



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



TIPS & TECHNIQUES

FOR MOTORCYCLE RIDERS

RISKS

Don't place yourself in danger of becoming a statistic by increasing your risk.

- Stay alert and attentive to what's happening on the road.
- Don't ride under the influence of drink or drugs.
- Keep to the speed limits and drive according to the conditions.
- Take breaks to avoid fatigue.

SETTING UP AND BRAKING

'Setting up' is braking lightly as you approach potential hazards, giving you more opportunity and space to react to events.

The advantages of this are:

- It prepares the rider. By recognising the hazard and taking preparatory action you will have more control.
- It prepares the motorcycle to stop if needed without locking up the brakes and losing control.
- It prepares the vehicle behind you, whose driver has been alerted by the brake light that you may be about to brake hard.

SAFE CORNERING

In rural and regional areas, the majority of motorcycle crashes tend to be single vehicle. Many of these relate to misjudging cornering.

BRAKING AND GEARS

- Adjust your speed coming up to a corner
- Allow for traffic and weather conditions
- Ease off the brakes gently on entering the corner
- Change down to the appropriate gear to get you into and out of corners

ROAD POSITION

- Start corners wide to improve your vision of oncoming traffic
- Plan to finish in tight
- Move away from the central 'head-on' zone as you round the corner

Tip: Look at where you want to finish up as you come out of the bend. Your hands and handlebars will cause you to follow that line of sight.

DIFFICULT SURFACES

A number of surfaces can provide a slipping hazard for motorcycles, particularly if the road surface is wet, including painted lane markings and steel surfaces such as manhole covers. To ride safely on slippery surfaces:

- Reduce your speed, so that you require less space to stop
- Reduce the amount of lean on the motorcycle when riding curves. This is done by slowing down and/or leaning your body into the bend.

Tip: On wet roads you may gain more traction from riding in the tracks made by the car in front of you. However, look out for oil that often collects down the centre of a lane.

SWERVING

If something unexpected happens and you need to avoid a crash:

- Lean in to the swerve and then try and correct the motion as quickly as possible
- Check where you're going to make sure you don't end up in another crash.

STEERING SHAKES OR 'WOBBLES'

This can occur at any speed due to incorrect tyre pressure or weight distribution on the bike.

If it happens:

- Grip the handlebars firmly but do not try to correct the steering. Don't fight the wobbling
- Gradually decelerate without braking suddenly
- Once the wobbling stops, pull over to a safe place.

BLOWOUTS AND PUNCTURES

If a blowout or rapid puncture occurs whilst you are riding:

- Don't brake - just gradually close the throttle down and try to steer straight.
- Move your weight towards whichever tyre is still inflated.

CARRYING A PILLION PASSENGER

Carrying any additional weight on your bike will affect the handling of the motorcycle:

- Do not carry a pillion passenger or heavy loads unless you are an experienced rider
- Make sure you have a suitable seat fitted on your motorcycle
- A passenger is your responsibility - make sure they are as well protected as you are
- Adjust the rear suspension spring preload, mirror, headlight and tyre pressure to allow for the additional weight

- Ride at lower speed
- Slow down earlier
- Adjust your buffer zone to allow extra stopping distance
- Keep conversation to a minimum to avoid distraction
- Do not make sudden moves or show off as it will make your passenger nervous and could compromise safety.

Your passenger should:

- Get on the motorcycle after you have mounted the motorcycle and started the engine
- Sit as far forward as possible
- Hold onto the waist of the rider or a secure part of the motorcycle
- Keep both feet on the footpegs at all times, even when the motorcycle is stopped
- Stay directly behind you, leaning as you lean and avoiding any unnecessary movement.

The above information has been sourced from the RTA (NSW) motorcycle handbook.



TOWARDS ZERO

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