



# tech tips

## *Preparing your Scooter for Winter Storage*

Tech Tip #003  
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*Note:* For some of us it is that time of year again. The leaves are turning color and it won't be too long before old man winter is nipping at your nose. This also means that it will soon be time to put your scooter into hibernation for the winter. Putting your scooter into winter storage is not as easy as pushing it into the garage and waiting for spring to come around again. To help you, I have put together a tried and true list of things to do to keep your scooter happy while it sleeps through the winter months.

### Gas Tank

Let's start with the gas tank. I have heard many different opinions on what to do with your gas when you put the bike in storage... (fuel stabilizer, filling the tank etc.) I have found that both of these methods have drawbacks. Stabilizer can ruin the gas and make for a huge mess come spring. Filling the tank to the top can also lead to problems such as ending up with an entire tank of gasoline on your garage floor.

What I do to keep the gas tank clean and dry over the winter is drain all the gas out then I spray some WD-40 into the tank to keep it from rusting. Another good trick is to get some plastic such as a shopping bag, fold it into a square, place it over the open hole in the gas tank and then close the lid and secure it tight...presto the tank is now sealed tight (no rust no fuss).

Next you will want to drain the oil tank (if your scooter has oil injection) this will make sure you start fresh next summer. 2-cycle oil that sits over time will absorb moisture and might

"clot-up" from sitting. The best way to drain the oil is to remove the hose from the carburetor side and let the oil drain out. This will not get all the oil out but it will remove 90% of it and that is good enough.

### Carburetor and Motor

Now that we have the gas tank clean, now we need to get the carburetor and the motor ready. Let's start with the motor. You will want to start the scooter with the fuel valve in the 'OFF' position this will drain the remaining gas out of the fuel valve, fuel line and the carburetor.

The best way to clean the carburetor for long-term storage is to pull the jets out and clean them with carburetor cleaner. You should also spray some carburetor cleaner in the carburetor body to clean out any leftover gas. You can also try starting the scooter again to clear out any remaining fluids.

The next thing is an oil change. If you leave old oil in the gearbox all the dirt and deposits will settle out of the oil and sit in the bottom of the gearbox. If this happens every time you go to

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change your oil the deposits left in the gearbox will contaminate the new oil as soon as you put it in. So, it is a good idea to change your oil before you put the scooter into long-term storage. Remember to use 30-weight motor oil!

### Cylinder and Exhaust

So far we have the gas tank, oil tank and the gearbox ready for the winter. Next, we want to get the cylinder and the exhaust ready.

We will start with the exhaust first because it is easy. What you want to do is plug or cover the tail pipe. This will keep moisture from creeping up the pipe and into the cylinder. I use a small piece of plastic and some duct tape and cover the tail pipe. Easy as pie!

The cylinder is also a very straightforward prep. I remove the spark plug and spray some WD-40 or some "fogging fluid" into the cylinder. Then I take a very small amount of 2-cycle oil and pour it down the carburetor throat. This combo will lube and protect both ends of the crankshaft and cylinder. Now all you need to do is gently kick the motor over to spread the oil around the crank and cylinder. Put the spark plug back in and your all set.

### Battery

The next thing to look at is the battery (if your scooter has one). If you leave the battery in all winter it will be dead by summer and will also be ruined from sitting in the cold. The best way to store a battery for the long haul is to remove it from the scooter and bring it into the house. Put it in a safe place and put it on a

piece of wood to keep it off the floor. This will keep the battery out of the cold and will keep it semi fresh for next spring. In spring you can put on a charger and be back in business. Now an old battery might not last the winter so if you have an old battery don't be surprised if it is dead after a good recharge.

### Storage

Now we are ready to put the scooter in storage. If your going to put the scooter outside, make sure you have it covered and well protected from the elements. I do not recommend outdoor storage due to the damage that the weather can do in real short order. If you can, get it in a shed or a friend's garage. Also make sure that you do not store it on dirt or grass. The moisture will attack the body and cause rust.

Now, regardless of where you keep it you will want to put on some blocks. I use a few small 2x4s under the stand and a milk crate under the rear of the bike. This will let the suspension relax. Also, deflate the tires, including the spare. This will keep the tires from cracking over the winter.

Take care folks, and try to enjoy the weather while it lasts. I will be out to the last possible day before I need snow chains on my Allstate.

Happy scootering!

~Dr Vespa