

The Importance of Bike Safety Checks

NICA Safety Reports have shown bike safety checks (ABCDE - **A**ir, **B**rakes, **C**hain, **D**erailleur, **E**verything Else) are a crucial component in reducing mountain biking injuries.

Student-athletes, coaches and other riders are required to complete these checks at the following times:

- before team practice or other NICA activity or event
- after any crashes
- after changing a tire or any other mechanical work on the bike
- anytime a bike starts to look, sound or feel differently
- if there is a specific mechanical concern

Responding to a failed Bike Safety Check

When a bike safety check is failed whether at the trailhead or mid-ride, NICA Coaches or Event Staff will facilitate walking bikes to where they may be picked-up. If a student-athlete's bike fails a safety check, parents or guardians should follow-up with their local bike shop. Bikes failing safety checks automatically are re-checked at the aforementioned times.

To avoid walking out, NICA Student-Athletes or Coaches may choose to take on field repairs with consideration for their mechanical training and/or experience (see table):

Spectrum of Bike Mechanics for Coaches, Student-Athletes and Other NICA Participants as they Relate to Safety		
<p><u>Encouraged to learn</u> as part of NICA Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusting tire pressure • Fixing a flat tire • Lubing chain • Replacing chain • Adjusting seat post height • Cleaning bike 	<p><u>IF Student-Athletes or Coaches have assessed they have the applicable training or experience</u>, they may consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusting location of brake levers and shifters on the handlebar • Adjusting shifter cable(s) • Adjusting suspension • Adjusting headset while swapping out stems and spacers • Replacing parts with exception of working on brakes 	<p>Should be done by a certified mechanic or bike shop ONLY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brake repairs* • Including brake pad replacement*



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NICA Guide to Bike Maintenance and Repair

***Important note on brakes: Due to injuries attributed to brake failures, only bike mechanics with training and professional experience should complete brake or brake pad installation, maintenance, repair or replacement. Correspondingly, student-athletes, coaches, volunteers, staff and other riders should not attempt the above-mentioned mechanical work on brakes as part of any NICA activity or as part of their NICA team or league membership (implemented Spring 2021).**

Recommended Daily, Weekly and Annual Bike Maintenance

NICA is presently putting together a recommended guide for bike maintenance that can be completed at home and maintenance that should be referred to a local bike shop.

References:¹ [Student-Athlete Code of Conduct](#)