

MOTORCYCLE RIDING SKILLS

Information that may help save your life

1. Safety is of paramount importance when riding a motorcycle, much more so than driving an automobile. So before you even mount up and start your bike, take stock in these few items first.
 - a. Are you physically fit and mentally alert for the ride? Start your brain **BEFORE** you start your bike.
 - b. Is your motorcycle mechanically safe and maintained for the trip at hand?
 - c. Avoid “rocking out” to tunes while riding, especially on the Interstates and carrying a passenger. **YOU OWE THIS RESPECT TO YOUR PASSENGER!**
 - d. Avoid all that “breaker one nine” chatter on the CB if your bike is so equipped because that is a serious distraction to you the rider while maintaining control of the “beast” between your legs. **YOU OWE THIS RESPECT TO YOUR PASSENGER!**
2. How often do you just go out for a few hours just to practice your riding skills someplace? This is something that should be done often to hone your skills and become a confident rider. And no, just plain everyday riding is not the practice you need to be proficient because you need to practice all those skills that you so often do not have to use in everyday riding.
3. Awareness of traffic and all situations around you while on your motorcycle.
 - a. The “4” points of an intersection – Front, Rear, Left side, Right Side. **BE AWARE** of what is going on around you and what is coming at you.
 - b. Your position in traffic.
 1. Stay out of the passing lane if at all possible while on Interstates. This irritates motorists and causes bad situations.
 2. Pass all semi-tractor trailer trucks as quickly as possible. When along side of these vehicles you take your life in your own hands because when these vehicles have a blowout at highway speeds, what it could do to you on your motorcycle is something too grisly to contemplate.
 3. Be fully aware of your position in city traffic as you will become invisible to most motorists and many accidents are caused by people turning directly in front of you at any given point in time. They do this because they just don’t see you there. **MAKE YOUR PRESENCE KNOWN!**

4. Gravel driveways and parking lots.

- a. Quite the dangerous and tricky ground that should be avoided at all costs if possible.
- b. Gravel is most unkind to the two wheel vehicle as balance is the main theme of these conveyances and gravel is a major enemy of balance.
- c. Use both feet down for extra balance and control when pulling into or out of gravel areas to ensure you are in complete control of your motorcycle.
- d. Fine gravel is bad enough for balance but larger gravel is the real skill tester when rolling on these surfaces. Larger gravel can cause more chances of losing control of your motorcycle due to the size of the pebbles and the effect they have on your front tire.

5. Parking lot bumpers. Be especially aware of these objects as they can cause serious accidents if the front wheel of your motorcycle comes into contact with one of these parking lot “gremlins” at any speed. These objects are often placed in awkward positions in parking lots or even may be knocked out of place by over-anxious drivers failing to see them or coming to a sudden stop when striking them. Point is, these bumpers can cause serious consequences to motorcyclists if not watched for and avoided.

Just a few items to think about and remember while out on your motorcycle having fun either by yourself or with your significant other. Remember, you owe your passenger the courtesy and respect to ride as safe as possible.

Don Light

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