

Motorcycle Tech Tips on Pipes

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From Street Walker Exhaust

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If I had a dollar for every time I've heard that over the years, I wouldn't have to be beating out sheet metal, I could be lying on a secluded tropical beach somewhere slurpin down Corona's

Too many times this scenario could be avoided by purchasing the correct part for your application & as silly as it sounds, installing the damn part the right way. We manufacture a line of custom exhaust pipes called Streetwalker Exhaust Systems. I frequently deal with customers who are trying to purchase a set of Streetwalkers for their custom scooter & they tell me, "I'm taking my bike into the shop to have my mechanic install them for me" Gimme a break, there isn't too much easier on a scooter than installing a set of pipes. If you can't put on your own pipes who the hell turns the key to start the bike for you? Installing pipes isn't a tough job, you've seen it done in the How To's in your favorite magazines. Even Mikey & Paul Sr. have installed a set or two on the Discovery channel. Here are a couple of tips for Evo's & Twin Cams Remove your old pipes, take the two exhaust flanges, & the clips that hold the flanges on off the old pipes, you'll probably use them again on the new pipes, if so go ahead & put em on. Two exhaust studs with the appropriate nuts or two stainless steel bolts per pipe is all that bolts the each pipe onto the head. Install NEW exhaust port gaskets in each head, they usually are little round guys made of a knitted stainless steel. Push the pipe into the port, the exhaust flange over the two exhaust studs, the flange can't come off because you put that tricky little snap ring on after the flange. You did put that snap ring on right.....right? Put a washer & a nut on each stud & tighten them finger tight only for now. Finger tight is a technical term that means you don't use any damn tool to tighten the nut.....none, nada, zip, got it. Now install your mounting bracket..... usually goes towards the rear of the pipe. Mounting brackets usually bolt to either the transmission or the frame, never, ever the swing arm, so don't try to bolt it up to the damn swing arm, big mistake! Once you locate the mounting point for the exhaust bracket, be it tranny or frame, bolt up the bracket, but again finger tight. Leave the wrench in your pocket for now. Now install the bolt that goes from the mounting tab on your pipe to the appropriate hole in the exhaust bracket you just installed. Put a washer & a nut on the end of that bolt, but this time, not even finger tight. A couple of turns on the nut by hand only. Now go back & tighten the two bolts or nuts that bolt the pipe & flange to the head. Go back & forth from one to the other until the bolts or nuts are good & snug all the while holding the pipe in place until the nuts are good & snug. Tightening the nuts until your face turns beet red & your forehead breaks out in a sweat is way passed good & snug. You're flirtin with disaster if you go that far, lighten up! Now do exactly the same on the other pipe holding it in place while you tighten the exhaust bolts (nuts) good & snug. Now go back & tighten down the bolts that hold on the exhaust mounting bracket you installed. Next step is to tighten the nut & bolt that goes from the mounting tab on the pipes to the mounting bracket you just finished tightening. If tightening this last mounting bolt down is drawing the rear of the pipes down severely, stop! You're drawing the pipes into a bind, probably putting undue stress on their entry into the head & possibly creating a stress point in the pipes that with the help of heat & vibration will probably ultimately become a crack in the pipe. The pipe needs to be shimmed either between the exhaust bracket & the mounting point on the frame or tranny or between the bracket & the tab on the pipes or maybe both. Shimming it at these points is ultimately bringing the mounting point on the bracket damn near right up against the tab on the pipes. Now when you tighten it back up you won't be drawing the pipe into a bind. Shimming means adding possibly flat washers or you can buy store bought spacers in almost any increment to take up the space. If you have the opposite problem & the pipes are hitting the motor, tranny, air cleaner, frame, passenger pegs, forward control or another hard mounted fixture & you can't draw them down tight at the head without creating a bind by the pipe coming into contact with one of the guys I just mentioned, you've got a whole other problem. You either have the wrong pipe for your application & they aren't gonna work for you or maybe you bolted the wrong pipe to the wrong head, in which case you just might be the guy who needs to take the bike to a shop!

Lots a luck!