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The Difference between Road Bike and Dirt Bike Stabilizers

Scotts manufactures 2 different stabilizers, a road bike version and an off-road version. Both units share the same physical size and appearance, the main differences are in the valving design. Below is a very brief description of the differences between the 2 styles.

The off-road damper is a non-rebound stabilizer, which means, as it sweeps away from center it has damping but the moment it changes direction back toward center the damping is free until it reaches center again, hence the term non-rebound or free-rebound. This was an important development in the off-road damper and is what makes our damper work so well. Its design is to allow the rider to correct for constant slides associated with off-roading while not fighting with the damping forces back to center. It's a serious advantage for the off-road rider. This feature helps prevent the common syndrome known as arm pump. Our stabilizer is the only one made with this feature.

The road bike damper design requires a totally different function and therefore is a rebound damper. A road bike is primarily leaned, not steered, and the damping forces need to be absorbed in both directions to maintain constant stability, due to the nature of the energy needing to be absorbed.

Can they be interchanged? Yes.

Are you receiving all the advantages you could by using the off road unit on a road bike application or vice versa? No.

Is there a giant difference? That would be individual opinion. Using your dirt bike damper on your road bike would still be a vast improvement over no damper at all and the same goes for using a road bike damper on a dirt bike. Some customers, who have tried switching from one to the other, say they feel no difference. Others claim there is a huge difference. So you see, it's truly personal preference. There are other internal differences between the 2 stabilizers that would take a lot longer to explain. The best bet is always to use the right damper for the right application. However, we could not tell you that they don't work when switched for the other application, it's just that they work better when used as designed for the right application.

There are always specific applications that might favor one type or the other depending on the situation. We make our suggestions based on our testing and what the majority of our customer base prefers. You have the option to specify whichever unit you prefer when ordering.