

# CB500X Adventure FAQs

## (revised 1st January 2018)

Please note: These FAQs apply specifically to the current Production Specification Rally-Raid Products CB500X 'Adventure' kit, and associated parts and accessories for the Honda CB500X, (plus CB500F and CBR500R where appropriate).

### **1. I understand that there are different 'Levels' of kit available, can you explain the key differences to me in simple terms?**

From 2018 onwards, we have simplified our range of wheel and suspension upgrades for the CB500X: There are now two core upgrade options available - **LEVEL 1**, and **LEVEL 2**.

**LEVEL 1** maintains the original length suspension travel and corresponding standard seat height. There is also the option of fitting direct replacement heavy-duty spoked wheels in both 17" diameter front and rear sizes.

**LEVEL 2** is our +2 inch (50mm) longer-travel suspension kit - a comprehensive reworking of the original suspension components, which also allows you to fit our dedicated spoked Wheel Kit that features a larger diameter 19" front wheel together with our 17" rear wheel.

**Please note.** while the standard dimension **FRONT** and **REAR LEVEL 1** suspension components are available and can be fitted separately (as desired and/or finances allow), the **LEVEL 2** longer-travel suspension components must be sold/fitted as a complete kit.

Similarly, while the **LEVEL 1** 17/17" spoked wheels can always be fitted without any suspension modifications, the **LEVEL 2** 19/17" Wheel Kit can only be fitted once our **LEVEL 2** suspension has been fitted.

### **2. So, can you describe the two 'LEVEL' options in more detail?**

#### **LEVEL 1 KIT**

This kit upgrades the standard travel suspension with higher quality and adjustable components front and rear. This is the ideal option for those who do not wish to raise the seat height at all. These components are also suitable upgrades for the CB500F and CBR500R models.

- The **Rear Shock** offers the same travel as the OEM shock but offers a far higher-quality and adjustable damping (via a single combined adjuster wheel for rebound and compression); together with the option of fitting a hydraulic remote preload adjuster to easily compensate for different luggage and passenger loads.
- The **Fork Kit** offers the same travel as the OEM fork components, but completely replaces the internal parts with our unique shim valves and dedicated damper rods, plus longer linearwound springs, which eliminate the OEM plastic spacer inside the forks. note. In addition, our billet preload adjuster caps are available as a separate accessory for owners of the pre-2016 model bikes that do not come with fork preload adjusters as standard.
- The **LEVEL 1 Spoked wheels** (pair) come in direct replacement 17/17" sizes both front and rear, and utilise the OEM brake discs, hardware, and cush-drive/sprocket assembly from your original wheels and are fitted with OEM size wheel bearings and seals. note. Pre-2016 ABS models also utilise both OEM sensor rings; while 2016-onwards models do require our own replacement front sensor ring while retaining the OEM rear.

- In addition, the **LEVEL 1 Spoked Wheels** are now available in either standard tube-type or professionally converted Tubeless rim options, together with the choice of black or gold powder coated rims.

## **LEVEL 2 KIT**

This Kit increases the overall travel and ride-height by +2" (50mm) front and rear, which correspondingly offers far greater off-road performance, and is only suitable for the CB500X model.

- The **Rear Shock** is fully adjustable - offering individual controls for rebound plus high & low speed compression damping - together with a remote reservoir for increased oil capacity. As with our **LEVEL 1** shock, there is also the option of fitting a hydraulic remote preload adjuster to more easily compensate for different loads and conditions.
- The **Fork Components** are similar to the **LEVEL 1** specification, but with an increase in travel to match the longer rear shock; while the complete kit also includes revised geometry rear suspension linkage components, a billet top triple-clamp and a longer side-stand.! Because these matched components raise the bike equally front and rear, it is perfectly possible to retain your original cast aluminium wheels with our **LEVEL 2 Suspension Kit** fitted - typically appealing to those riders who spend the majority of their time on paved or mild unsurfaced roads but would appreciate more ground clearance and an improvement in ride quality afforded by the longer travel and fully adjustable suspension.
- However, the **LEVEL 2 Spoked Wheels** complete what we consider is the ultimate specification for the CB500X to be used in an all-terrain 'Adventure' bike role. These are available as a package with our **LEVEL 2** suspension, or as a second phase to anyone who has previously fitted our **LEVEL 2** suspension to their machine. The **LEVEL 2 heavy-duty spoked Wheel Kit** retains our 17" diameter rear wheel but comes with a larger diameter 19" front wheel together with a dedicated 19" front fender and associated mounting hardware. These wheel sizes mean there is a far wider range of all-terrain tread pattern tyres available; and in conjunction with our **LEVEL 2 Suspension Kit**, we consider the revised geometry and associated ground clearance is now optimised for the bike to be used in a more adventurous role.
- As with our **LEVEL 1 Wheel Kit**, the **LEVEL 2 Wheel Kits** are available both in standard tube-type or tubeless rims, and in either black or gold powder-coating. Similarly, all the OEM brake and drive hardware are carried over, and they are equally suitable for both non-ABS and ABS models of all years.

### **3. Can I purchase any of the suspension components separately, or do they have to be bought as a package?**

It is possible to buy the **LEVEL 1** front fork or rear suspension components separately - as these do not affect the geometry of the bike in any way.

However, the longer-travel **LEVEL 2** suspension components must be fitted as a matched pair and can only be sold as such - since it is also essential to fit the revised rear linkage components together with the billet top triple-clamp that are included as part of the +2" (50mm) long-travel suspension package.!

### **4. I love the look of the spoked wheels - can I just buy the wheels on their own?**

You can buy the pair of **LEVEL 1** 17/17" wheels independently of any suspension upgrades, but It is not physically possible to fit the 19" front wheel on the CB500X without also fitting our longer travel **LEVEL 2 Suspension Kit** - which ensures clearance at full travel.

### **5. My original cast wheels are tubeless - do you have that option for your spoked wheels?**

Yes, although our standard rim option means you do have to use inner tubes with our spoked wheels, (even inside tubeless tyres such as the continental TKC80) - we now offer both **LEVEL 1** and **LEVEL 2** wheel sets professionally

converted by BAR Tubeless in Italy with a 4-year warranty, available from stock. You simply choose either the tube-type or tubeless product option when you order, then select your rim colour preference from the drop-down menu.

Please note that not all colour/tube/tubeless options may always be available immediately from our warehouse stock, but all specific orders will be satisfied as quickly as possible.

**6. *Ok, I'm ready to buy - I see you are based in the UK - how do I purchase the parts I want?***

Rally Raid Products have a comprehensive web-shop: [www.rally-raidproducts.co.uk](http://www.rally-raidproducts.co.uk), that accepts International payment in a range of currencies. We use UPS for worldwide shipping, in stock items are shipped within 5 days. The customer is liable for import duty, UPS will contact the customer for payment once the item has reached the destination country.

**7. *Can I fit the suspension/full Adventure kit myself at home, or does it need professional installation?***

The kit/s have been designed to be DIY fit, and full step-by-step instructions are available on the Rally Raid Products website to read/download at the bottom of each respective product page.

The kit/s have been specifically designed to be completely bolt-on, and there is no need to cut or weld anything to fit the upgraded components. Typical workshop tools - a metric socket set, wrenches and allen keys are really all that is required. Should you prefer a professional workshop to undertake the work on your behalf, then they too will appreciate the straightforward nature of the conversion.

**NOTE.** *To safely fit the front and rear suspension components, you will need support the bike so that no weight is on either the swing-arm/front forks in turn. In that regard, we suggest you consider our tubular Engine Guard which cradles the engine and fit that first - then you can support the complete weight of the bike on a scissor lift directly underneath the engine. In addition, while the vast majority of the installation is simple bolt-off bolt-on, you will be required to remove the fork internal components and replace them with the new Rally Raid parts. If you are not confident or familiar with such a procedure, we do recommend obtaining the assistance of an experienced and/or professional workshop mechanic for that element of the conversion.*

**8. *Can I still use a centre stand if I fit the longer-travel LEVEL 2 suspension?***

No. Unfortunately the standard-length centre-stand is not long enough to lift the rear wheel off the ground once the +2" (50mm) suspension has been fitted. The **LEVEL 2 Suspension Kit** also requires a longer side-stand to replace the original (supplied as part of the complete **LEVEL 2 Suspension Kit**), and there is simply not enough space for both stands to stow correctly on the bike.

**9. *OK, so how can I lift the rear wheel for chain maintenance for example?***

We realise it is useful to be able to lift the rear wheel off the ground for maintenance, but at the same time, consider a traditional centre-stand bulky, and unnecessary weight to carry around with you for the vast majority of the time - particularly on a bike that is intended to be used more frequently off-road.

Instead we would suggest you consider a short removable prop-stand similar to those used by dual-sport riders - which typically locates under the swing-arm and is used in conjunction with the side stand to lift the rear wheel a few inches off the ground.

For workshop and home maintenance, we strongly recommend you invest in either a traditional paddock stand to lift the rear wheel (the universal type can be used with many other motorcycles too of course), or a simple scissor-lift that can be used to lift either wheel in conjunction with the Rally Raid tubular engine guard.

**10. *My bike has ABS - do the Rally Raid spoked wheels still work with the ABS?***

Yes, they certainly do. In the UK and Europe the CB500X is only sold as an ABS equipped model, so it was essential that our replacement wheels would retain all the OEM ABS and braking components. They work equally well with the non-ABS bikes too of course.

The only consideration is that from 2016-onwards, the OEM front ABS sensor ring changed shape. Rally Raid subsequently sell a direct replacement front sensor ring for owners of the later models.

**11. I see that some manufacturers offer 'switchable' ABS these days, is that something I can have too?**

Yes. Again, the UK/EU bikes all come with ABS as standard, and while we feel it is an excellent system both on-road and off, there may be an occasion (traditionally in very technical off-road terrain for example) that you absolutely don't want the ABS to cut in.

We offer a simple ABS bypass switch that completely disengages the front and rear ABS, allowing the bike to behave in the same way as the non-ABS version (which is sold in the United States for example) does. When the ABS is disengaged, a dash warning light is illuminated to remind you. You can also switch between ABS on and ABS off on-the-fly as you ride along.

**12. How much taller is the bike once the long-travel LEVEL 2 suspension and 19/17" spoked wheels are fitted?**

We have measured our full **LEVEL 2** bike (fitted with Continental TKC80 all-terrain tyres) at a little over 34" seat height (870mm). To compare, the standard seat height on the OEM cast alloy wheels and street-biased tyres is 31.9 inches (810mm).

**13. I'm rather short in the leg, what are my options to upgrade if I want to ride my bike off-road more seriously?**

We realise that the CB500X does appeal to shorter riders, which is why we felt it important to offer our high quality/adjustable suspension in standard travel/ride-height length for both front and rear.

The **LEVEL 1** suspension components will make the most of the original travel available, without raising the seat height at all - you just must keep in mind that without raising the bike, your ground clearance is still limited.

Therefore, we would certainly recommend also fitting the tubular Engine Guard to protect the otherwise vulnerable sump; while our heavy-duty foot-pegs offer a far larger platform for when standing while riding off-road, and indeed improve general comfort when riding long distances too.

Finally, the **LEVEL 1** 17/17" spoked Wheel Kit offers stronger and more resilient heavy-duty rallybike specification wheels, which can accept the OEM size tyres or similar more all-terrain tread pattern alternatives.

Whether you specify our 17/17" spoked wheels or chose to retain the OEM cast wheels, we recommend fitting the Continental TKC80 in 120/70 x 17" front and 150/70 x 17" rear sizes - which will make the bike feel significantly more sure-footed and capable off-road than the standard tyres.

**14. If I fit the LEVEL 2 (19/17") wheels, can I swap between my OEM cast wheels for commuting during the week, then swap to the spoked wheels for off-road use?**

Yes, if you so wish - however, we have designed the Adventure kit to specifically improve and enhance the standard CB500X into more of an 'all-road all-rounder', without compromising its day-to-day usability at all. The full **LEVEL 2** wheel and suspension package really ought to be considered a complete reengineering of the original bike, making it comparable with other mid-size adventure bikes such as the BMW700GS, V-Strom XT or Kawasaki KLR650 for example - none of which you'd consider actually require changing the wheels every weekend I'm sure...

However, retaining your OEM cast wheels does mean you essentially have a set of super-moto wheels available now, and could always have those fitted with street tyres for more spirited on-road riding, and/or if you regularly commute and want to save your all-terrain tyres specifically for longer adventure rides. All you need to do is swap the OEM brake discs and cush-drive assembly back and forth between each set of wheels as desired.

**15. Do I need to change the gearing (my chain and sprockets) if I fit the LEVEL 2 spoked wheels?**

No. One of the main reasons we decided to retain the 17" rear wheel diameter is so that the final drive gearing would remain the same, and that the speedometer (which is driven from the gearbox) also remains accurate. Of course, there is nothing to stop you gearing up or down a few teeth to suit a personal preference and do consider that depending on what brand/size/tread-pattern rear tyre you fit, the rear wheel may be slightly larger in diameter overall than

standard - but we found that when using a 150/70 x 17 Continental TKC80 for example, there is no appreciable difference.

**16. I see the LEVEL 2 longer-travel suspension kit comes with new rear linkage parts and a replacement top triple-clamp too - why is that?**

The rear linkage components are essential to allow the much longer rear shock (+50mm travel) to physically fit on the bike, and to retain the original leverage ratio for the rear suspension.

At the front, the **LEVEL 2** components offer +30mm more travel over standard (so that both the front and rear suspension are now equal at 170mm travel), and as part of the geometry revisions, it was also essential to lower the top of fork legs by 20mm, which is achieved with our dedicated billet top triple-clamp.

In addition, the top triple-clamp offers a choice of handlebar mounting position forwards and back when using the OEM handlebars, plus the option of choosing Fat-bar risers should you wish to fit stronger aluminium handle bars. It also incorporates dedicated mountings for an optional Scotts steering damper if desired.

Also included in the **LEVEL 2** package is a longer replacement side-stand so that the taller bike remains at the correct angle with the longer suspension fitted.

**17. I really don't like the stock handlebars, but I understand their shape means the choice of alternatives is very limited - is there any alternative from Rally-Raid Products?**

Yes. Our billet top triple-clamp (standard with the **LEVEL 2 Suspension Kit**, and there is also a **LEVEL 1** version available as an accessory has a choice of bar riser options.

You can specify the standard height bar risers to retain the (22mm) stock diameter bars or select the high-rise Fat-bar option that is designed to accept 28mm tapered bars - mounting them correspondingly higher so that a wider selection of traditional MX/Enduro bars can now be fitted to the bike.

Our Fat-bar risers have been specifically designed to mount the Renthal 'RC High' bend (84mm rise) bars, as we feel these offer the combination of rise and sweep for off-road riding (and indeed are a very popular choice with rally riders), and fit with the OEM cables, hoses and switchgear wiring without modification.

**18. The LEVEL 2 Wheel Kit comes with a replacement front fender - why is that necessary, and why a low fender?**

The street-style OEM front fender is designed to fit closely around a 17" tyre, and there simply isn't enough clearance for the 19" spoked wheel to fit. The **LEVEL 2** Wheel Kit comes with a dedicated replacement 19" front fender (and new mounting hardware), that properly follows the profile of the new wheel, and offers improved mud-clearance.

Unfortunately, because of the brake-hose routing, it is not possible to fit a high fender successfully on the ABS equipped bikes; but we also feel that the low rally-style fender compliments the bikes styling and offers better protection to the front of the engine and radiator too.

**19. I have a CB500F model - can I fit the longer-travel LEVEL 2 suspension to my bike too?**

Technically no. While the rear shock, linkage and the fork internal dimensions are the same between models, the CB500F headlight is mounted directly to the triple clamp, which is different to the replacement version we manufacture for the **LEVEL 2** kit for the CB500X.

We consider that CB500F customers would be more than adequately served by fitting our standard travel length **LEVEL 1** upgraded suspension, perhaps in combination with the **LEVEL 1** 17/17" spoked wheels should they desire more of a 'Scrambler' style conversion.