

General Fault Log

The sheet that makes every other diagnostic better. What happened, under what conditions, and what had changed just before.

One line every time something happens. The conditions column is the one that solves intermittents, and it is the one everybody leaves blank.

MAKE AND MODELENGINE FAMILY NUMBERLOG STARTED

FAULT LOG

DATE	MILES	WHAT HAPPENED	CONDITIONS	WHAT HAD CHANGED RECENTLY

CONDITIONS WORTH CAPTURING EVERY TIME

Engine cold or hot. How far into the ride. Air temperature and whether it was wet. Uphill, flat or downhill. Steady throttle or accelerating. Fuel level. Whether it had stood for a while beforehand. Any of those can be the pattern, and you cannot know which until you have several entries.

WORK DONE — SO CAUSE AND EFFECT LINE UP

Keep this alongside the fault log and dated the same way. A fault that first appears the week after a job is one of the commonest patterns there is, and it is invisible unless both are written on the same page.

DATE	MILES	WHAT WAS DONE	BY WHOM	ANYTHING DIFFERENT AFTERWARDS?

WRITING IT UP FOR SOMEBODY ELSE

1. What the machine is: engine family number, displacement, and roughly how many miles.
2. What it does, in one sentence, described rather than diagnosed.
3. When it does it — the conditions column, summarised across entries.
4. When it does NOT do it, which narrows things as much as when it does.
5. What you have already checked, including everything that came back normal.
6. What was done to it most recently, and when.

THE NORMAL RESULTS ARE WORTH INCLUDING

People report only what they found wrong, which makes it look like nothing has been checked. Saying that the plug was wet, the spark was strong and the compression was unchanged eliminates three whole branches for whoever reads it — and stops them suggesting you check them.

WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU SAW, NOT WHAT YOU CONCLUDED

The observation is recoverable later and the conclusion is not. "Wheel would not spin more than half a turn" is still useful in a month. "Brake problem" is not, because you will not remember what made you think so.

Need to work out what you actually own?

The Scooter Parts Registry is a free public record of the Chinese factories behind US-market scooters, ATVs and go-karts — brand, engine family, VIN prefix, factory and related machines. No account, no email.

thescooterparts.com/identify