

Ride On

...the key riding skills from the Ride On video
A NEW APPROACH TO SAFE RIDER TRAINING

By motorcyclists for motorcyclists



A NEW APPROACH TO SAFE RIDER TRAINING

Text based on the Ride On video script. Technical advice by Alex Jerrim (Driver Improvement Consultancy), Cameron Cuthill and staff (Honda Australia Rider Training), Ray Gilbert (Motorcycle Council of NSW), Robyn Martin (Ulysses Club) and Ray Newland (FCAI-Motorcycle Group).

Ride On

Although due care and skill have been used in the production of this booklet, it has been produced primarily for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended to be, and should not be relied upon as, a substitute for professional training.

Introduction

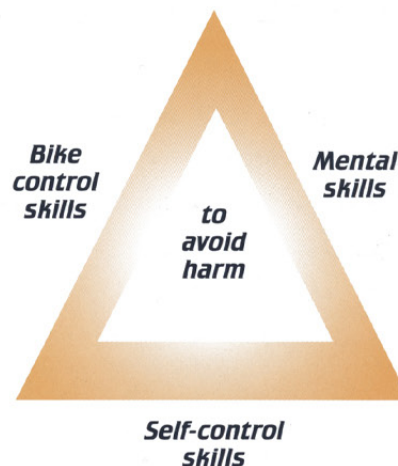
With the help of many motorcyclists, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau developed the video *Ride On* and this booklet to help the student and the instructor.

The video highlights safe riding techniques as well as the need to develop mental alertness and self-control. This booklet follows the key points from the video. Through practice, these key points can become life-saving habits.

The booklet and the video are not substitutes for personal training by a qualified instructor.

We want to encourage you to develop three sets of skills so you can avoid harm and enjoy riding for many years to come.

Skills Triangle



The good rider needs three sets of skills:

- 1. Bike control skills***
- 2. Mental skills to recognise potential harm, and***
- 3. Self-control skills.***

1. Bike Control Skills

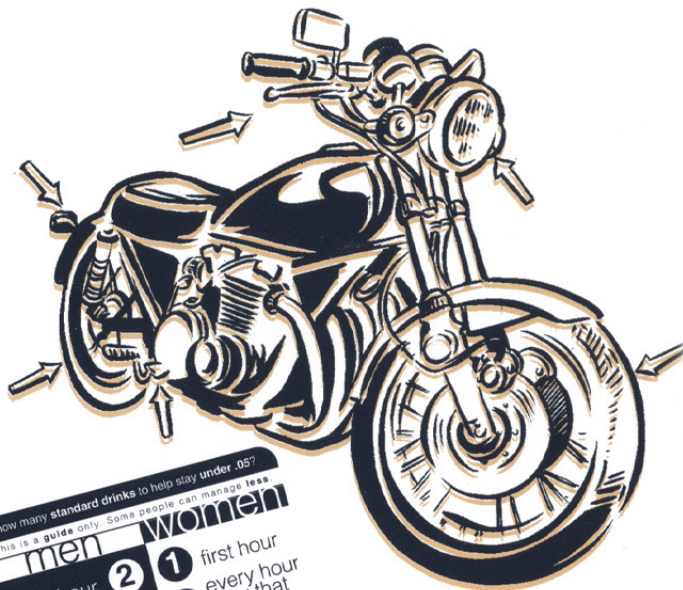
A. Before you ride, always check:

■ Your Bike

- Any fluid leaks, tyres, indicators, stop lights, brakes.
(Your owner's manual will list what you need to check.)

■ Yourself

- What affects you affects your riding—alcohol, drugs (illegal and some prescription drugs) and emotions (e.g. being angry).

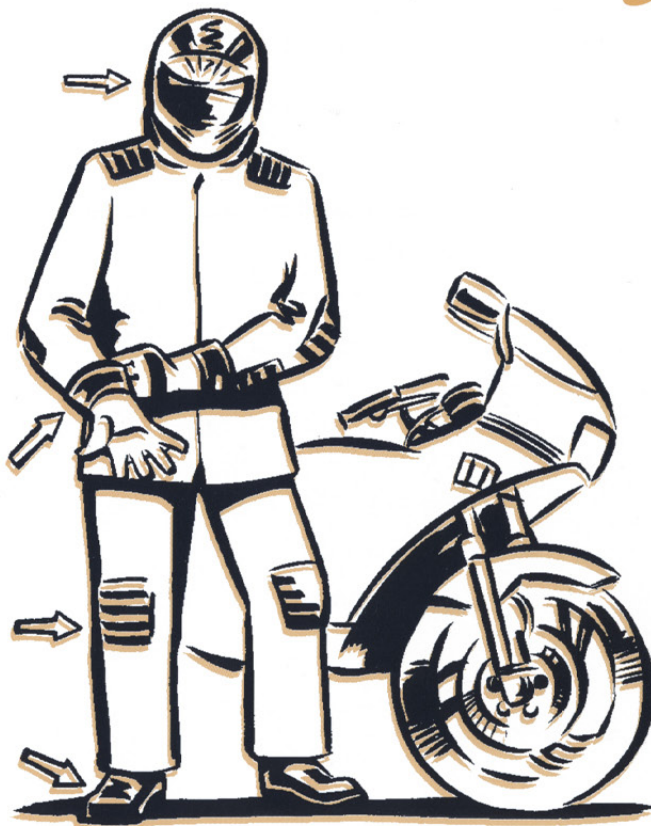


■ **Your Gear**

- It doesn't always prevent injury, but it sure lessens the blow.

■ **Your Helmet**

- Securely fitted, they last 1–5 years, depending upon use, and are designed to absorb only one impact or one drop. Always buy a new helmet, as you don't know the history of a secondhand helmet.



B. Controlling Your Bike

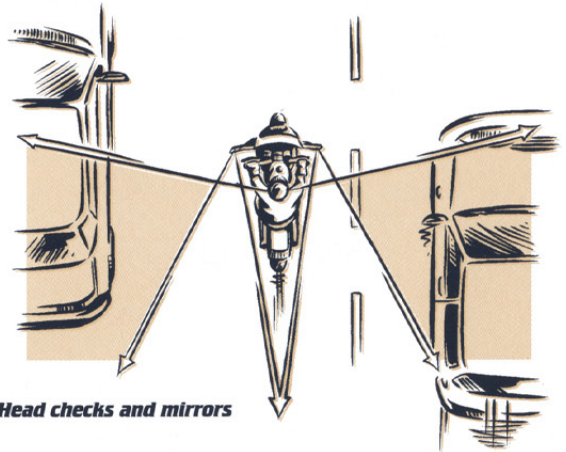
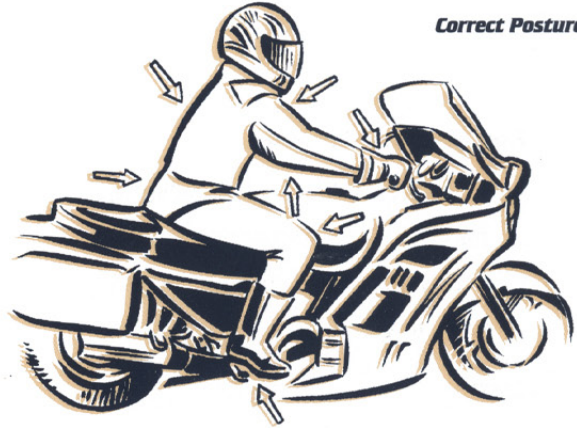
■ **Correct Posture:**

- This increases control and comfort and reduces fatigue. Feet on foot rests (arch of foot), knees in and against the tank backside in rider's part of saddle, back reasonably straight, shoulders and arms relaxed, elbows slightly bent, and wrists down.

■ **Head Checks and Mirrors:**

- The shaded areas show the blind spots. A quick head check to the blind spots before you move into them can save your life. Make it a habit.

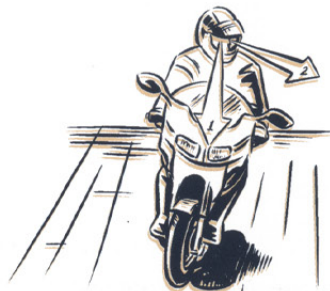
Correct Posture



Head checks and mirrors

■ **Head and Eye Placement**

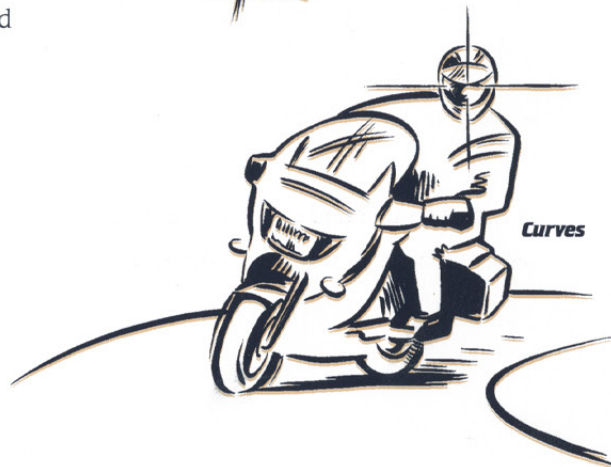
- Eyes have a direct relationship with handlebars. Do not focus on obstacles you want to avoid but look where you want to go.



Head and Eye Placement

■ **Curves**

- When riding around a curve, the body leans into the curve, head is upright and eyes are level with the ground and maintain a line of sight through the curve.



Curves

■ **Braking at Very Low Speeds (Under 10 km/h)**

- When wheeling your bike, make sure front wheel is straight before using front brake
- When riding very slowly, keep throttle above idle, use the rear brake only to slow, and clutch to prevent stalling.

■ **Turning at Very Low Speeds**

- The slower you go, the more you have to compensate for the weight of the bike, so you must lean out of the turn and look where you want to go.



Wheeling your bike



Riding very slowly

C. Controlling Your Bike at Higher Speeds

■ ***Changing Direction (Swerving)***

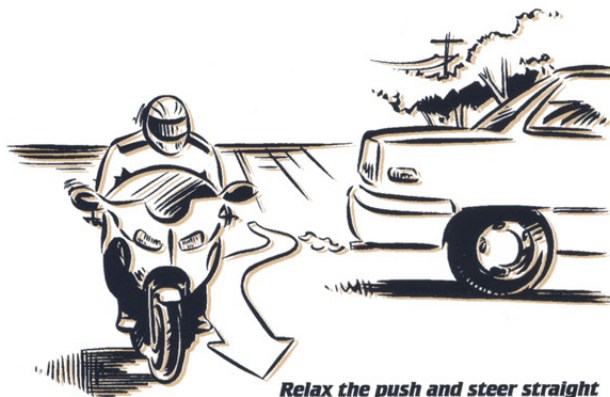
- To change direction, there are two steps:
 1. Look where you want to go.
 2. Firmly push the handlebar on the side you want to go to i.e. push right, go right; push left, go left.

This momentarily steers the bike off your intended course but forces the bike to lean in the direction you want to go. Once the swerve is started, relax the push and steer straight.

Better to avoid having to swerve by maintaining survival space.



Push right, go right



Relax the push and steer straight

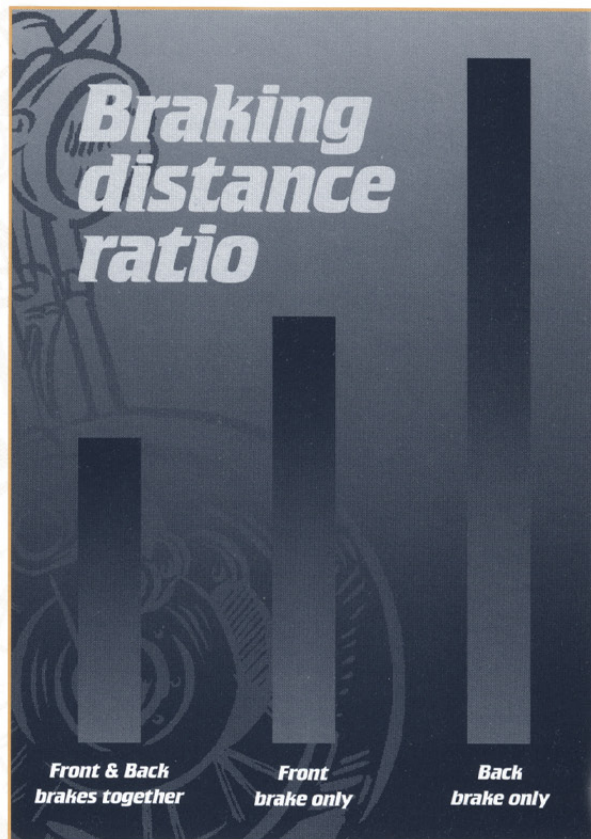
■ **Braking**

- Using both brakes together will stop the bike in the shortest distance.

■ **Good Braking**

- There are two parts to good braking—set-up and squeeze.

Set-up means to apply the front and back brake levers just until the brakes start to work.



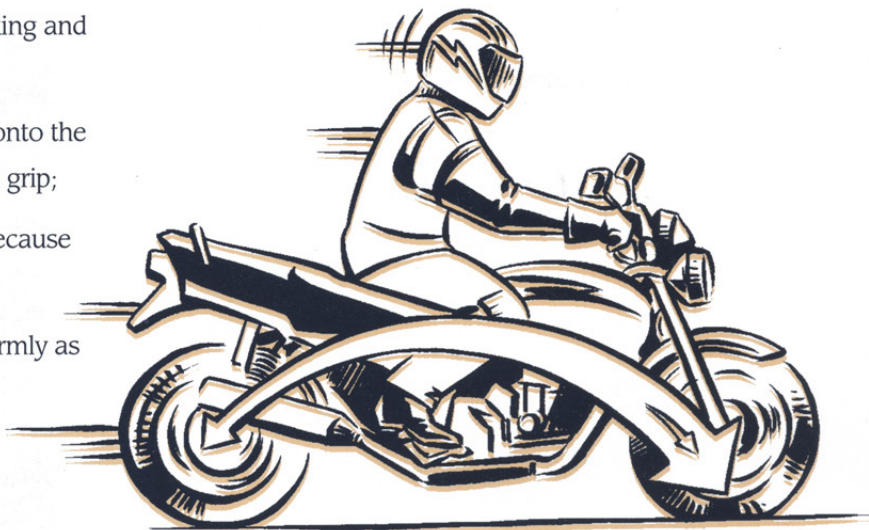
The set-up prepares you and the bike for braking and:

1. takes the slack out of the braking and suspension systems;
2. begins the transfer of weight onto the front tyre, which gives it more grip;
3. alerts the driver behind you because your brake light comes on.

Then, progressively squeeze as firmly as you need until you stop.

Set-up and squeeze needs to be practised until it is a habit.

- On poor surfaces (e.g. wet or gravel) gently squeeze and allow a longer distance to stop. In the wet, set up a lot earlier to dry the brakes.



Transfer of weight onto the front tyre

Bike Control Skills

■ **Skidding**

Grabbing your front brake or stomping on your back brake in an emergency rather than set-up and squeeze, can cause a skid.

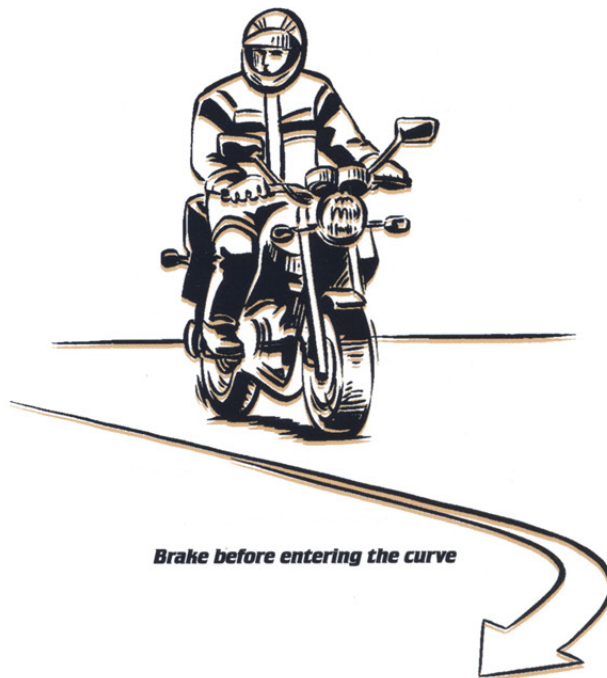
What do you do if the:

- Rear wheel skids? Steer the bike straight if it's out of line, then release the brake pressure and reapply carefully.
- Front wheel skids? Release the brake immediately and reapply carefully.

■ **Curves**

Brake before entering the curve. Because your tyre grip is being used up for cornering, there is less available for braking.

If you have to brake in the curve, get the bike as upright as possible and the handlebars straight before you squeeze.



2. Mental Skills to Recognise Potential Harm

The good rider needs to develop the mental skills to see and avoid possible harm before it happens.

■ **Survival Space**

- The rider should develop the habit of looking then setting up brakes or moving away.
- As a good safety guide you need to be ready for action at least 3 seconds before an event. A 3-second 'survival space' gives you time to react and then stop or move away from the danger.



■ **Calculating your survival space**

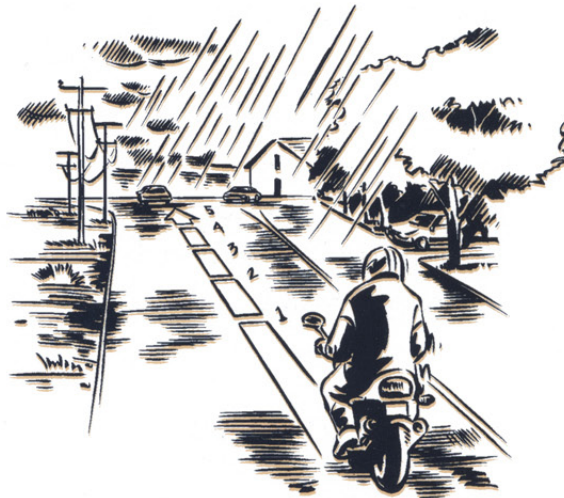
- Select a stationary point in front of you and count, 'One thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three'. If you have passed your selected point before you get to the end of '1003', you need to give yourself more room.



Three second 'survival space'

■ **In bad conditions**

- Like wet or gravel roads, you'll need at least another second, may be more. (It's safer to have 5 or 6 seconds).



In bad conditions

■ **Protecting your survival space**

- Look at these examples of how the riders protect their survival space.

■ **(1) On-coming Traffic**

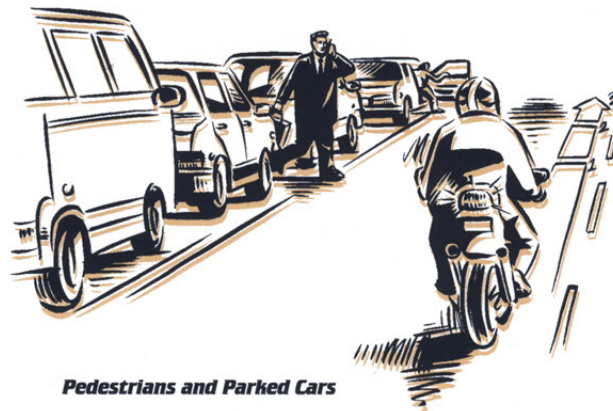
- Rider moves away from possible danger.



On-coming Traffic

■ **(2) Pedestrians and Parked Cars**

- Rider sets up the brakes and moves away from possible danger.



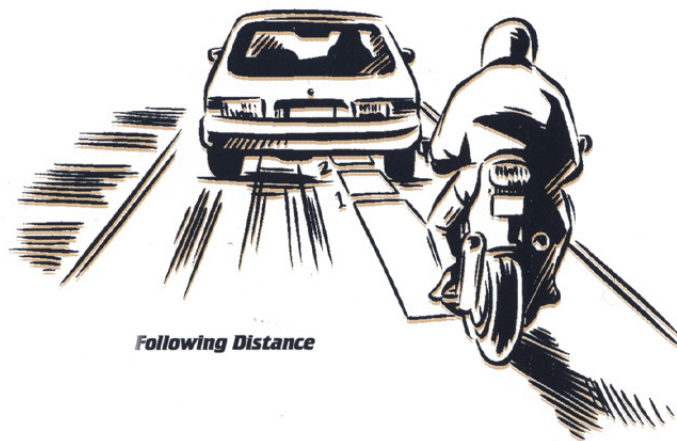
Pedestrians and Parked Cars

■ **(3) Minor Intersection**

- Rider sets up the brakes and moves away from possible danger.

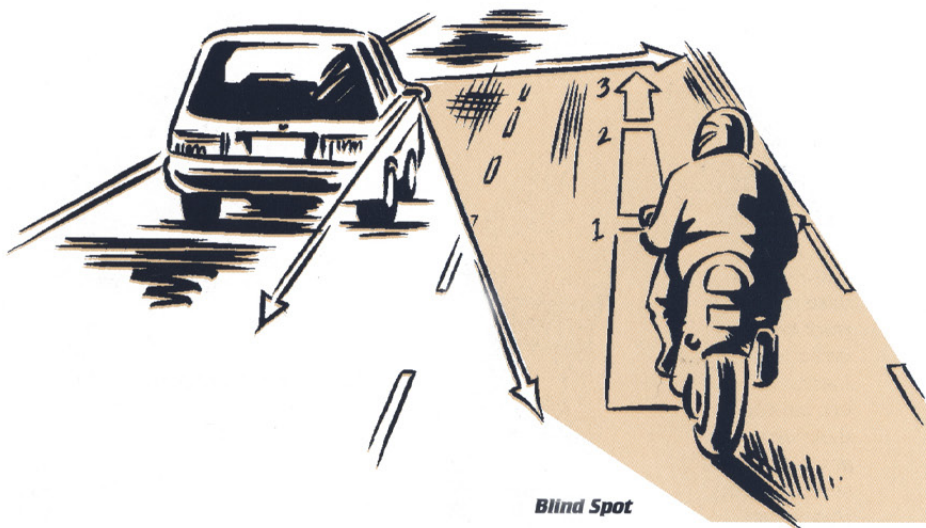
■ **(4) Following Distance**

- In the dry, follow 3 seconds behind; in the wet, make it 4-6 seconds.



■ (5) *Blind Spot*

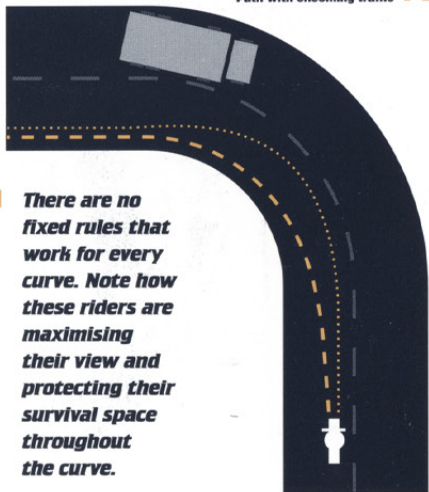
- When you realise you are in this dangerous situation, drop back to protect survival space.



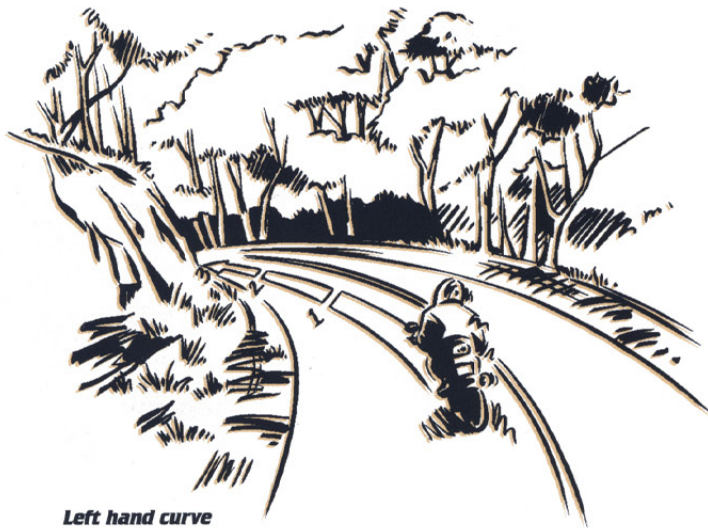
(6) Left-hand Curve

- Slow down before the curve, using brakes and changing gears as necessary. Position yourself to maximise your view and protect the 3-second survival space throughout the curve.

Path with no oncoming traffic
Path with oncoming traffic - - -



There are no fixed rules that work for every curve. Note how these riders are maximising their view and protecting their survival space throughout the curve.



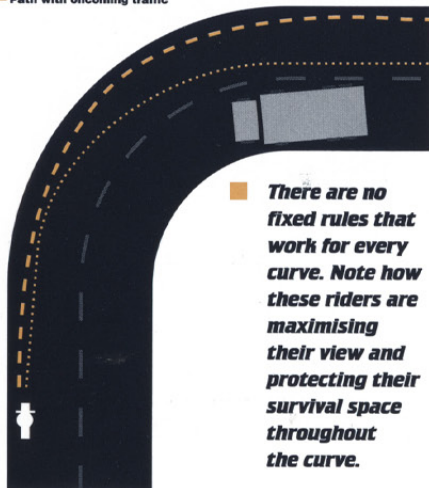
Left hand curve

■ (7) Right-hand Curve

- Slow down before the curve, using brakes and changing gears as necessary. Position yourself to maximise your view and protect the 3-second survival space throughout the curve.

..... Path with no oncoming traffic

- - - - - Path with oncoming traffic



■ *There are no fixed rules that work for every curve. Note how these riders are maximising their view and protecting their survival space throughout the curve.*



Right hand curve

For most riders, riding is much more than just a means of transport. It feels great—‘fun and freedom’. Probably the hardest thing about riding is having the self-control to keep this ‘fun and freedom’ in check.

The ‘fun and freedom’ feeling pushes some riders to stretch their limits, to ride high-risk.

High-risk riding is putting yourself in a dangerous situation where you depend on luck to get you through without crashing.

Let's say you are running late and you take a blind left corner a bit too fast. So you swing wide and cross the centre white line. You are riding high-risk because you are depending upon luck to get you through and not your own skills. If you are lucky, there will not be a car coming the other way.



Self-Control Skills

You are responsible for your own survival; don't hand it over to other road users and don't leave it to luck.

You can help yourself by looking at the way you ride and developing a different way of thinking. Instead of blaming the other rider or driver for a near miss, start thinking of what you could've done to keep control of your own safety, how you could've protected your survival space. You then learn from your experiences and mistakes.

There is high-risk and low-risk riding. The safer alternative always takes a lot of self-control but it will help keep you safe and help you enjoy riding for as long as you want to ride. The choice is always yours.



The choice is always yours



***Ride
On***

Ride On



*For more copies of this booklet,
or to order the Ride On video,
Call: 1800 621 372*



Commonwealth Department of
Transport and Regional Services

Rider

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