looking aesthetically pleasing, it will be a guide to the source of puncture as you will be able to trace the piercing on the tube, to the tyre.

Using a set of tyre levers, remove the tyre from the wheel on one side and pull out the inner tube.

Carefully run your fingers round the inside of the tyre to locate the cause of puncture. If you can't find anything, use a tissue to sweep any small chippings out.

Once you have found the cause of puncture – pin, thorn, glass etc, pull it out.

Check the rim tape is fully covering the spoke holes, that the valve hole isn't sharp and that the rim of the tyre is smooth.

If your tyre brand is lined up with the tube valve, you can locate the puncture by comparing the distance from the logo on the tyre, to the position of the hole.

Modern puncture repair kits have pre-glued stickers which reduce the waiting time at the side of the road. Alternatively, carry a spare tube and repair the punctured one when you get home.

Put a little air into the repaired/new inner tube. This will prevent the tube from twisting.

Line the tyre brand name over the valve hole and feed the inner tube under the tyre. Take care not to twist the tube. Don't fit the small valve cover until the end, as the tube and valve will move as you inflate the tyre.

With the tube in place, gently ease the tyre under the rim, making sure you don't nip the inner tube.

Once in place, start inflating the tyre. Check that the tube is tucked into the tyre and not protruding between the tyre and the wheel rim. Check the tyre bead is lined up right round - sometimes it can pop off around the valve hole; just press it down to even the beading around the wheel.

Make sure the valve is sticking out of the valve hole at a straight angle, not bent.

Inflate the tyre to the pressure printed on the side of the tyre and screw on the valve collar to keep the valve straight.

Fit back into the frame of the bike, making sure it is central to the frame. Reconnect the brakes and check they are connecting with the rim / the disks are catching the pads. Tighten the wheel nut or quick release skewer so it is firm, but don't force it.