

Ride Anywhere

THESE BIKES WILL TAKE YOU WHEREVER YOU WANT TO GO

NEXT TIME YOU GO FOR A Sunday ride, keep an eye out for state forests, fire roads, and other off-road opportunities. Ever been tempted to take your cruiser or touring bike onto the trails? Not likely. But imagine, if you had a bike that could handle both street and dirt, how much more varied that Sunday ride could be.

More than just dirt bikes with lights, dual-purpose (also called dual-sport) motorcycles are designed with both on- and off-road capabilities. These bikes represent a compromise between two worlds: they're too heavy to be competitive dirt bikes and don't offer the same performance as street bikes, yet they're plenty competent at both kinds of riding. These motorcycles let you ride to the trails, instead of hauling a bike in a trailer. And they give you the freedom to go from street to dirt to street whenever you feel like it.

Most dual-purpose bikes are marked by 21" front wheels and all-season tires, a cross between slick street rubber and hard-core knobbies. The bikes also have longer suspension travel for soaking up bumps and dips, which makes them adept at handling everything from potholes to rocks and roots. This feature makes dual-sport bikes a good choice for urban riders or commuters who have to deal with less-than-perfect roads.

The seats are designed to let you move around easily and don't provide much long-range comfort. But, with the exception of the larger models, like the Kawasaki KLR650 and the MZ Baghira Enduro, dual-sports aren't meant for touring duty. And on trails, you're likely to spend a lot of time standing on the pegs anyway.

Key features that separate dual-sport machines from dirt bikes are the conveniences (and legal requirements) for street riding. These include an electric start, a battery, lights, and turn signals — all things that add weight, another compromise between street and dirt riding. For your reference, all of the bikes listed here are street legal.



Given the versatility, light weight, and low cost of these bikes, they're great for all kinds of riders — newbies, adventurers, and weekend warriors who like a change of pace. Even our publisher, Buzz Kanter, just bought a Suzuki DR-Z400S. In the next two issues, we'll show you a whole host of easy upgrades that turned Buzz's DR-Z into a sweet adventure touring machine. **RB**

Online Resources

Want to learn more about dual-sport bikes and riding? Check out these helpful web sites.

www.ama-cycle.org/roadride/offroad.asp

Click on the link for the 2005 Suzuki/AMA Sports Dual Sport Trail Riding Series. The events take place all over the country, with chances to win great prizes — including a new Suzuki DR-Z400.

www.dual-star.com

This company provides a ton of adventure gear for motorcyclists. The web site includes a listing of dual-sport events, as well as links to organizations and companies that promote responsible outdoor adventure activities.

dualsportnews.com

This web site is a supplement to *Dual Sport News* magazine. It offers information about dual-sport and adventure motorcycling, including makes and models, gear and equipment, ride techniques, tech tips, places to ride, and events. ■

SOURCES

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO.
powersports.honda.com

KAWASAKI MOTORS CORP.
800/661-RIDE
www.kawasaki.com

MZ
www.motorradna.com

SUZUKI
800/828-RIDE
www.suzukicycles.com

YAMAHA MOTOR CORP.
800/962-7926
www.yamaha-motor.com

Dual-Sports

Displacement

Engine

Compression Ratio

Transmission

Brakes (front/rear)

Wheelbase

Seat Height

Suspension Travel (front/rear)

Ground Clearance

Fuel Capacity

Dry Weight



\$3,899 Suzuki DR200SE

Good choice for beginning trail or street riders: light weight, low seat height, smooth power

199cc	Air-cooled single	9.4:1	Five-speed	Disc/drum	55.3"	31.9"	8.1/8.1"	10.2"	3.4 gallons	249 pounds
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\$4,099 Yamaha XT225

Another versatile beginner's bike, slightly more compact than the Suzuki DR

223cc	Air-cooled single	9.5:1	Six-speed	Disc/drum	53.1"	31.9"	8.9/7.5"	11.2"	2.3 gallons	238 pounds
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\$4,099 Kawasaki KLR250

Offers good power, a detachable subframe, and more suspension travel than others in its class

249cc	Liquid-cooled single	11:1	Six-speed	Disc/drum	55.7"	33.7"	9.1/9.1"	10.6"	2.9 gallons	258 pounds
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\$5,499 Suzuki DR-Z400S

Uses some of the best features of the popular off-road DR-Z400E, including the torque motor

398cc	Liquid-cooled single	11.3:1	Five-speed	Disc/disc	58.5"	36.8"	11.3/11.6"	11.8"	2.6 gallons	291 pounds
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\$4,999 Suzuki DR650SE

Offers an optional low-seat setting, which also reduces height, ground clearance, and wheelbase

644cc	Air/oil-cooled single	9.5:1	Five-speed	Disc/disc	58.7"	34.8"	10.2/10.2"	10.4"	3.4 gallons	324 pounds
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\$5,599 Honda XR650L

Honda's only street-legal dirt bike offered in the US, it's readier for the hills than the city

644cc	Air-cooled single	8.3:1	Five-speed	Disc/disc	57.3"	37"	11.6/11"	13"	2.8 gallons	324 pounds
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\$5,099 Kawasaki KLR650

A favorite of world travelers with its good ergos, large tank, dirt capability, and touring accessories

651cc	Liquid-cooled single	9.5:1	Five-speed	Disc/disc	58.9"	35"	9.1/9.1"	9.4"	6.1 gallons	337 pounds
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\$5,995 MZ Baghira Enduro

Great blend of street and dirt features, with sporty, long-travel suspension and street-legal knobbies

660cc	Liquid-cooled single	9.2:1	Five-speed	Disc/disc	60.2"	36.6"	N/A	N/A	3.3 gallons	375 pounds
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