

Let's pick up where we left in PART I.

If "bottoming" is noted at either end, the compression damping should be adjusted "in" (clockwise) to reduce the compression stroke. Generally, the front fork compression adjuster is the slotted screw at the bottom of the fork. The rear compression adjuster is the screw in the shock reservoir.

(And, remember this!)

Making damping decisions in the garage can lead to nasty surprises. Letting your friends adjust your suspension is also a no - no.

(Don't forget this!)

From PART I, the bike spring rates were dialed in and the rebound and compression damping was adjusted.

Let's go further and fine tune the bike's suspension rebound and compression settings.

STEP 1: Adjust rebound damping front/rear. (Critical adjustment, change slowly)

If either front or rear tends to kick up, (rebound), more than the other after landing from a large jump, then more rebound damping is needed at that end. Adjusting the rebound damper screw "in" or "clockwise" causes more damping. This causes the suspension to return more slowly to its original ride height. If the front end bounces up after landing from a jump, turn the slotted screw at the top of the forks "in" 1 click at a time to slow their return. If the rear end kicks up after landings, or kicks up side to side while riding down high-speed straights, turn the slotted screw at the bottom of the shock "in" 1 click at a time. This slows the rear wheel return.

But remember, too slow a rebound setting causes "packing" because the suspension does not have time to rebound to its original ride height before you hit the next bump.

Rule Of Thumb: Run your rebound at both ends "faster" rather than "slower". When the bike is on the verge of, but not quite, kicking up after lands, the rebound is set just about right.

STEP 2: Adjust rebound damping and stability for jumping.

This adjustment is extremely important and must be fine tuned by the rider very carefully. This adjustment determines how much time it takes the rear wheel to return to its original position after hitting a bump. In steps 1 & 2, (from PART I) you determined how much compression travel will be used as you hit each bump. The rebound damping must now be "tuned" to return the suspension to its original ride height before contacting the next bump.

If the rebound is too fast, the bike will bounce up after landing from a large jump, or kick sideways through rough sections. If the rebound is too slow, the wheel will not

have enough time to return between bumps. This causes it to "pack down" becoming harsh and bouncy. "Packing" can occur as soon as the second bump.

Experimentation is required to fine tune this adjustment. Stick a small screwdriver in your boot so you can make track side adjustments. Then ride and concentrate on the highest speed and most aggressive portions of your test track.

Front Forks: Start by speeding up the front rebound by turning the screw at the top of your forks "out" (counterclockwise) 2 clicks then ride your test track. Continue turning the adjuster out until the bike kicks up after landings or bounces up for no reason. ***Record this setting for reference.***

Then try turning the rebound "in" (clockwise) 2 clicks at a time until the front end begins to get stiff or your arms seem to be working harder. These are signs of packing.

Record setting. These settings define your rebound working range. Personally, I prefer to run my rebound on the fast side. *"Fast fork rebound will reduce headshake and arm pump."*

Rear Shock: Start by speeding up the rear rebound by turning the screw at the bottom of your shock "out" (counterclockwise) 2 clicks then ride your test track. Continue turning the adjuster out until the bike kicks up after landings or kicks side to side. ***Record this setting for reference.***

Then, try turning the rebound "in" (clockwise) 2 clicks at a time until the rear end begins to pound and get stiff. If may feel like you have a flat tire, the rear is riding low, or like the rear is "dead". You will probably get tired faster. These are signs of packing.

Record the setting. These settings define your rebound working range. I prefer to run my rebound as fast as possible without it kicking up or sideways.

NOTE: "Faster rebound settings will help you clear double jumps and ride aggressively." "Slower rebound settings conserve energy in deep sand and desert whoops."

STEP 3: Balance front end and rear end static ride height.

If the rear end squats under acceleration along with too much front-end lift, and/or the bike doesn't want to turn sharp or easily enough: Adjust your rear sag to 95mm.

If the front end rides low, turns too sharp, and/or tends to Head Shake, try a combination of lowering the front forks in the triple clamps and adjusting rear sag to 107mm.

STEP 4: Balancing front and rear. Regardless of personal preference on compression stiffness and rebound speed, both ends must be balanced and work together.

Compression Balance: The front spring and compression setting must coordinate with the rear spring and compression setting. If the front forks are too soft and plow through a whoop, but the rear end rides up over it, the bike will go into the "endo" position. To cure this, you would try to stiffen the front to make it ride up and over this bump to match the rear end. First, try a combination of turning the fork compression adjuster screw in, adding 5mm fork oil, adding preload to the front fork springs, and pulling the fork tubes down in the triple clamps. Also, try speeding up the front rebound clicker "out" 1 or 2 clicks. This makes the front end kick up after this bump.

When you reach the limit on making the front stiffer, you should try making the rear end softer. Try a combination of turning the shock compression setting "out", and reducing rear spring preload. Also try slowing the shock rebound, clicker "in" 1 click, to make the rear stay down after the bump. Reverse this logic if the fork is stiffer than the rear.

Rebound Balance: The front and rear rebound settings must coordinate to throw the bike up level on jump take-offs. (First the compression balance adjustments above must be made.) If the front end continuously jumps higher than the rear, try a combination of slowing the fork rebound, clicker "in" 1 click, and speeding the rear rebound, clicker "out" 1 click.

General Note: Heavier riders, very aggressive riders, and desert riders will usually prefer heavier spring rates. Call me to discuss your specific questions.