If you already have a motorcycle you have probably already considered the value of having two wheeled transportation if T-SHTF. Motorcycles have many advantages over cars and those will be amplified many times over when times get tough and the rules go out the window. If you do not have a motorcycle or license the good news is that it is not too late to make that happen.

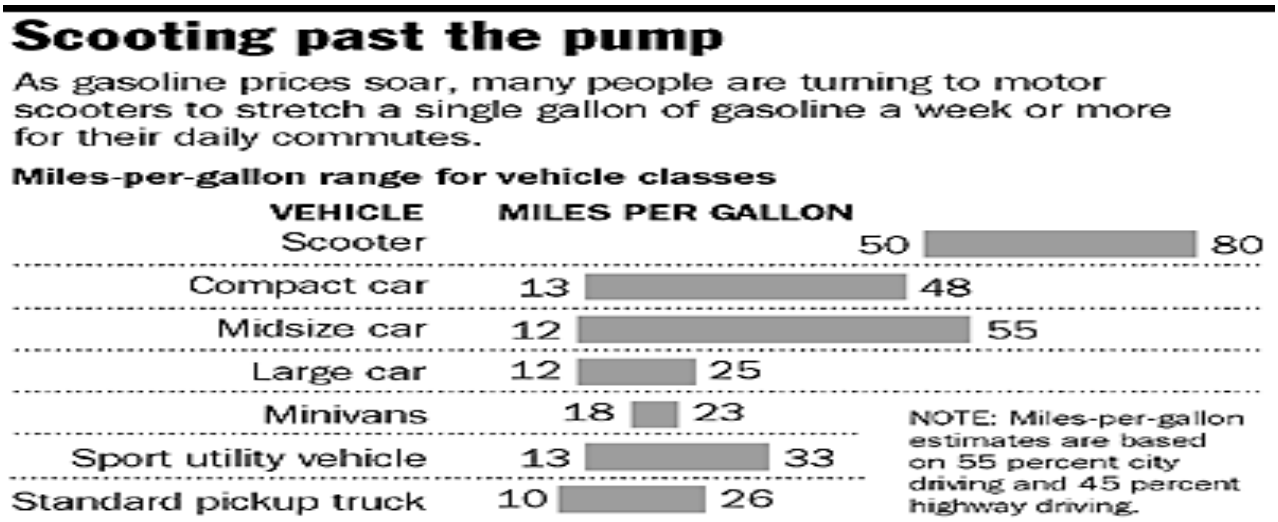
Many cities offer a Motorcycle Safety Foundation training courses, if you live in a rural area contact possibly the county sheriff department or motor vehicle licensing site, they typically will advertise these course dates/locations. Knowing how to operate a motorcycle proficiently definitely falls into the Prepper skills category, but this takes time and dedication.

Wondering why you should consider a motorcycle if T-SHTF? Here are several good reasons why:

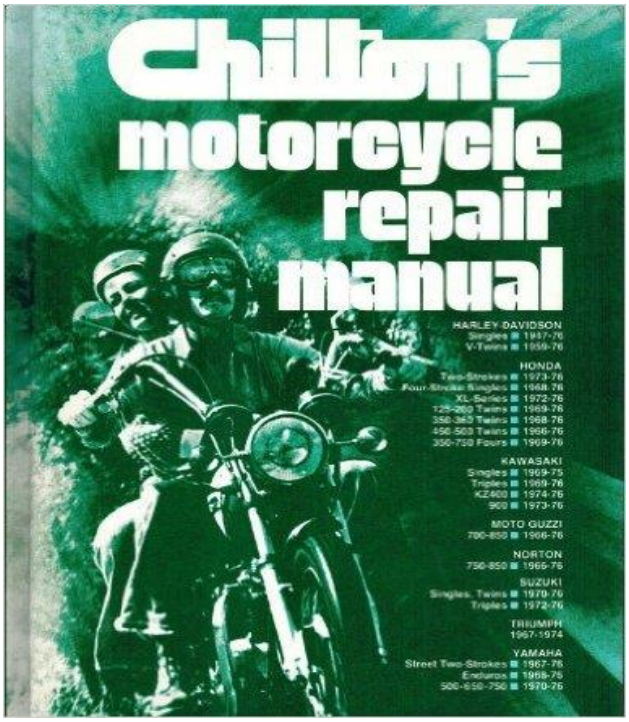
– **Evasion:** One of the main reasons why motorcycles work so well as scout vehicles or BOV is that it can run on a small amount of fuel, is light to be carried by a larger BOV and focuses mobility on on-off terrain environments. Even slower and heavier bikes can out accelerate most cars very easily. If highways are blocked with cars this does not present a problem to a motorcycle rider who can simply weave in and out of the obstacles. Ever wonder why lane splitting in states is considered a moving violation by law enforcement. Simple, if your desperate and in traffic, you SHTF two wheeler will have the distinct advantage of using either the lanes between cars, the shoulder or if the roadway has a sizeable clearing of both sides (which most state roads have built into their plans), then you are going to be motoring far quicker than Joe Snuffy in his POV. Try chasing a rider on a motorcycle with a 4×4. A good rider will be able to use the contour of the land such as a ravine or tree line to evade any chasing four wheelers. Unless you are some yuppie dune buggy driver out fitted with a rifle coupla, your chances of evading the bad guys in a chase is very high. .

– **Scouting:** Quick in and out into areas considered impassible by other vehicles. Wonder why most Special Operations units have two wheel dirt bikes in their tactical order of battle? You got it, when human intelligence is weak and a near-time assessment of the opposition forces are necessary, highly trained scouts who have the advantage of stealth and mobility, a winning combination that strengthens our forces position in a shifting combat zone. When we apply the same in SHTF, a main convoy party can keep moving as the rider-scout recons the routes ahead for dangerous choke points/roadblocks and darts back to let them know which way to go. Additionally if you were to bug in a motorcycle could be used to scout out dangers beyond the neighborhood or used to seek out essential services (medical, water, food, etc.).

– **Fuel extenders**: Motorcycles get excellent gas mileage. A standard tank usually holds 3 to 5 gallons, combine that with up to 50mpg and you've got quite a bit of riding that can be done locally off of one tank. An additional fuel bladder or small gas can, you extend your operational range significantly.



– **Mechanically Simple:** Troubleshooting a motorcycle engine, or even tearing one down to change out a part is relatively simple versus conducting the same operation on a new 4×4 SUV. It takes less than 30 minutes to remove the fairings and gas tank from most bikes, after which you pretty much have access to the entire motor and fuel delivery system. I you are like me, I typically go to Youtube, downloading these videos are going to pay off when SHTF or buying a Chilton's Motorcycle Repair Manual right off Amazon.com. Make sure you have the manual that covers your particular motorbike.



– **Versatility.** This really depends on the type of motorcycle which you own, but with the exception of the most dedicated sport bikes most two wheeled vehicles should be able to handle most road surfaces relatively well. Pavement, gravel, dirt and (if you have a dual-sport or dirtbike) even mud shouldn't present a problem giving the rider the opportunity to travel over various terrain very quickly. Many motorcycles can be outfitted with tank and saddle bags, enabling the rider to carry quite of bit of equipment.

- They are quite easy to quickly hide in a ditch or hedge when you go to ground.
- Also if you stay overnight in a house or farm building you can take the bike inside with you so as not to leave a vehicle outside advertising your location.
- Small dirt bikes can be manhandled over walls fences rocks or similar obstacles unlike a car.
- You can carry a dirt bike in the back of a pickup or van to give yourself options.
- When it breaks down (which in time many vehicles will) one person can push it back home.

– **Supply runs**: While a motorcycle cannot carry loads of gear it could be used for essential supplies (extra ammo, medical supplies, barter items). The low fuel usage and ability to navigate restricted terrain make it invaluable.

So what type of dual sport-or dirt bike should I consider?

– Certainly one that has a 4 cylinders, 2 cylinders and even 1 cylinder ranging in CC's from 250 to 1600 with HP output from 25 to 180.

– Find one that is relatively inexpensive. A used KLR can be had for around $3k, new their MSRP is around $6k. – Think small and cheap. If you are looking at your first bike, buy something you won't mind laying

down a few times because when your off-roading, your going to have a spill or two. A good off-road bike should be able to be manhandled by one person.

Avoid street bikes like the large Harley or Honda Touring bikes. Nice for on-road use, but not really practical in a SHTF event.

Have the ability to be the following:

– Street and dirt use.

– Be able to carry a passenger AND gear.

– Extended range, 200+ miles at a minimum.

– Be easy to work on, the KLR has one cylinder and has a carb.

– Readily available parts, boutique motorcycles need not apply.

– Wear good protective gear. That 10 year old helmet that your buddy had in his basement is not what you want on your head. Imagine jumping out of a moving car at 60mph while on the highway, what would you prefer to be wearing? Shorts, sneakers and a T shirt are not what I would consider proper protective equipment, even a good pair of ECU's and some knee and elbow pads are better than your street clothes. A good pair of riding gloves are also just as a necessity as your bike. Road rash and brush rash is quite common if your traveling fast and light.

What do we look for in a SHTF bike?

- Each of the bikes above can work as a survival motorcycle. Which one depends partly on you (size, weight, skill) and your locale (terrain, whether you can get a dirt bike plated, etc.).

- Motor sizes are going to differ widely across the different types of motorcycles. Cruisers and touring bikes range from around 883 cubic centimeters (cc's) to as high as 2000 cc's. These bikes are also much heavier, weighing in at between 800 and 1000 pounds.
- Mainstream sport bikes come with motors as small as 250 cc's (which we don't recommend unless you're extremely light) to as high as 1400 cc's in the Kawasaki ZZR1400. Remember that these bikes typically don't exceed 500 pounds so that's a lot of power. Anywhere between 500 and 650 cc's is more than enough power for the average person looking for a good motorcycle to use in a survival situation.
- Dirt bikes have a much smaller engine but still have plenty of power because of the way that they're built and the fact that the bikes weigh next to nothing. Anywhere from 250 cc's to 400 cc's provides plenty of power for the average adult.
- Regardless of what type of motorcycle you decide to go with, remember that they are lethal machines if you don't know what you're doing. You should most certainly take a training course and always wear safety gear that includes a minimum of a helmet, long sleeves, long pants and boots. Most states require a motorcycle certification on your driver license if you're going to ride it on the streets.
- There are also age limitation laws in some areas so make sure that you know what those are. For a motorcycle license, the age is usually the same as it is for driver licensing in that state. For off-road vehicles, laws differ.

Now what bike to choose from:

Examples of good dirt bikes include the Honda CR and CRF, the Baja, the Yamaha YZ and the Kawasaki KX. You can pick one up used for around $3K.

Most of the Japanese makers do this; they have a line that is "off-road only" and a line that is "dual sport", whereas the euro makers tend to use the same bike for both (the street legal versions have a few add ons to make them legal).

Japanese versus European bikes:

- The Japanese bikes, especially Honda, have the advantage of being very common and having a wide dealer support network.

    - For example, compare the Honda XR650R (no longer made) to the Honda XR650L. The latter is their dumbed down "dual sport" - it is a completely different bike, it is heavier, has a different lower power engine, a different transmission and no kick start (it can theoretically be retrofitted).

- European bikes (KTM/Husaberg, Husky {now owned by BMW}, Gas Gas, Beta, etc.) are superior in many ways, especially off-road, but they are not as common as the Japanese bikes and dealer support is sparse (KTM is getting better. Husaberg, made by KTM has many KTM parts). Many now have EFI (all Husbergs and many KTMs do). Increasingly you won't find them with kick starts.

Older bikes that are based on performance!

Honda XR400R: Production 1996-2003. Air-cooled engine, single overhead cam; Kick-start only; Oil carried in frame; No-tool side-access air box; Dry weight 265lb; Max power 34hp; Fuel capacity 9.5lt; Seat height 930mm. Excellent low-end rpm power delivery; Best torque; Incredibly easy to ride; Handles corners and does well on the trail. Reliable as hell and very easy to work on; Bulletproof!

Honda XRR - XR650R: its air-cooled, single-cylinder, 644cc glory since 1993. The Honda feels cramped, with low bars and a fairly tight seat-to-foot peg relationship. Tipping the bars forward from the as-delivered position alleviates some of this. Then you just keep on riding, no matter what. The 650 has a five gear box, which for most bikes now, has six. It is a trusted and true operational bike, but so many other offer better features. Also it

fuel range while economical could use a bigger tank.

Suzuki DR350: The bike is the super-sweet 349cc, single overhead cam engine. Producing only 30 horsepower at 7600 rpm, the results ought to be dull but Suzuki gearbox engineers really earned their money and the ratios are chosen to perfection. This means that every one of the 30 available horses can be used all the time. In the real world the DR will tackle really tough trails – certainly anything in the recreational trail rider's handbook – and yet will cruise along the freeway at a genuine 70 mph with another ten or so mph left for overtaking. In between the two extremes, the motor is lively and so, so user friendly that even the neophyte motorcyclist is constantly encouraged to push his or her performance envelope. There is one downside. Since the motor tends to spend a lot of its life flat out, fuel consumption is not brilliant. Anything above 45 mpg is a good day – and a bad trip is less than this. With a tiny 2.3 gallon (9 liter) fuel tank, and less than half a gallon reserve, gas stops need some thought and pre-planning.

Suzuki DR400: Available in kick or electric start; Liquid cooled, DOHC engine; Side access airbox; Dry weight of the kicker version: 260lb; Dry weight of the electric starter: 277lb; Max power 40hp; Fuel capacity 10lt; Seat height 945mm; Good low-end power; Great top-end power; Mushy suspension; The electric start version is especially rough around the corners; Cramped riding position; Known to be more suited to the road than the Honda models; very reliable

Other recommended bikes are the Honda Baja and the Yamaha WR450 or WR250

Hard to find, but true SHTF bikes that are EMP proof: The Honda CT90 and 110 are probably the best bug out bikes, very simply bullet proof motors, worldwide about 50 million have been made, so many spare parts available that you can practically buy every part online and assemble a whole bike from scratch. they are EMP proof, will get 150 mpg if ridden easy and have a huge frame mounted rack that can hold hundreds of pounds. preppers have even fitted additional racks on front downtube and there is even an available front rack. They are as extremely quiet and can easily be repaired in the field. Unfortunately, Honda doesn't make them anymore or a version of them.

CT110

CT90

Where to Buy: Unless you are a true off-road enthusiast, paying for a new bike that you will use for a SHTF is just nuts. Second hand bikes off of Craigslist or Cycletrader.com can be had for cheap.

New bikes: Gosh, there are so many bike companies that offer great bikes that I am not going to write about them. You will simply have to do your research on your own. Where to find good information on new bikes and their performance is really up to you; consider using one of these bike websites. http://www.motorcycle-usa.com/ or http://www.dirtrider.com/off-road-bikes

But wait, willing to dump more cash for more fuel economy? Check the new eCycle Hybrid Motorcycle. This thing is reported to get a whopping 150 mpg! It uses an 8kW permanent magnetic brushless CMG motor / generator and a 4-stroke gasoline engine, and it'll go 0-60 in 6 seconds, and it looks cool. You can roll around town on this gas sipper in style!

Lastly, lest we forget, if TEOTWAWKI hits and you need a battle ride, lets not forget the all too important role Harley Davidson played in World War II. Either way having that as an option when the need arises seems invaluable. Of course my go to is my 4 wheel drive pick up /SUV.

Good Preps to you!

Do I need to license my bike?

A good SHTF bike is totally useless if you can ride it on a normal day, first, like everything that you do as a prepper, you need to train using your bike in different situations. Take it to a nearby dirt track, get use to coming off a hill at partial or full throttle. Open her up in a field, you'd find that even in a flat area, there is ruts in the ground, your simply not going to open it up (that is for those stunt men that have a controlled environment).

- Get one that can be plated in whatever locale you intend to be for a while, or where you intend to live.
- Do not count on that law enforcement will ignore the fact that your bike is not street legal and plated. In some emergencies you may get away with it, in some you may not, and you don't want that ruining your experience or even if you suspect that SHTF is going to happen and lean into your plan before it happens.
- Some US states are very lax about what bikes you can plate and some are really strict. California is very strict and not just about what you can plate, but what you can ride off-road and when.