

## REPLACING A REAR TIRE ON A KAWASAKI VN2000

By tensman



Rear tire life on this bike has varied from 5400(Metzler 880) to 11,800 (Elite III). The rear tire is a size 200/60-16. This tire has about 7900 miles on it; I could run it longer, but it's another rainy morning so the timing is right to GIT-ER-DONE!

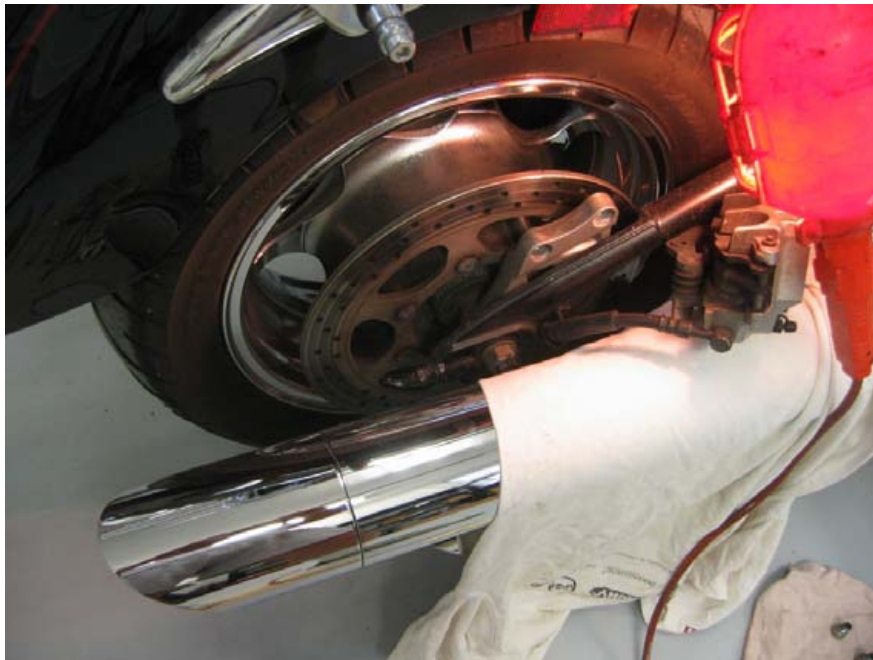


A couple of rear tires in inventory – I'll use the oldest one first - it's a 2007 mfg date.



Up on the lift she goes – I put a rubber band on the front brake lever just as added precaution that the bike won't tend to roll forward when the weight of the rear tire is not there to balance the load.

I just removed the rear brake caliper and laid it on the muffler.



**Caution:** do not touch the rear brake lever until the calipers are re-installed or the brake pistons could be pushed out of the caliper!!



I removed the cotter pin, axle castle nut, and the axle. It's easier for me to use the lift to just unweight the tire assembly by having it just touch the floor – that makes pulling the axle very easy. Now after loosening the belt adjusters, the tire has been rolled forward and the belt easily comes off. Belt looks good for 47,000+ miles (no cracks, breaks, missing teeth, etc. – just a little dry; I'll spray it with silicone at reassembly to keep it quiet for awhile).





Now raising the bike up allows the tire to be rolled out. I've removed the drive pulley; it takes a little coaxing to pull it off the wheel due to the tightness of the rubber shock absorbers. The first time the drive pulley was removed was a chore. I apply Never-Seize to the rubber and to the pulley. The pulley slips off much easier now.



Here we are ready to remove the valve core and let the air out, then mount the tire on the No-Mar tire changer. Do not lay the tire down on the brake disc – this could warp the disc and cost you big \$\$ to replace.



Got the bead broken and the removal tool ready to remove the tire - using some slick spray lubricant makes the removal easier. This is the easier part of manual tire changing.



Note the rim clamps on the tire changer – these are optional equipment on the No-Mar changer and definitely worth the cost as they don't tend to slip and do not get in the way of the tire sidewall during installation.

Here's the inside of the tire just removed. This tire had been plugged using a StopNGo plug, then, due to a slow air leak, I patched the plug area internally to make it airtight. The tire ran about 5000 miles after plugging with no leaks. I just used a common patch kit from an auto parts store.



Here we are with the new tire mounted, aired up, and ready to get a static balance. This one took (5) ¼-oz. weights to balance.

Remember, be sure the tire rotation is correct before installing the tire to the wheel and be sure to position the colored dot at the valve stem to minimize balance weight.





Now, reversing the removal steps and re-installing the tire and wheel assembly, we're ready to rock'n'roll. Just a few reassembly notes:

- Clean and lube the axle spacers and the grease seals; I use high temp disc brake grease
- The drive pulley has a spacer that can fall out – don't lose it – if you don't reinstall this spacer, the wheel won't want to go round and round easily after you torque the rear axle (ask me how I know this?!)
- After installing the axle and the brake caliper, leave the castle nut loose and align the belt. Leave the belt a little loose if you align the belt with the tire in the air. As the swing arm rotates with the weight of the bike, the belt gets a little tighter. Check belt tension and readjust as needed. Belt should NOT be banjo tight - an excessively tight belt preloads the transmission output pulley bearing and the rear wheel bearings.
- Rear axle torque is 80 ft-lbs; use a torque wrench.
- Remember to pump up the rear brake before you ride out as you may have retracted the caliper pistons during caliper removal

OK, we're done.

Now, where are my keys??

