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Warning: Servicing and tuning motorcycle suspension requires special tools and knowledge. If you are unfamiliar with the proper techniques STOP and have a qualified suspension technician complete the installation.

POLISHING FORK TUBES

The cause of many fork oil seal failures can be traced to improper fork tube maintenance. Dirty water spots on the fork tubes slide under the wipers and when wetted inside the fork get wiped off by the oil seal. Eventually the contaminated oil seal leaks. If the fork tubes are clean and slippery BEFORE you ride the wipers and seals will last longer and the forks will ride more smoothly. Most riders wash their bike after the ride is complete and that is a good thing. Now let's finish the job so your wipers and oil seals will provide longer service life, reduced friction and a more responsive ride. My technique is outlined below.

Place your bike on a solid work stand that elevates the front wheel off the ground. If your forks have partial wrap around fork guards they can stay in place. If your bike has the wrap around style (newer KTM for example) you will need to remove the bolts that secure them and slide the guards up. Examine the fork tubes and notice any dried water spots and dirt residue. Water spots and stuck on dirt is very common at the bottom of the fork tubes and this is a big problem area. I like to clean the fork tube with a fairly rough shop rag. Wrap the towel around the fork leg and polish the chrome until all the spots and dirt are removed. The chrome should be clean all the way to the bottom of the tube. Now the tubes are clean let's make them slippery so the wipers and seals produce less friction and that means a smoother ride for you. I recommend using automotive wax or silicone sprayed onto a shop rag, then wiped on the fork tubes. After coating the tubes remove the bike from the stand, hold the front brake on, and push the suspension down several times. This will help to work the wipers over the treated tubes.

Replace the fork guards if you removed them and go ride.

I perform this procedure on my shop bike after every ride.