

TRAINING

MANAGE THE RIDE

10 TOP TIPS FOR SAFE RIDING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

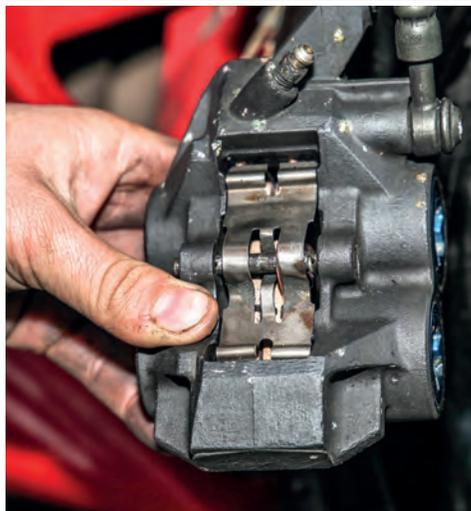
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There is absolutely no denying that a riding a motorcycle is a lot more fun than sitting in cars and it is more fuel efficient as well.

However, when it comes to safety, motorcycles just cannot beat cars or other four-wheeled vehicles, partly

because there is no protection around a motorcyclist and also because motorcyclists are more vulnerable to external factors like other road users, climate and environment.

Here are 10 motorcycle safety tips to help every rider reduce the risks.



1 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Riding a motorcycle requires skills and you need to pass the Basic Handling Skills test to get your licence to ride. But that doesn't prepare you very well for real life riding on the road. That's where the Ride Forever courses come in. These are designed for motorcyclists at every level, from learners to experienced riders and will help you learn how to tackle real-life situations more effectively.

2 PRE RIDE CHECKS

Even if your motorcycle is brand new, you need to do the basic checks every time, before you ride. Check the brakes, electrics (lights, indicators etc), chain, tyres. It's also important to check for any loose bolts or parts, or any mechanical hazards. If you are unsure what to look for specifically, get a technician to give you a checklist of 'ride critical' things to look at and get into the habit of pre-ride inspections.

3 EDUCATE YOUR PILLION

There are certain safety rules that your passenger sitting behind must be aware of too. Make sure you tell your partner how to behave while on the road. All he/she is expected to do is sit tight and not try any stunts, which can prove dangerous to both of you. Certain things your partner must not do is try to look behind, move the body while in motion, stand up or bend down on any side. Your motorcycle will react to any such sudden movements and could result in you losing control.

4 MAINTAIN A HEALTHY SPEED

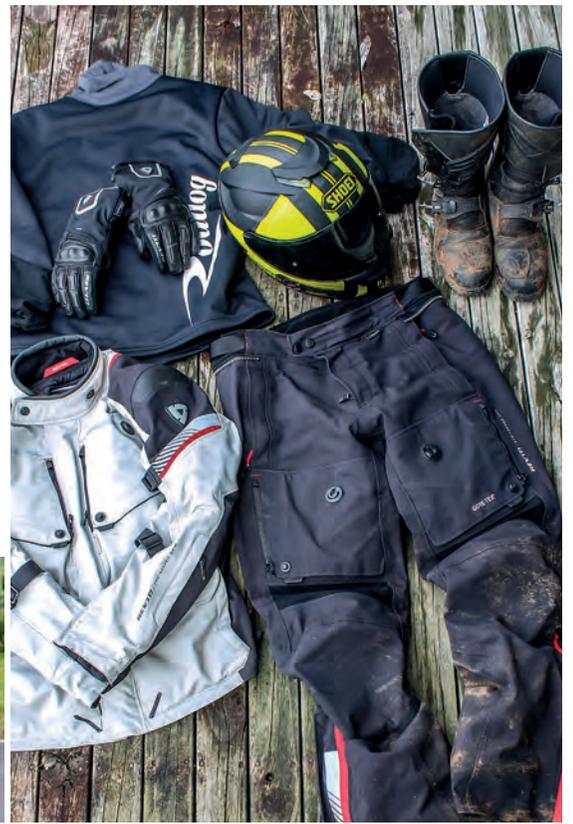
Speed limits are created for a reason and every route and road has a different limit. Pay attention to these and use common sense while making a judgment on your speed.

If the road is empty and wide without many vehicles, it is okay to ride at top speed as per the limit set for that road. If there are many corners and bends, it is best to ride at a slower pace to avoid surprises, especially where there are blind corners. You should never ride outside your comfort and control zone.



5 AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Every second while you are riding a motorcycle requires you to remain cautious. There will be plenty of opportunities to get distracted and if you find anything really worth watching, just slow down and stop for the view. Never try to look anywhere other than the road ahead of you. Avoid taking phone calls while riding. Pull over at a rest spot to check for any calls you might have missed.



6 STAY 100% ON THE JOB

When you are riding a motorcycle, you have to be more focussed and defensive than when you're driving a car. You will need to put 100% attention into staying alive on your bike. Your spatial awareness – where you are on the road in relation to everything else and knowing what else is around you – will help you make good decisions on your ride.

There are a lot of tips that can be taught to you, but it is mostly your common sense that you need to apply during every second of your ride.

7 GEAR-UP

The second most important step before you take to the road, is getting the right safety gear for you and your pillion. The first rule is to wear the right gear all the time, with all skin covered.

You – each – need a helmet, preferably full faced, gloves, reinforced jacket, riding boots with ankle support and sturdy trousers with knee and hip protection.



8 KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING

When you are planning a road trip on your motorcycle, make sure to learn about the route. Find out about the roads on that route, if there are any roadworks, and what sort of speed limits and traffic you can expect. It's a good idea to identify refuelling locations on longer rides and make sure you have an idea of places you can stop to take a break.

9 UNDERSTAND THE WEATHER

This is very important part of planning your motorcycle ride, especially when you are planning a long distance trip. Check the weather forecast not just in your city, but everywhere you are traveling on your motorcycle on that day. Avoid riding when there are rough weather conditions and see if the route has sufficient motels where you can stop in case of emergencies. Certain weather conditions make riding impossible due to a lack of visibility and slippery roads in case of rain.

10 RIDE IN A GOOD MOOD

When you are stressed, sad, disturbed or angry – these are not the times when you should consider riding. If you are overtired or drowsy, it's time to stop riding and recharge.

Before a big ride especially, make sure you have had enough sleep, you are in a good mood, free of any stress and just very happy about going on the road trip. Plan your motorcycle rides only when you are in a positive physical and mental state. ■■■