

I want to go rally/touring

Part 1 - the motorcycle

Some background

I started touring/rallying not long after I got my motorcycle licence after many years of camping and hiking with Scouts. It was a natural progression to have something else do all the heavy lifting, meet new and interesting people and travel Australia.

Back then, gear was basic much like the rider so the following suggestions come from almost 40 years of riding and given this is a BMW journal the maxim what you pay for is almost what you always get – whether that's value is up to the buyer.

Disclaimer

Product and brand names are likely the ones I have used but otherwise representative of the concept. There will be cheaper, equal or more expensively priced and other alternatives in the marketplace and therefore not a recommendation. Look around and talk with others.

Your motorcycle

You have one so that is a start and pretty much all you need to go rallying. Having a reliable one will help and certainly save you from the scorn of your riding peers or providing hours of entertainment – to others - if your bike happens to stop after having arrived at the rally.

If you own an older motorcycle – anything with a carburettor, then start doing your own basic maintenance and work up from there. With the aid of a workshop manual and common tools you will (1) get to know your motorcycle and (2) have an idea on what happened if it stops and where to start looking for the fix. That said the chances are you are going to have the same roadside problems as the modern motorcycle.

Today's modern & maintained motorcycle - anything with fuel injection - rarely breaks down and if they do then you're probably looking for a trailer if you haven't been stopped by a (1) dead battery, (2) bad/no fuel, (3) flat tyre or (4) loose wire – usually related to your DIY addition before leaving home.

I have had and let lapse BMW's roadside assistance and in the past sorted myself and others out on the road, but along with the usual motoring associations there is also the National Motorcycle Alliance if you are looking at pre-paid roadside assistance. I hear the best of the lot is RACV where you register the family car/bike (covers the driver/rider) whilst you are then also covered on whatever you happen to be on and anywhere in Australia. No, you do not have to live in Victoria, a case of strength in numbers it would seem.

However, as a BMW owner you will need to take at least a pannier's worth of spares and tools. I rallied with one rider who confessed, *"I know knew nothing about mechanics, but carry the OEM workshop manual and tools so that someone else could help me out"*.

As one pannier is full of hydration fluid and small quantity of food, here is a beginners list for the other:

- Tyre pressure gauge
- Tubeless? CO2 tyre repair kit & bottle of sealant
- Tubes? Spare tubes, sealant, patches, tools including levers to get the wheel and tyre off and 12V compressor

- Disposable gloves and dishwashing liquid (beader for tubed tyres)
- Roll of duct tape and assorted cable ties
- A good quality multi-tool knife with combo pliers/wire stripper/cutter
- Assortment of nuts, bolts in size and length – found on your bike. You will be surprised at what falls off.
- A length of insulated electrical wire, crimps and plain wire to join / tie parts back together.
- Chain lube and tools to adjust the chain – do not forget a socket/spanner for that big nut.



Typical Basic Multitool

For the longer ride and if carried almost a guarantee not to be required but will give you panache as an Aussie tourer. You can always group share, but then you would not need the other 30+L pannier.

- A multi-tool kit that fits your bike (Torx, Allen, Phillip, flat). My current favourite is Aldi's combo socket set @ \$30 & one raffle prize at the BMWCCACT 38th Kosciuszko Rally.
- Spare fuses – if you still have them.
- 2 Part Epoxy metal
- Spark plugs to suit + socket to reach
- 1L engine oil to engine to suit
- Folding work mat (these really are handy)
- A clutch lever. Pity clutch and brake levers are not interchangeable.
- Clutch /throttle/brake/carburettor cables (as required). These can be run in-

place parallel to the one that won't break (tape up the ends to keep them clean)



Compact Multitool Kit

Finally, there is the global BMW rider, well then:

- Full size spanner and socket set
- Homemade jack to support the front wheel off the ground (not required for airheads)
- Spare clutch and brake levers
- Complete spare globe kit
- Torque wrench
- WD40 and Loctite
- 4L (or required oil) + filter + tool.
- 1L gearbox oil
- Fuel filter, hose and fuel pump (popular with the older fuel injected BMWs)
- New sump / fill washers
- Combo axe / hammer / mallet

- Disposable mechanic gloves, tyre bead lube (dishwashing liquid is for amateurs)
- BMW hand cleaner & moisturiser
- Spare electrical / electronic modules (the more carried the greater insurance of not being required).
- Butane torch
- OEM workshop manual
- GS911 + smart phone or even better notebook PC to communicate with
- Smart phone + Optus SatSleeve or SPOT 2 or Inreach for satellite communication with your spares supplier and/or support partner. Do not forget setting up your online account with VIN before leaving home and will save you time and satellite charges.



Serious Roadside toolkit

So you're ready to go

You have the bike, done some maintenance, packed your gear (future issue) and ready to go.

Did you really look at those tyres? The second half never lasts as long as the first half and finding your brand/type/size in country / remote areas can be a challenge. Never mind, give whatever the shop has on the shelf a go or if it's a public holiday and you still have 1500km to go then try your chance next to the closed tyre shop' scrap bin. Worked in Balranald.

If your BMW has a chain & sprocket and you are past the halfway mark on adjustment and planning the 'big trip', consider replacing both sprockets and chain before you go or at least know what part numbers or sizes you will be looking for to order in and forward delivery at that next town.



Examples of tube and tubeless tyre repair kits

Garry Smee
R1200ST, F800GS, R100RS & RnineT Urban GS