

Bike Project: Tektro M290 Front Brake Pad Change

November 2021

*A medium
complexity service
project*

The Tektro M290 is a pretty good entry level hydraulic disc brake and I've been using them on my NCM Moscow Plus for some time. This has involved numerous brake pad changes so I thought it would be a good idea to document the process.

I would rate this as a medium complexity service project. With a few basic tools the job can be done in less than 10 minutes and save you a significant amount of money, it may well be a lot more convenient than having to visit the bike shop every few hundred miles.

How do you know when to change the pads? Easy, when the brake lever almost touches your grips before biting.

Obviously, if you are not confident you should take it to the bike shop as brakes are pretty important.



Figure 1 - M290 Brake System

Many pads to choose from, get the right ones

Selecting Your Pads

There are many options on the market, both from Tektro and from third parties. These come in Ceramic, Resin, Sintered etc. The options are probably too wide to be covered here and a lot of it is personal choice.

I use *Noah and Theo NT BP004 Semi Metallic Pads* which I rate highly. They offer a good balance between durability and performance and, at the time of writing, cost just over £6 per wheel. Try this [link](#) for the full range.

Tools & Parts

This is a very easy project so you will not need a lot, this is what I used.

- Spare pads
- 5mm hex socket & ratchet (or just an allen key / hex wrench)
- 3mm hex wrench (or allen key)
- Side cutters (or a utility knife)
- Brake pad alignment tool (or a large flat screwdriver)
- Blue thread-lock.



Figure 2 - Parts & Tools

Step by Step

This really is a quick (10-minute) project. There is a photo at the bottom of the list of steps to help you identify the right parts. Have a full read through before you start.

*Good chance to
clean your discs*

1. If you have any, wear some disposable gloves, this is a messy job.
2. Take a photo like the one below, it will help if you need to refer to anything later.
3. You will need to remove the brake calliper (or caliper if you are from the USA) from the bike, this is achieved by removing the two bolts highlighted in green in the photo below, if your brakes are attached via a mount (shown in yellow) note its orientation so that you can put it back correctly. It is important to note that the bolts may not be the same length so be careful to remember which one goes where. To do this I used a 5mm hex socket and ratchet for ease, but a hex wrench works too.
4. Slide the calliper off from the disc and away from the bike.
5. Optionally, you may now like to clean the disc. The best way to do this is with isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and a disposable cloth, do not touch the pad with your fingers as they will leave it greasy.
6. Remove the pad retaining bolt marked in blue, this will require a 3mm hex wrench or driver. In some cases, it may have been substituted with a split pin.
7. Slide the old discs out, they will be very dirty, they come out in the direction of the red arrow and the two pads will spring apart when you do so.

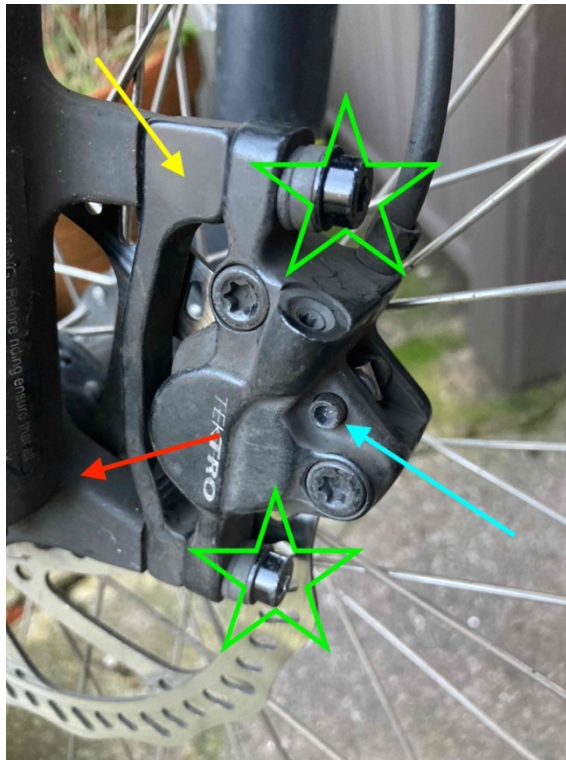


Figure 3 - A Few Pointers

8. Press the brake pistons pull home with the alignment tool, this will take a little force. They will go in fully so that the silver pistons are flush with the internal face of the calliper. This is essential as the new pads will be thicker than the old worn ones.

9. Using the side cutters, remove the tie which will be holding your new pads together. Be careful not to touch the face of the pads with your fingers as the grease will contaminate them. The pads can then be pushed together and slid into the calliper.
10. Apply a drop of blue thread lock to the pad retaining bolt and reinsert it.
11. Slide the calliper back over the disc and refit the two bolts to fix it to the bike, a drop of blue thread lock should be used. The bolts should be tightened until they begin to bite and then backed off for a full turn
12. You can now align the calliper to the disc, this is done by applying the brakes using the lever and holding it tight whilst tightening the bolts fully (but not overtight as the threads could be damaged), the thread lock will prevent them from vibrating loose. A torque wrench could be used if you have the specification for your bike).
13. Try the brake lever, it should apply the brakes without excess movement. And the wheel should turn freely without excessive pad rubbing.

Testing & Bedding In

New pads need a very small amount of use (several stops) to bed in and become fully effective so do this on the flat rather than charging off down the nearest hill.

*Bedding-in is
important*



Figure 4 - Sample Pads with spring clip