

tuning up for riders

a workbook for
learning to ride



Yukon

Highways and Public Works

There and back again. Safely.



There and back again. Safely.

Are you ready to take your road test?

See reverse.

Make sure you have **valid** insurance and vehicle registration for your motorcycle.

Make sure you **bring** your current learners licence.

Use Tuning Up to help you prepare.

Don't stress... get lots of **practice** and you'll be confident.

Ask us questions if it's not clear. We want you to succeed!

Riding skills

A rider with smart riding skills:



Observation

- looks well ahead in the direction of intended travel
- scans at intersections
- shoulder checks and mirror checks
- does a 360-degree vision check when backing up.



Hazard perception

- identifies hazards in the riding environment.



Speed control

- uses the throttle, brakes, clutch and gears smoothly
- chooses and maintains a consistent and appropriate speed.



Steering

- steers smoothly and accurately
- maintains good riding posture and balance
- keeps both hands on the hand grips when possible
- keeps both feet on the pegs while riding
- stops with the front wheel straight.



Space margins

- keeps appropriate space margins in front and on both sides
- chooses safe lane positions
- stops accurately.



Communication

- correctly uses turn signals, hand signals, eye contact, brake light and horn
- rides with maximum visibility.

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Who's it for?

This guide is designed for:

- beginning riders who want to learn to ride and get a motorcycle licence
- licensed riders who are new to Yukon or those who just want to review their skills
- experienced riders who are supervising new riders.

What's in it?

The 20 sessions in *Tuning up for riders* lead you through exercises to help you prepare for the class 6 road test. Although these sessions don't take the place of professional motorcycle training, you can use them to guide you as you practise on your own.

Different kinds of information appear in different locations in this guide. Here are two sample pages and suggestions for using the information.

The image shows two overlapping pages from a manual. The left page, titled "low-traffic practice", includes a diagram of a street intersection with a car, a motorcycle, and a truck. Below the diagram are instructions for observing hazards and a list of five numbered points. A blue box contains the text "Learn to ride start review". The right page, titled "session 8 - countersteering", includes a diagram of a curve with a motorcycle and arrows indicating steering. It contains a "coaching tips" box, a "Riding through a curve" section with instructions, and a list of "Batteries" (tips) for riding through a curve. The page numbers 66 and 49 are visible at the bottom of the pages.

Sidebar

Main column

Main column

Most of the information for each chapter can be found in the main column on the right of each page. This main column also includes:



- **Illustrations** — To display certain points or to give direction.
- **Reminder(s)** — Pay special attention to these while you do the exercises. They'll help you increase your skill.
- **Think about** — Exercises to do off your motorcycle. They will help you “tune up” your safety techniques.
- **On your bike** — Exercises to do on your motorcycle. They will help you prepare for your tests and help you build safe lifelong riding skills.
- **Coaching tips** — These notes will help your supervisor teach you the manoeuvres.
- **Choosing a route** — Check these suggestions when designing your practice routes.
- **How are you doing?** — Rate your progress and invite your supervisor to rate you as well.

Sidebar

You will find the following information on the left of the page:

Learn to ride
smart review

try this

warning!

using see-think-do

- **Learn to ride smart review** — Check the *Learn to ride smart* guide for valuable background information.
- **Try this** — Try these additional exercises when you have mastered the basic exercises in the session.
- **Warning** — Take note. This information will help keep you safe.
- **Using see-think-do** — Think about these questions and discuss them with your supervisor or other expert riders.

Getting ready

You're probably eager to get on your motorcycle and start to ride. But first you need to get some things in place.

Is your motorcycle suitable?

Make sure it's a size and weight and power that you can handle. Can you put both feet flat on the ground when you sit on the seat?

Your motorcycle must meet safety requirements and must be properly licensed and insured.

Is your licence in order?

You can't ride a motorcycle without a valid motorcycle learner's licence. Carry it whenever you ride.

Do you have a supervisor?

Learning to ride a motorcycle — like learning to drive a car — isn't easy. That's why a supervisor must be able to see you at all times while you're riding, until you pass the motorcycle road test.

Think carefully about the person that you ask to be your supervisor. Does your supervisor have:

- Time** — Can they commit to the time required?
- Qualifications** — Have a valid full-privilege Class 6 licence?
- Knowledge and skill** — Excellent riding skills and sound riding knowledge?
- Safety** — An excellent safety record and can be relied on not to drive or ride while impaired by alcohol or drugs, speed or take other risks on the road?
- Experience** — Lots of riding experience?
- Communication skills** — The ability to clearly give you information and communicate ideas?
- Patience** — Have the patience necessary to work with you?

A learning plan

Learning to ride a motorcycle is fun and exciting. But it can be challenging. It's important to set aside enough time to practise. Here are a few tips:

- **Use *Tuning up for riders*.** Because the sessions are written for both you and your supervisor, it's a good idea for both of you to read this guide. Keep it with you while you practise so that either of you can refer to it at any time.
- **Allow enough time.** Allow time during each practice session to review what you've already learned and to learn new skills. Plan your schedule with your supervisor. You may want to allow one- to two-hour blocks for your practice sessions. Depending on how fast you progress, you may need about 10 to 15 hours to become competent in motorcycle control skills (Sessions 1 to 10), and another 10 to 15 hours for on-road practice (Sessions 11 to 20). The more practice you get, the safer you'll be on the road.
- **Keep to the order.** The sessions progress from the simplest riding skills to the more complex. It is important to follow the order so you keep safe while you build your skills.
- **Keep records.** Use the **practice log** at the end of this guide to keep track of your practice sessions.
- **Assess yourself.** Use **How are you doing?** to evaluate your progress. Rate yourself and ask your supervisor to rate you. Then compare the results.

Learning by stages

A good way to learn to ride a motorcycle is to progress by stages. Each stage will help you build the skills necessary to move on. You should not move on until you're confident that you've mastered the previous stage. This way you can stay well within your skill limits. The best way to expand your riding limits, or to progress to the next stage, is to practise.

Stage 1: Off-street practice (Sessions 1 to 10)

To learn basic motorcycle-handling skills, start out in dry weather for your first few practice sessions. Find a quiet, paved area that has no traffic, such as a parking lot. Choose an area that's:

- legal for you to use

- big enough (20 by 50 metres minimum; 30 by 100 metres — about the size of a football field — would be better)
- paved and flat (access to a slight incline is also useful)
- clean and free of parked cars, obstacles, debris and grease.

This stage is very important. It builds the foundation for your future riding skills. Don't attempt more complex manoeuvres until you're confident that you can ride your motorcycle at low speeds with good throttle and clutch control, accurate steering and smooth speed control.

Stage 2: Low-traffic practice (Sessions 11 to 14)

In this stage you'll work with your supervisor to practise basic skills at higher speeds and in low traffic, but still in a low-risk environment. You'll also start to use the see-think-do strategy and develop your hazard perception skills.

Choose a route that:

- has little traffic (a quiet country road or an industrial park in the evening or on the weekends)
- has long straight stretches, some hills and curves and a couple of side roads
- is close to your home or easy for you to get to on your motorcycle, so that you don't need to ride in heavy traffic just to reach the site.

Don't leave this stage until you can steer smoothly and control the gears, execute turns and curves accurately and identify and respond to hazards.

Stage 3: Moderate-traffic practice (Sessions 15 to 17)

Normal traffic is one of the most challenging riding environments because of the number of other road users and the complexity of traffic at intersections and on multi-lane roads. Choose an area that's only moderately busy so that you can practise your new skills in safety. Your route should include:

- a variety of intersections
- different volumes of traffic
- multi-lane roads
- parking lots.

Practise your riding and hazard perception skills in this stage until you're confident that you can ride safely.

Stage 4: Highway practice (Sessions 18 to 20)

Try to develop finesse in your riding during this stage. Choose a highway that's easy to get to and has a variety of exit and entrance points. Don't move on to this stage until you're confident of your motorcycle skills and your ability to judge traffic accurately.

Professional training

Professional training is extremely valuable. Good teaching will help you learn faster and avoid developing bad riding habits.

Other resources

- Always use *Tuning up for riders* along with *Learn to ride smart*. This way you'll have the background information that you'll need to get the most out of your practice sessions.
- Don't forget to refer to your owner's manual for information on how your motorcycle works.
- Many riders gather information about motorcycling by reading motorcycle magazines and books.

Being a supervisor

Being a supervisor is a big commitment. It means demonstrating riding skills and coaching the rider through difficult manoeuvres. Before you commit to be a supervisor, ask yourself these questions:

Do I have the time?

A new rider needs a lot of practice to gain skills and confidence. You should plan to commit many hours helping the new rider prepare for the motorcycle road test.

❑ **Am I qualified?**

Supervisors must have a valid full-privilege Class 6 licence. You also need to be an experienced rider with a good safety record.

❑ **Do I have a good relationship with the rider?**

Supervising a new rider can be stressful. Can your relationship survive the frustrations of riding practice?

❑ **Am I a good communicator?**

Your main teaching tool will be your communication with the rider. Are you a good listener? Can you explain complex ideas in simple terms?

❑ **Do I have a lot of patience?**

At times, helping a new rider can challenge your ability to stay calm and collected.

Coaching tips

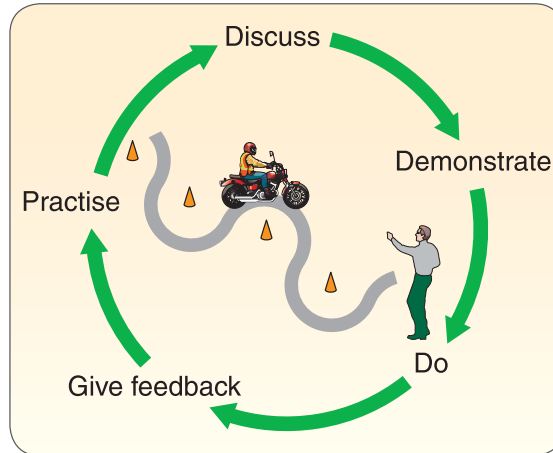
Supervising a new rider can be a rewarding experience, but it can also be challenging. Here are some suggestions that may help the experience work better for both you and the new rider:

- **Use the see-think-do strategy.** Take time to help the rider develop a systematic way of seeing the riding environment, thinking about it and taking appropriate riding actions. One way to do this is to set aside time to discuss the see-think-do questions in this manual.
- **Use a learning cycle.** The following cycle is one way to help the new rider develop skills:
 - Discuss the exercise with the new rider.
 - Demonstrate it.
 - Let the new rider do the exercise while you watch.
 - Give feedback.
 - Allow time for the rider to practise.
 - If the rider is not successful, go through the cycle again.
- **Review.** Build in plenty of review time both at the beginning of the session and during it.

Learn to ride smart review

Read *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6 for background on the see-think-do strategy.

Repeat this learning cycle until the rider has mastered the basic skill.



- **Assess accurately.** Use the rating scales in this guide to assess the rider's skills and make clear suggestions for improvement. You'll need to judge whether the rider is overconfident and apt to rate their own riding skills too highly, or whether the rider is under-confident and apt to be overcritical and overcautious. These factors may influence how you communicate your assessment of each manoeuvre.
- **Use the coaching tips.** Throughout the guide you will find helpful tips on how to teach specific exercises and descriptions of the kinds of behaviours you should encourage in the new rider.
- **Plan.** Always plan routes ahead. Consider safety and difficulty.
- **Model a good attitude.** Because you'll be an influential model, the new rider may adopt your attitude toward riding. Make sure you pass on an attitude that supports good judgment and responsibility. For example, never coach or supervise a new rider while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- **Control the situation.** New riders are often eager to move on and may be overconfident. To help control the situation, always choose a safe riding environment. If you're riding together, be clear about how important it is for you to be able to see the new rider at all times and for the new rider to pull over if you become separated. Never let a new rider attempt a manoeuvre unless you're sure they can complete it safely.
- **Illustrate.** Drawing diagrams of manoeuvres can help to clarify teaching points. *Tuning up for riders* includes some blank intersection diagrams for your use. You may also want to keep a notebook handy.

- **Create transitions.** You may find that the more challenging, high-speed manoeuvres will get the rider's adrenaline going. Intersperse these exercises with low-speed manoeuvres so that the rider maintains good control.
- **Communicate with a rider training school.** If the rider is taking professional training, you may find it useful to talk to the instructors and co-ordinate your practice sessions with their training program.

Communication tips

- **Focus.** Keep your communication focussed on the riding. Leave other conversations for later.
- **Think safety.** Talk only in a safe place. Stop and pull off the road. Sometimes you'll have to get off the motorcycle.
- **Be positive.** The new rider needs encouragement. Give positive comments and try to end each practice session on a positive note. Communication starters include:

That turn was good. Now try ...

You're really progressing. Now try ...

- **Use questions.** Asking questions can help the rider assess his or her own skills (for example, *What did you think of the way you ...?*).
- **Be clear.** Use simple explanations. Focus on the most important point and don't give too many instructions at one time.
- **Give reasons.** Tell the rider **what** you want them to do and why it's important. This helps the rider understand good principles of riding.

notes

off-street practice



The first 10 sessions in this guide will help you gain the riding skills you need before moving on to riding in low traffic. Learning basic riding skills in an off-street location will give you a sound foundation for the rest of your riding career. Give yourself enough time to become confident in your skills.

Getting ready

You'll need:

- an off-street training site
- a suitable motorcycle
- a motorcycle learner's licence
- your supervisor
- some training supplies:
 - at least eight markers (try large plastic jugs half-filled with water)
 - masking tape or sidewalk chalk
 - a measuring tape.

Getting to the site

Avoid riding to the practice site until you've learned the off-street riding skills. Instead, ask your supervisor to ride your motorcycle to the site while you travel as a passenger or go by car. An alternative is to transport your motorcycle to the site by truck or trailer.

Planning your practice

Set your own pace — Work through the sessions at your own rate. Make sure you're competent in your skills before moving on to the next exercise or session.

Move from large to small — For most exercises, start out with the markers set well apart. Then, as your skills improve, move the markers closer together to gain more precision.

Be creative — The exercises in these 10 sessions cover the basics. However, you're free to vary and extend them or to combine them differently. If your training area isn't suitable for some of the exercises, try arranging the markers differently.



Self-check

You need to be safe when you ride. Before you start (and periodically while you're riding), take time to check yourself.

Make sure you're:

- drug- and alcohol-free
- wide awake
- focused
- healthy
- calm
- wearing an approved helmet
- wearing eye protection
- wearing appropriate gear, including a high visibility garment.

Reminder — Check your licence plate to make sure your motorcycle insurance is up-to-date. And remember to carry your motorcycle driver's licence and current insurance papers whenever you ride.

Motorcycle check

Motorcycle controls

Identify these controls and tell your supervisor how they work:

- ignition switch
- fuel supply valve
- the gauges and indicators on the instrument panel
- choke or enrichener
- high/low beam switch
- turn signals
- horn
- clutch lever

Learn to ride smart review

Check **Learn to ride smart, chapter 3**, for information on controls.

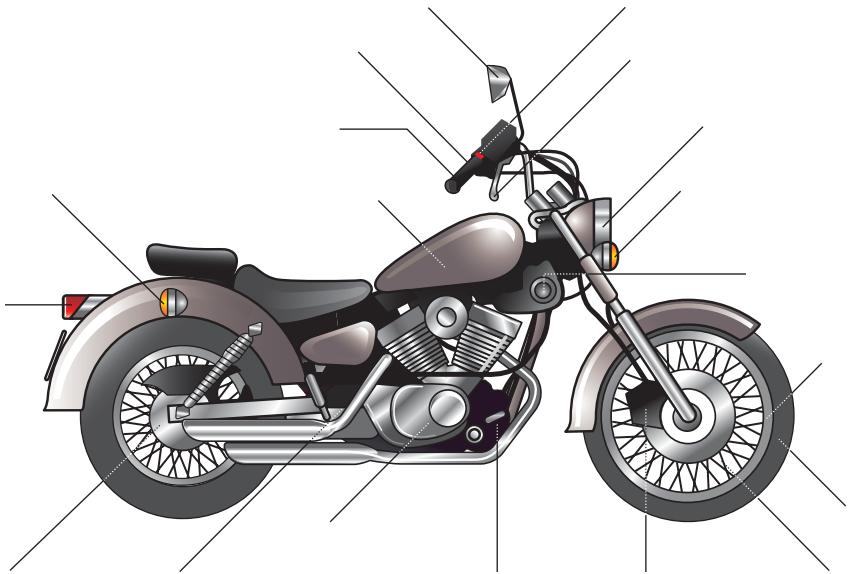
Before you get on the bike, make sure you know where the controls are located and how they work. Reading your owner's manual is a good idea as you do this.

- throttle
- electric starter
- engine cut-off switch
- front brake lever
- rear brake pedal
- gearshift lever.

Pre-trip check

Your safety depends on how safe your motorcycle is. Do a pre-trip check each time you get ready to ride.

- Watch your supervisor do a pre-trip check on your motorcycle. Observe carefully and ask questions so that you'll be ready to do it on your own next time.
- As you watch, use this illustration and note the names of the parts that you should check before taking your motorcycle out.
- Show your supervisor how to do a pre-trip check.



Fill in the names of the parts you need to check before you ride.



Moving the motorcycle

These off-bike exercises will help you learn to balance your motorcycle and keep it upright while pushing it. You'll need this skill to move your bike when it's not running (like when you take it out of the garage).

Pushing

When pushing the motorcycle, keep the weight leaned slightly towards you. This is especially important when turning, as the motorcycle could fall. Also, keep all four fingers resting on the brake lever in case you need to apply the brake. This is called **covering the brake**.

- Approach from the left.
- Apply the front brake.
- Put the motorcycle in neutral.
- Stand the motorcycle upright.
- Raise the side stand.
- Look where you want to go.
- Release the front brake, covering it with all four fingers.
- Scan in all directions to make sure the way is clear. This is called a **360-degree vision check**.
- Push straight ahead.

try this

- Push the bike in wide circles and figure 8s.
- Push the bike backward in a straight line. Keep both hands on the handlebars, or use your right hand to grasp a secure point near the back of the bike.
- Push the bike backward while turning it.

Stopping and parking

- Make sure that the front wheel is straight.
- Apply the front brake gently.
- Put the motorcycle in first gear.
- Lean the bike onto the side stand.
- Turn the handlebars to the left.

Reminder — Don't look down at the motorcycle. Look where you want to go. If you're turning, look through your turn. If you're backing up, look behind you.

Getting on and off the motorcycle

These exercises will help you get used to the feel of your motorcycle. You'll practise getting on the bike, resting in a comfortable position while you're stopped, walking the bike backward and then getting off and parking the bike.

Getting on

This exercise shows you how to get on your bike correctly. You'll also learn to keep the motorcycle upright by using the bike's two wheels and your left foot to maintain a comfortable balance. This is called the **three-point resting position**.

- Apply the front brake and straighten the handlebars.
- Straddle the motorcycle, keeping the weight of the bike on the side stand.
- Sit down.
- Stand the motorcycle upright, then lean it slightly to the right so that your right leg is holding the weight.
- Raise the side stand with your left foot.
- Balance the motorcycle, transferring the weight over to your left leg.
- Bring the right foot up and apply the rear brake.
- Maintain the three-point resting position until you're ready to move.

Reminder — If you don't lift the side stand up before you move off, it could scrape the ground and upset the motorcycle.



coaching tips

The first few times, get the rider to put both feet down and move the motorcycle slightly from side-to-side to get a feel for the weight of the motorcycle.

Backing up

- Check that the motorcycle is in neutral.
- Do a 360-degree vision check.
- Cover the front brake by keeping your hand ready to apply it if necessary.
- Walk the bike backwards.
- Look from side-to-side and behind every few seconds.

Getting off

- Apply the front brake.
- Put your right foot down.
- Lean the motorcycle slightly to the right.
- Kick out your side stand with your left foot, and check that it's all the way out.
- Lean the bike's weight on the side stand.
- Get off.

Reminders —

- When parking your motorcycle, leave it in first gear with the handlebars turned in the direction that gives maximum stability.
- If you have a motorcycle with a centre stand, check the owner's manual or ask the dealer for instructions on how to use it correctly.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Knowing the controls

- Identifies the controls. 1 2 3

Pushing the motorcycle

- Pushes in a straight line with good balance. 1 2 3
- Keeps eyes up. 1 2 3
- Covers the front brake. 1 2 3
- Backs up safely and with good balance. 1 2 3
- Pushes through curves safely and with good balance. 1 2 3
- Keeps front wheel straight when stopping. 1 2 3

Getting on and off the motorcycle

- Gets on and off the motorcycle safely and correctly. 1 2 3
- Balances in a three-point resting position. 1 2 3
- Uses side stand correctly. 1 2 3
- Turns handlebars correctly when parked. 1 2 3



Riding posture

Good riding posture is important. It prevents fatigue and helps give you control. During this session, ask your supervisor to check your posture as you sit on the motorcycle.



How's your riding posture? Use the list below to check it.

- Eyes are up, looking where you want to go.
- Wrists are flat or turned slightly downward when you are holding the handlebars. (This will prevent you from accidentally rolling the throttle on if you have to brake suddenly.)
- Elbows are slightly bent.
- Upper body is relaxed with shoulders and elbows down.
- Knees are close to the gas tank.
- Feet are on the pegs, angled slightly outward with the heels just behind the footpegs.
- Body is in line with the motorcycle frame and centred on the motorcycle.

using see-think-do

- Have you done a self-check?
- Have you done a motorcycle pre-trip check? See session 1.



The buddy push

The buddy push is an exercise you do while sitting on your motorcycle with your supervisor pushing you while the engine's turned off and the motorcycle's in neutral. Having a buddy (in this case, your supervisor) push you gives you practice balancing and maintaining good riding posture while riding in a straight line. Your supervisor will need to get the bike up to 8 to 10 km/h or a fast walking pace. At the end of the push, you'll practise braking to help you learn to use both brakes separately and together.

Using the rear brake

- Release the rear brake pedal, leaving your right foot on the peg.
- Bring your left foot up to the footpeg when your supervisor starts to push the motorcycle from behind.
- Move forward about 10 metres, and then apply the rear brake with gradually increasing pressure.
- Keep the handlebars straight.
- Put your left foot on the ground as the motorcycle stops.
- Maintain the three-point resting position until you move off again.

Reminder — Keep your eyes up. Pick a point well ahead and



coaching tips

- Give the motorcycle a strong push and let go. The rider should keep the motorcycle upright without help.
- At the beginning, it may be easier for the rider to start with both feet on the ground.
- If the bike starts to turn or if the rider starts to lose balance, tell the rider to look in the direction they want to go. Check the rider's posture during this exercise.

keep looking at it as you go.

Using the front brake

- Follow the rear brake exercise, but this time apply the front brake by gently squeezing the lever.



coaching tips

- Make sure the rider doesn't use the rear brake while applying the front brake.
- Stress to the rider that it's important to keep the handlebars straight when using the front brake.

- Keep the handlebars straight to prevent the motorcycle from falling.

Using both brakes

- Repeat the previous steps, but gently apply both brakes at the same time.

Reminder — Keep your upper body relaxed.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Buddy push

• Has good balance.	1	2	3
• Keeps front wheel straight.	1	2	3
• Steers smoothly and accurately.	1	2	3
• Uses both brakes smoothly.	1	2	3
• Has correct riding posture.	1	2	3
• Keeps foot on the rear brake when stopped.	1	2	3

notes



Understanding power

In this session, you'll start riding under power. Take a few minutes to learn how to check your engine before you start it up, and to know how to use the clutch.

Preparing to start — FINE-BC

Each time you start your engine, you need to go through a number of steps. Memorizing the FINE-BC steps and doing them every time you start your engine will help keep you problem-free on the road.

- F** — Fuel. Make sure that the fuel supply valve is in the “on” position and that you have enough fuel.
- I** — Ignition. Turn the key to the “on” position.
- N** — Neutral. Make sure the neutral light is on, and move the motorcycle forward and backward with the clutch out to check that it's in neutral.
- E** — Engine cut-off switch. Check that the stop switch is in the “run” or “on” position.
- B** — Brake. Apply the front brake.
- C** — Clutch and choke. Pull the clutch lever toward the handgrip. If you are making a cold start, use the choke or enrichener.

Demonstrate FINE-BC to your supervisor.

Using the clutch — the friction zone

As you practise the exercises in this session, you'll start to learn how to use the clutch together with the throttle for smooth speed control. You control the amount of power that goes to the rear wheel by using the friction zone. This is sometimes called **slipping the clutch**.

In this session, make sure you can use the four clutch positions:

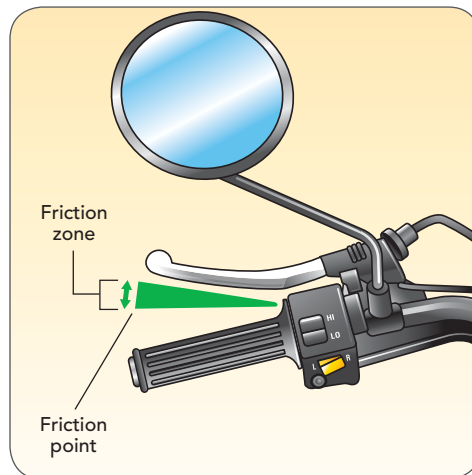
1. **Squeezed** — The clutch lever is squeezed against the handlebar. No power is delivered to the rear wheel.

Learn to ride smart review

Don't forget that your motorcycle needs an in-depth inspection every week or two to supplement the pre-trip check. For pointers on what to look for, read **periodic inspection** in **Learn to ride smart, chapter 3**. Also, check your owner's manual.

- 2. Friction point** — This is the point where you have begun to release the clutch and have just entered the friction zone. You'll feel a small amount of power moving to the rear wheel.
- 3. Friction zone** — As you continue to release the clutch lever more, it'll move through the friction zone. This is the distance between the friction point and the point where the clutch is fully released, shown in the illustration below by the green triangle. This allows more power to reach the rear wheel. You can adjust the location of the friction zone to suit your grip.
- 4. Released** — The clutch lever is fully out. All available power is delivered to the rear wheel.

As you release the clutch through the friction zone, more power reaches the rear wheel.



Starting up and moving off

Now you can balance, steer and brake. Time to start the engine and move forward. The next two exercises will teach you how to start the engine and use the clutch. For good control of the bike at low speeds, you'll use the clutch friction zone.

Whenever you're doing low-speed manoeuvres like the ones in this session, keep all four fingers resting on top of the clutch lever in case you need to use it. This is called **covering the clutch**.

Starting the engine

- Before you start your engine, go through the FINE-BC routine.
- Start the engine by pressing the starter button or using the kick-starter.
- If your motorcycle has a choke/enrichener, adjust it until the engine is running smoothly.

Reminders —

- Make sure the engine is warmed up and the choke/enrichener is off before you move. A warm engine will sound smooth when you rev it after the choke is shut off.
- If your motorcycle has a kick-starter, check your owner's manual for instructions on how to use it.



coaching tips

Have the rider use the engine cut-off switch several times, until they can find it without looking.

Creeping forward

In this exercise you learn to engage the clutch and use the friction zone to get the motorcycle moving under power.

- With your front brake applied, put your feet as far forward as you can comfortably reach them.
- Keep your eyes up and look straight ahead.
- Fully squeeze the clutch lever and put the motorcycle in first gear.
- Release the front brake and let the clutch out very slowly until you reach the friction point.
- From this point, release the clutch a little bit at a time until you feel the motorcycle moving forward. (You're now in the friction zone.)
- Move forward about a metre, keeping your feet on the ground.
- Squeeze the clutch lever and at the same time apply the front brake progressively and smoothly to stop.

try this

Repeat this exercise until you become confident about finding the friction zone to begin to move, and operating the brake to stop.

Reminders —

- Make sure the side stand is up.
- Don't release the clutch lever abruptly when you're stopped and in gear or the motorcycle may lurch, stall or suddenly take off.

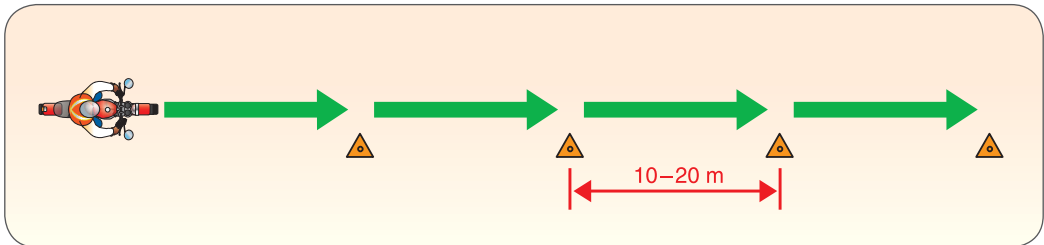


coaching tips

- This exercise must be handled carefully. The new rider will be moving under power for the first time and the motorcycle could take off accidentally. It's a good idea to stand just to the left of the rider so that you can quickly reach the clutch if necessary.
- Alternatively, you may want to cover the rider's clutch hand with your own so that you can better control the situation.
- Make it clear that the rider should not use any throttle and should travel only a short distance.

Moving off and stopping

This exercise is key to building your riding skills. Practise it until you can do it smoothly and with confidence.



Set up a few markers 10 to 20 metres apart. Follow the checklist as you move off and stop at each marker.

- ❑ Start the bike (it should be in neutral).
- ❑ Put the motorcycle into first gear.
- ❑ Find the friction point.
- ❑ Roll the throttle on a small amount and release the clutch lever slowly. **Be cautious — you don't need much throttle.**
- ❑ As the motorcycle starts to move, bring your left foot up and rest it on the footpeg.
- ❑ As you approach your stop point, roll the throttle off, squeeze the clutch lever and gently apply both brakes.
- ❑ Come to a stop at the marker and put your left foot down.

Reminders —

- Use good riding posture and keep your eyes up.
- Keep your knees in.
- Keep your upper body relaxed.
- Cover the clutch.



coaching tips

If the rider is having trouble balancing the bike, suggest they speed up a little.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your ratings with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Starting the engine

- Follows the FINE-BC procedure. 1 2 3

Creeping forward

- Releases the clutch smoothly. 1 2 3
- Keeps eyes up. 1 2 3

Moving off and stopping

- Uses the throttle and clutch smoothly. 1 2 3
- Uses both brakes smoothly. 1 2 3
- Stops accurately at a specific point. 1 2 3
- Rides in a straight line. 1 2 3
- Keeps the front wheel straight when stopped. 1 2 3
- Maintains correct riding posture. 1 2 3



Steering and looking

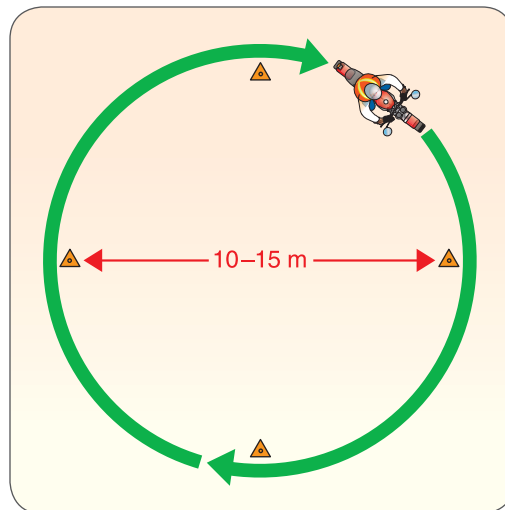
Steering can be easy if you use your eyes. It's tempting to look at the markers, but this won't help you to balance and steer. Instead, keep your head and eyes up and look in the direction you want to go, and your motorcycle will follow.

Before you do the following exercise, explain to your supervisor where you'll look and how you'll turn your head as you ride in a circle.



Riding in circles

In this exercise, you'll learn to steer through a curve while looking in the direction you want to go. You'll also practise maintaining the smooth speed control that you learned in the last session. Riding through a curve is a basic skill that you'll use in much of your riding. Keep at this exercise until you feel confident you can do it well.



Mark off a circle about 10 to 15 metres across, depending on the size of your practice area and the size of your bike. Once you are confident, try riding a big figure 8.

- Move off slowly.
- Keep your eyes up. Look across the circle to where you intend to go.

Learn to ride smart review

In this session, you're riding fairly slowly, and much of your steering will be low-speed steering. But, there may be times when you find yourself starting to countersteer. To make sure you know how to do both, review **low-speed steering** and **countersteering** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6.

- Accelerate to about 10 km/h. If the motorcycle leans let your body lean with it, but keep your head upright.
- Keep going around the circle until you feel confident.
- Practise going in both directions.

Reminders —

- Keep your head up and look where you want to go.
- Grip the tank with your knees.
- Try to keep your speed steady and controlled. Don't go too fast.
- Stay away from the edge of the practice lot — leave a safe space margin.



coaching tips

- Watch that the rider's head is turned.
- Make sure the rider keeps the speed low (15 km/h maximum) in this exercise.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your ratings with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Riding in circles

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Maintains smooth speed control. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Keeps head turned to look in the direction of travel. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains accurate steering path. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Leans with the motorcycle. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains correct riding position. | 1 | 2 | 3 |



Building confidence

Some new riders are overconfident and give themselves an unrealistically high rating on their riding skills. Others are under-confident and think their skills are weaker than they really are. Both riders may be putting themselves in danger. To be safe on your bike, you need to be realistic about your riding skills.

Go back over the **How are you doing?** sections in sessions 1 to 4.

- How did you rate yourself? How did your supervisor rate you? How much difference was there between the two ratings?
- Compare your riding skills now with your skills in session 1. How much do you think you've improved in:
 - maintaining balance a lot a little
 - controlling the motorcycle a lot a little
 - using skills automatically a lot a little
- How has your confidence level changed as your skill level has improved?

Spend a few minutes discussing your confidence level with your supervisor:

- Is it realistic?
- How could it be improved?

With your supervisor, write down the exercises that you need to review from the earlier sessions to increase your balance, control and ability to perform automatically. Set aside time to practise them.

Exercises I need to practise: _____



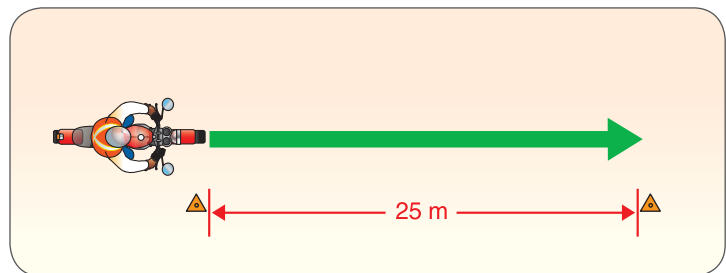
Low-speed exercises

Many riders think they're showing their skill when they ride at high speeds. But the truth is, riding at low speeds can be more difficult. The challenge of riding at very low speeds (under 5 km/h) is to keep your balance. You do this by using clutch-throttle control, by looking in the direction you want to go and by keeping your knees in and maintaining a relaxed upper-body posture. These techniques will help you maintain balance and steering control in slow, heavy traffic.

From now on, when you're doing low-speed exercises, practise covering the rear brake — keep your foot just above the brake pedal so that you're ready to apply it to control your speed.

The low-speed straight ride

Set marker 25 metres from the starting point.



- Release the clutch lever gently until you reach the friction zone and begin to move.
- Roll the throttle on slightly.
- Continue moving forward, maintaining a slow, steady walking speed. Your supervisor can help you keep this speed by walking beside you.
- Roll the throttle off and squeeze the clutch lever until you're just out of the friction zone.
- If you want to slow down, gently apply the rear brake.
- As you lose speed, you may start to lose balance — roll on the throttle and release the clutch slightly. This will take you back into the friction zone.
- Use clutch-throttle control until you reach the end marker and come to a stop.

Reminders —

- Keep your eyes up and keep looking in the direction of travel.
- Avoid using the front brake.
- Avoid rigid steering by allowing your arms and shoulders to remain relaxed.

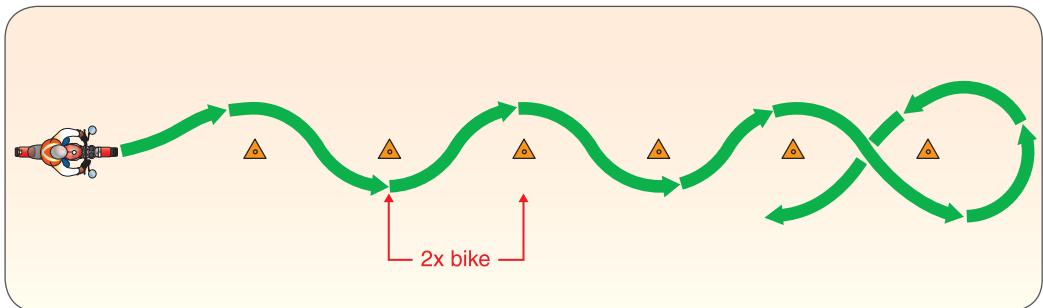


coaching tips

- The rider should start at a moderate speed (about 10 km/h), then slow down progressively to speeds that require using the clutch in the friction zone.
- Challenge the rider to use the clutch and go as slowly as possible without simply idling the engine.
- Check that the rider's knees are in and the upper body is relaxed.

Slalom with turn

In this exercise you'll combine clutch-throttle control with steering to ride through a slalom, make a turn and go back through the slalom course again. Your goal should be to ride the entire path without touching a marker, losing balance or stalling.



Set up markers as shown. To start, the distance between them should be two times the motorcycle length. The markers can be moved closer together (to about 1.5 times the motorcycle length) once the rider has gained more confidence.

- Start about five metres from the first marker, in line with the markers.
- Always keep your front wheel half a metre to one metre away from the markers.

- ❑ Use the clutch friction zone and throttle to deliver power smoothly.
- ❑ Steer so that your front wheel crosses between the markers at the halfway point.
- ❑ As you turn, look ahead to the next midpoint between the markers.
- ❑ Use the rear brake only to slow down, and don't use the front brake.
- ❑ Continue past the last marker.
- ❑ Turn around. (Don't forget to look through the turn.)
- ❑ Return through the slalom markers.

Reminders —

- Keep your knees in so that your weight doesn't shift.
- Don't stare at the markers. Always look in the direction you want to go.
- Cover the clutch.

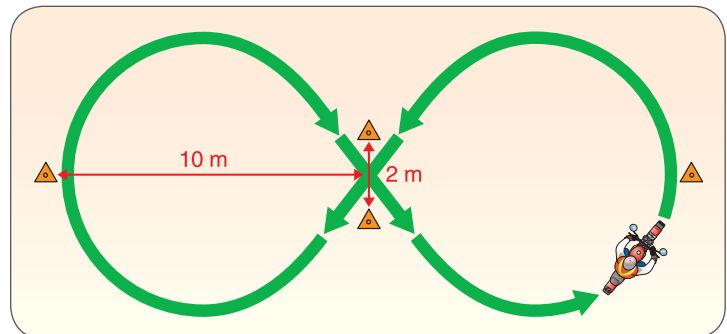
Figure 8

Keep a low speed, using the clutch friction zone and throttle control as you do a figure 8.

To set up the markers, measure the turning circle of the bike. Turn the handlebars as far as possible in either direction, then push the motorcycle in a half-circle. The track made by the front wheel is the turning circle.

In this exercise you may need to balance the motorcycle as it leans by keeping your body upright. This is called **counterbalancing**. Your eyes should be level with the horizon.

Start with 10-metre circles, then gradually move the markers until the circles are 1.5 metres larger than the turning circle of your bike.



- ❑ From a starting position, enter between the two middle markers, looking well ahead.
- ❑ Turn your head 90 degrees to look across the circle.
- ❑ Turn the handlebars in the direction you want to go.
- ❑ Steer your motorcycle around the circle, inside the markers.
- ❑ Enter the midpoint between the circles once more.
- ❑ Once you're just past the midpoint, turn your head to look across the second circle, and turn the handlebars in the direction of the new circle.

Reminder — If you need to slow down to maintain control, use the rear brake only.



coaching tips

- Before the rider tries this manoeuvre, it's a good idea to demonstrate it. Emphasize turning the head to look across each circle.
- Start with larger circles and reduce the size as the rider gains skill.

Starting on a hill

This manoeuvre is just like the beginning of the low-speed straight ride, except that you'll need to let the clutch out more slowly and use a bit more throttle to counteract gravity.

Start the exercise using a gentle incline and move up to a steeper one.

- ❑ Position yourself on the incline with the rear brake applied.
- ❑ Look in the direction you want to go (up the hill).
- ❑ Roll the throttle on slightly and slowly release the clutch until you reach the friction point.
- ❑ Release the rear brake, and then release the clutch very slowly.
- ❑ Gradually increase the throttle as you continue to release the clutch.
- ❑ Lift your left foot to the footpeg as you move off.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your ratings with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Low-speed straight ride

- Maintains a slow, steady speed without stalling. 1 2 3
- Uses good clutch-throttle control. 1 2 3
- Maintains balance and steering. 1 2 3

Slalom

- Weaves through the markers without touching any. 1 2 3
- Maintains steady speed control. 1 2 3
- Maintains balance — keeps feet on the pegs. 1 2 3
- Keeps eyes up. 1 2 3

Figure 8

- Maintains an accurate steering path. 1 2 3
- Maintains steady speed control. 1 2 3
- Maintains balance — keeps feet on the pegs. 1 2 3
- Keeps head turned to look in the direction of travel. 1 2 3
- Keeps eyes up. 1 2 3

Hill start

- Moves off smoothly. 1 2 3
- Doesn't roll backward. 1 2 3



Doing low-speed turns

Making smooth, precise turns requires smooth clutch and throttle control as well as accurate steering.

When making a low-speed turn, follow these four steps:

1. **Slow** — Reduce speed before the turn by rolling the throttle off and braking. This ensures that you won't have to brake during the turn.
2. **Look** — Look in the direction you want to go. This will help you steer smoothly and accurately.
3. **Turn** — Turn the handlebars in the direction of the turn. You may need to counterbalance.
4. **Roll** — Maintain a steady speed in the turn, then roll the throttle on gently as you come out of the turn.

Before you start the exercises, tell your supervisor how you plan to make a turn. You may want to use a diagram.



Practising low-speed turns

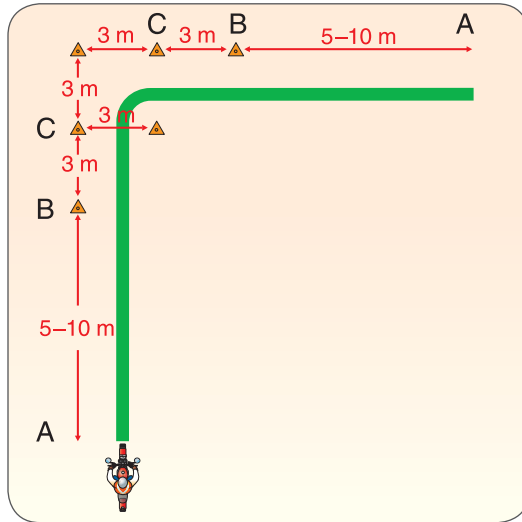
In this session you'll practise making turns without stopping (rolling turns) and making turns from a stopped position. You'll also practise turning and stopping.

Every time you make a turn at an intersection you'll use these skills. Take time to practise turning until you have good balance, steering and speed control.

Rolling turn

- Start at point A (see illustration on next page).
- Approach the turn and slow down.
- Turn your head to look through the turn.
- Steer the motorcycle through the turn.
- As you exit the turn, straighten the handlebars and accelerate.

Mark off a right-angle corner with a lane three metres wide, then gradually reduce the width to 1.5 metres.



Slow turn from a stop

- Start at point B (about three metres from the turn).
- Find your friction point and release the rear brake.
- Gently release the clutch lever as you slowly apply the throttle. (You may need to keep the clutch in the friction zone to do this.)
- As the motorcycle starts to move, put your foot on the peg.
- Look through your turn.
- Steer the motorcycle through the turn.
- When the motorcycle starts to come out of the turn, allow the clutch to engage completely, and accelerate smoothly.

warning!

In this session, try not to brake during turns. When you're on the road, you may need to brake while you're in a low-speed tight turn. If so, use only your rear brake. Using the front brake could cause you to fall.

Immediate turn from a stop

- Start at point C (just before the turn).
- Look through your turn.
- Turn the handlebars in the direction you want to go and lean the motorcycle slightly in the same direction.
- Find the friction point and release the rear brake.
- Gently release the clutch lever as you slowly apply the throttle. (You may need to keep the clutch in the friction zone to do this.)

try this

When you're confident in your ability to stop five or six metres beyond the turn, gradually decrease your stopping distance.

- As the motorcycle starts to move, put your foot on the peg.
- When the motorcycle starts to come out of the turn, allow the clutch to engage completely and accelerate smoothly.

Turn and stop

When you're confident about your slow turns, try stopping at a point five to six metres after the turn. Practise stopping after each type of turn.

- Make a turn.
- Straighten the front wheel.
- Apply both brakes.

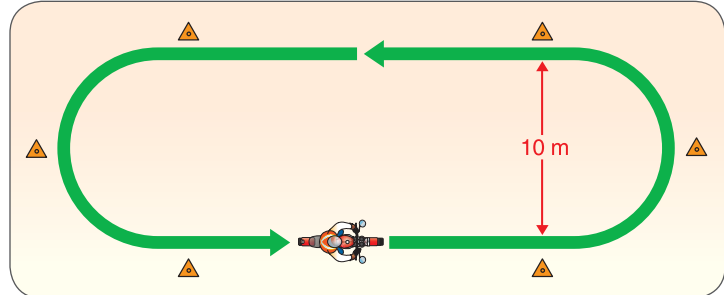


coaching tips

Have the rider practise both left and right turns.

Mark off two joined U-shapes 10 metres wide. Then gradually move the markers closer together to get a space the size of the turning circle of your bike plus 1.5 metres.

U-turn



A U-turn is really a half-circle turn. If you can do a figure 8 smoothly, you should be able to do a U-turn.

- Approach the U-turn.
- Slow to a safe turning speed.
- Ease off the brakes before you turn.
- Turn your head to look across the turn.
- Turn your handlebars in the direction you want to go and steer through the turn.
- Roll the throttle on as you begin to straighten up.

Reminders —

- You may need to use the friction zone as you do the U-turn. To prepare, cover the clutch lever. You should also cover the rear brake.
- You may need to counterbalance.



How are you doing?

Rate how you're doing so far, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Low-speed turns

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| • Looks through the turn. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Steers smoothly and accurately. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Decelerates and accelerates correctly. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Uses good clutch-throttle control. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Keeps knees in. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Brakes smoothly and accurately. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Avoids braking in the turn. | 1 | 2 | 3 |



Gears

Gearing up and down is a big part of riding. You need to be able to choose the gear that'll give you enough power to accelerate quickly if you need to. Choosing the correct gear will also reduce engine wear and fuel consumption.

Follow these four steps to upshift or downshift smoothly.

Learn to ride smart review

Review the information about changing gears and braking in **speed control** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6.

Upshift

1. Accelerate smoothly to an appropriate speed for the gear you're going to shift up to.
2. Squeeze the clutch lever while rolling the throttle off.
3. Lift the shift lever firmly with your left foot until the transmission engages, then release the shift lever.
4. Release the clutch lever smoothly while rolling the throttle on.

Downshift

1. Decelerate by braking or rolling the throttle off to an appropriate speed for the gear you're going to shift down to.
2. Squeeze the clutch lever smoothly while rolling the throttle off.
3. Push the shift lever down firmly with the left foot until the transmission engages, then release the shift lever.
4. Release the clutch lever smoothly while rolling the throttle on.

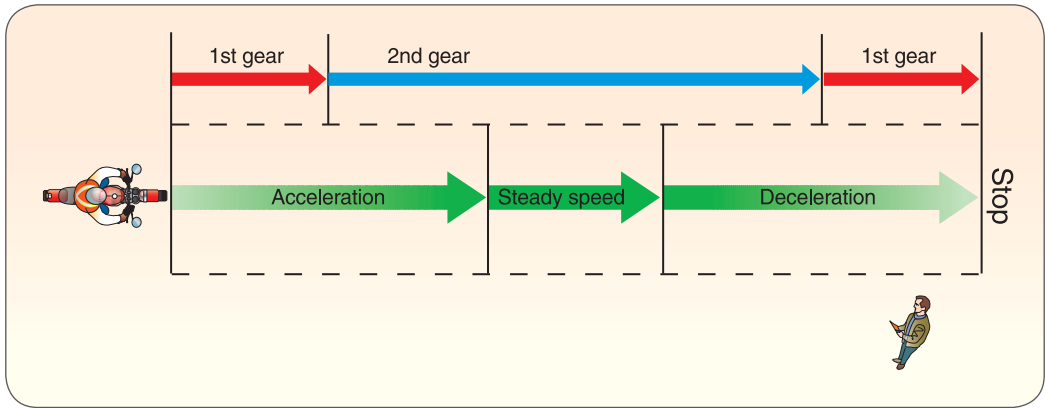
Before you begin the exercises, explain to your supervisor how to upshift and downshift.



Changing gears and braking

In this session you'll practise upshifting and downshifting until you can do both quickly and smoothly. Then you'll combine changing gears and braking in order to do a smooth, quick stop — a manoeuvre you'll need for emergency situations.

Straight-line gear change



Allow lots of space and generous buffer zones for this practice. Make sure that the supervisor can be clearly seen and is not in the path of the motorcycle.

try this

- After you've mastered two gears, try shifting into third gear if you have enough space.
- To practise precise stopping, place markers along the path where you want to stop and try stopping exactly at these points.

- With your motorcycle in first gear, move forward.
- Accelerate in a straight line, watching your supervisor.
- Note the engine sound.
- Upshift when your supervisor signals.
- Ride in second gear for a short distance.
- Downshift to first gear when your supervisor signals. (You may need to decelerate first.)
- Brake to a stop.
- Practise until you don't need prompting from your supervisor.

Reminders —

- Use a firm, progressive squeeze on the front brake and light-to-moderate pressure on the rear brake.
- Keep your eyes up.
- Keep the front wheel straight.



coaching tips

- The first time the rider does this exercise, make sure the pavement is clean and dry. Wet pavement could cause an inexperienced rider to fall.
- Before you start, make sure the rider knows how to shift up and down correctly.
- Position yourself at the far end of the acceleration path. Listen to the engine sound and motion to the rider when to upshift or downshift. This may be a good time to discuss the power band and r.p.m. with the rider.
- Encourage the rider to practise until they can shift quickly and smoothly.

try this

When you're feeling comfortable with the technique for a quick stop, ask your supervisor to signal when to stop.

Quick stop

Even when you're looking well ahead, there may be times when you have to brake suddenly. You need to be able to do this without locking the wheels.

If the wheels lock when you do this exercise, you have braked too hard. You can avoid this by noticing the feel and sound of the tires. If either tire starts to shudder or whine, you're close to a lock-up. Ease off both brakes.

For the quick-stop exercise, you'll use the same set-up as you did for the straight-line gear change exercise. Only here, you'll need to allow enough distance to be able to reach approximately 30 km/h.

- From the starting point, accelerate straight ahead.
- Shift into second gear.
- Maintain a steady speed and steer in a straight line.
- Do a quick mirror check for traffic behind. (Even though there's no traffic now, get into the habit of looking for traffic behind you, especially when stopping quickly.)
- Apply both brakes at the same time while rolling the throttle off and squeezing the clutch lever. Be firm and quick and smooth.
- Tap on the gearshift to make sure you're in first gear by the time you stop.

warning!

If your rear wheel locks, **immediately** reduce pressure on the rear brake until the wheel starts to turn. Keep the motorcycle upright and in a straight line by looking and steering where you want to go.

If the rear of the motorcycle begins to swing out to the side, you have waited too long to release the brake safely. If you release it at this point, it could suddenly gain traction and throw you off the motorcycle. This is called **highsiding**. If you are in danger of highsiding, keep the rear brake locked until you stop.

- ❑ Keep the handlebars straight.
- ❑ Just before coming to a full stop, ease some of the pressure off the front brake.
- ❑ Stop with your left foot on the ground and your right foot on the rear brake pedal.
- ❑ Do a mirror check for traffic behind.

Reminders —

- Keep your eyes up.
- Don't grab the brake suddenly. Apply pressure progressively but quickly.
- Grip the gas tank firmly with your knees.
- Brace yourself with the handlebars. Your weight will shift forward when you stop quickly.



coaching tips

- For the first few times, encourage the rider to use a lot of space to stop. This will let them concentrate on practising the correct technique. Once the rider has gained skill, introduce shorter distances and more precise stopping points.
- Start at about 20 km/h, gradually increasing the speed to 30, 40 and 50 km/h (if space permits).



How are you doing?

Rate how you're doing so far, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Straight-line gear change

- Shifts gears smoothly. 1 2 3
- Upshifts without losing road speed. 1 2 3
- Downshifts smoothly, avoiding sudden deceleration. 1 2 3
- Keeps eyes up. 1 2 3
- Maintains a straight steering path. 1 2 3

Quick stop

- Checks mirrors before braking. 1 2 3
- Applies both brakes smoothly. 1 2 3
- Stops quickly, without locking up or stalling. 1 2 3

notes



Know your steering

In this session, you'll practise countersteering. Most of the steering you have done until now has been low-speed steering with some counterbalancing. But, if you've increased your speed beyond 10 to 15 km/h, you may have experienced countersteering.

In session 6, you learned the slow-look-turn-roll sequence for low-speed turns. When you use countersteering, the sequence will change to slow-look-lean-roll:

1. **Slow** — Reduce speed before the turn by rolling the throttle off, downshifting, and if necessary, braking. This will ensure that you don't have to downshift or brake during your turn. Either of these could cause you to skid if you don't do them smoothly.
2. **Look** — Look in the direction you want to go. This will help you steer smoothly and accurately.
3. **Lean** — You'll use countersteering to get the correct lean that will help you make your turn. Push on the handgrip in the direction of the turn. Push left — lean left — go left. Push right — lean right — go right.
4. **Roll** — Maintain a steady speed in the turn, then roll the throttle on gently as you're coming out of the turn to straighten up the motorcycle.

Learn to ride smart review

Review **steering** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6.

Make sure you understand the difference between low-speed steering and countersteering and discuss them with your supervisor including:

- when you use each one
- what you do to change direction
- how you position your body on the motorcycle.



Countersteering

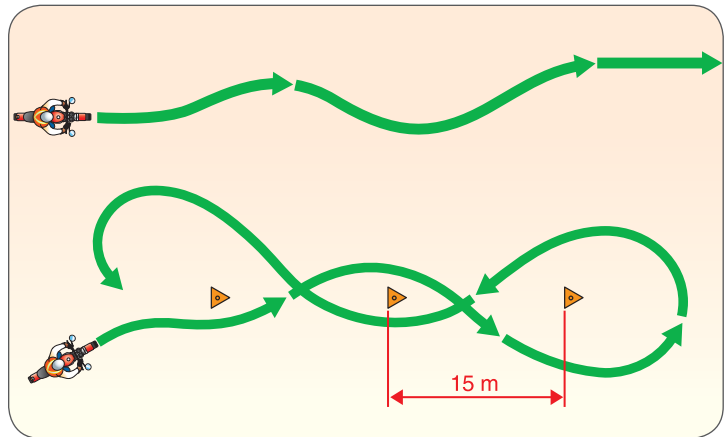
These exercises will help you get the feel of countersteering. First, you'll practise weaving and then move on to a quick change of road position. You'll ride in a path that combines

straight riding and gear changing with countersteering through curves. Finally, when you're feeling confident, you'll add braking and learn how to respond if you're forced to brake in a curve.

Weaving

Try weaving first with no markers until you get the feel of countersteering. Then add markers to the riding path and practise weaving. This will help make your steering more precise.

These two set-ups show the riding path for a weave, the first with no markers and the second with markers set about 15 metres apart. Depending on the length of your space, you may be able to set up only two markers. Make sure you have plenty of buffer space.



- Accelerate and upshift to second gear.
- Hold your speed steady at 20 to 25 km/h.
- Push on one handlebar until the motorcycle moves in that direction.
- Push on the opposite handlebar to turn the opposite way.
- Straighten the handlebars to bring the bike upright.
- Slow down and brake.

Reminders —

- Now that you're riding at higher speeds, you'll have better steering control if you have your fingers around the grips, instead of covering the clutch and brake levers.
- Keep the throttle and speed constant.
- Sit still and keep your body in line with the bike.
- Keep your eyes and head level with the horizon, and look where you want to go.



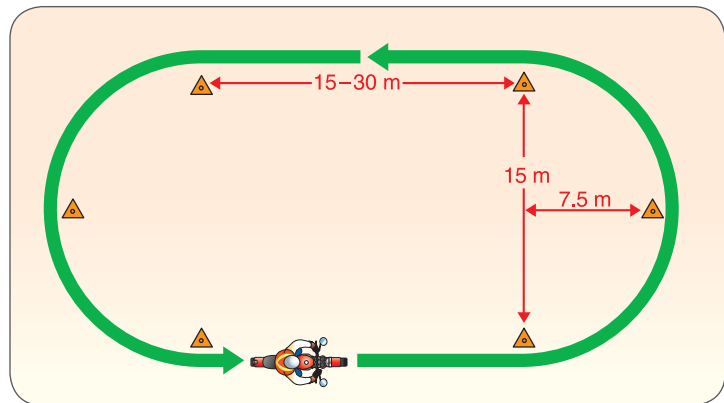
coaching tips

Sometimes riders find it difficult to get the feel of countersteering. In this case, stand at the far end of the path. Once the rider has steered to one side, signal the rider to steer to the other side.

Riding through a curve

In this exercise you'll countersteer through curves. You'll practise entering the curve at a safe speed, countersteering through the curve and then accelerating out of the curve. Riding through a curve when you're on the road will help you control your motorcycle.

Set up markers to form two large half-circles (15 metres across) as far away from each other as your practice area allows. Try to keep a buffer of at least five metres between the circles and the edge of the riding area.

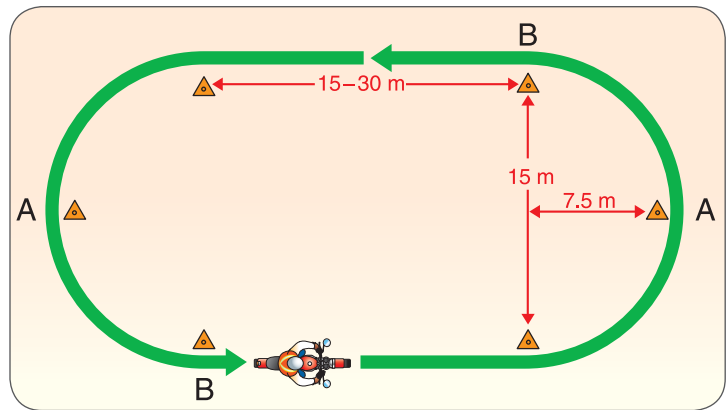


- Move off in a straight line and accelerate to about 25 km/h. You should be in second gear.
- Slow as you approach the curve.
- Look well ahead through the curve.
- Countersteer through the curve, keeping your speed steady.
- As you exit the curve, accelerate slightly and ride toward the next curve.

Reminders —

- Look ahead through the curve to where you want to go. Don't look at the markers.
- Do not brake in the curve.

Stopping in a curve



Using the same half-circles as the previous set-up, note positions A, where you will roll the throttle off, and B, where you'll stop.

try this

As you gain confidence, gradually decrease your stopping distance.

You may sometimes have to stop in a curve, so prepare yourself by practising.

- Ride through the first half of the curve at a moderate speed (about 20 km/h).
- Look in the direction you want to go.
- When you reach marker A, roll the throttle off.
- Apply the brakes and at the same time straighten the motorcycle.
- Downshift to first gear before you stop completely at marker B.

Reminder — When you do this exercise, get in the habit of checking behind you. In traffic, there's a risk of being rear-ended when you stop in a curve.



coaching tips

This manoeuvre can be dangerous for beginning riders. Have your rider start with low-speed, gradual stops before progressing to faster, shorter stops.



How are you doing?

Rate how you're doing so far, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Weaving

- Countersteers smoothly. 1 2 3
- Keeps body in line with the motorcycle. 1 2 3
- Keeps speed steady. 1 2 3
- Looks in the direction of travel. 1 2 3

Riding through a curve

- Slows down and downshifts if necessary before entering the curve. 1 2 3
- Steers through the curve smoothly and accurately. 1 2 3
- Accelerates and upshifts when leaving the curve. 1 2 3
- Keeps head turned to look in the direction of travel. 1 2 3

Stopping in a curve

- Countersteers smoothly. 1 2 3
- Looks in the direction of travel. 1 2 3
- Applies both brakes smoothly. 1 2 3
- Downshifts smoothly. 1 2 3
- Straightens the front wheel before stopping completely. 1 2 3
- Maintains balance when stopping. 1 2 3

notes



Developing good habits

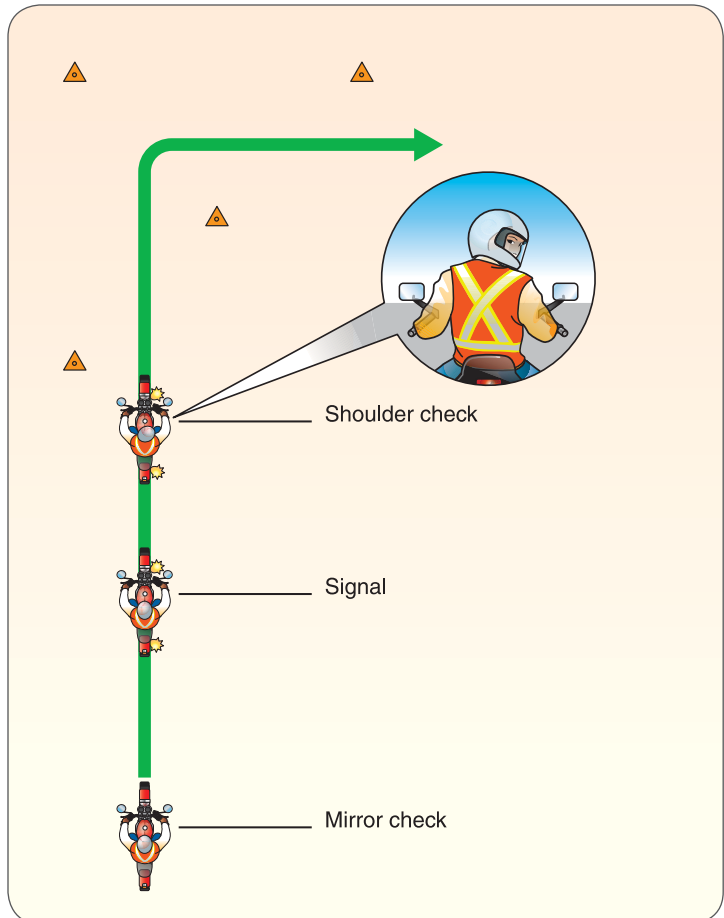
In this session you'll start to mirror check, signal, and shoulder check. Any time you plan to turn, change lanes, pull out or pull over, follow this observation sequence:

1. **Mirror check** — Check both mirrors for traffic behind.
2. **Signal** — If the path is clear, put on your turn signal.
3. **Shoulder check** — Look behind your shoulder about 45 degrees in the direction you plan to move to make sure your way is still clear.

Learn to ride smart review

Make sure you know how to observe and communicate correctly and that you know your hand signals. Read **observation** and **communication** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6.

Get in the habit of using the mirror check-signal-shoulder check sequence — it will help you observe and communicate consistently.



Part of learning to ride safely is developing good riding habits that become automatic. That's why it's important to build the right skills early in your riding career. There are different ways to build good habits.

- **Talking it through.** You can talk yourself through the process. As you approach a corner, tell yourself: *Mirror check-signal-shoulder check*. Then as you execute the turn, tell yourself: *Look through the turn*.
- **Practising.** Practise a manoeuvre over and over, making sure you're doing it correctly.

Decide how you learn best and take the time to build good habits as you go.

Whenever you're in a vehicle this week, take a critical look at the driving and riding habits of others. Note what you see.

	Good habits	Bad habits	Habits I can use
Observation			
Communication			
Maintaining space margins			
Speed control			
Keeping focused on the driving/riding task			

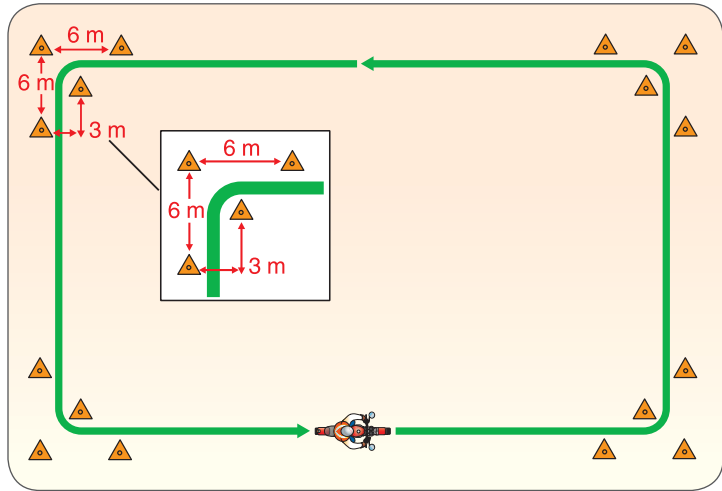


Practice circuit

The practice circuit will help you combine all your skills. You'll ride straight, make turns and use observation and communication skills while steering smoothly and maintaining speed control.

- Accelerate to about 20 km/h.
- As you approach the corner, check your mirrors.
- Signal.
- Tap on the brake to alert traffic behind you.

Use a large rectangular area (the larger the better). Make sure there's a buffer zone between the practice zone and any outside curbs or other obstructions. Use markers to create a right-angle turn at each corner of the rectangle.



try this

- Once you're comfortable with this exercise at a low speed, increase your speed enough to require some gear shifting.
- Practise starting turns from a stopped position and stopping immediately after a turn.

- Shoulder check to make sure the space is clear.
- Roll the throttle off before entering the turn.
- Turn while keeping your eyes up and looking in the direction you want to go.
- Accelerate gently out of the turn as you straighten the bike.
- Continue around the circuit.



coaching tips

- Check that the rider follows the mirror check-signal-shoulder check sequence before going into each turn and that the rider's hands are on the handgrips when shoulder checking.
- For extra practice, have the rider use hand signals instead of turn signals. Make sure that after signalling, the rider has both hands back on the handgrips before shoulder checking or steering.
- Have the rider reverse direction.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Practice circuit

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Completes mirror check-signal-shoulder check sequence before each turn. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Separates signalling from shoulder checking. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Approaches and exits turns smoothly. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Keeps both hands on the handgrips when shoulder checking or steering. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains accurate steering path. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Demonstrates hand signals correctly. | 1 | 2 | 3 |



Self-check

Would you take risks while riding? Use this scale, and the ones that follow in sessions 14 and 17, to identify your areas of potential risk. In session 19, do the self-check to find out what your complete risk profile looks like.

Exploring your risk profile, part 1

Read each of the paired statements. Put an X on the position along the line that best describes you. If you think the statement on the left describes you, put your X on the green mark. If you're closer to the statement on the right, put your X on the orange mark. If you're somewhere between the two statements, put an X on the blue mark.

Responsibility

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. I'm realistic about my riding skills. | | I can rely on my riding skills to get me out of any kind of trouble. |
| 2. I'll take curves slowly because I'm just learning. | | I'll take curves as fast as I can because I love the feel of accelerating through a curve. |
| 3. I'll need more experience before taking a passenger. | | If a buddy asks me for a ride, I'll say yes even though I haven't much experience. |
| 4. I'll always wear an approved helmet and fasten it properly. | | I might not bother fastening my helmet if I'm only going around the block. |
| 5. I'll always use turn signals. | | Sometimes I can't be bothered to use turn signals. |
| 6. If I see someone approaching a crosswalk, I'll prepare to stop. | | If I see someone approaching a crosswalk I'll speed up to get through first. |

How did you do?

Statements 1 to 3 help you think about how well you know your limits. Statements 4 to 6 help you think about your sense of responsibility to self and others. If your Xs tend to be toward the right-hand side of the graph in either of these two areas, you may be willing to take risks.

Your strengths? _____

What should you work on? _____



Skills check

By now you've been introduced to all the basic skills of motorcycle handling. Before you move from your off-street practice site to the road, your motorcycle-handling skills should be second nature. You should know how to control the speed and steering of your bike so well that you can devote your attention to the riding environment.

To ride safely on the road, you need to be competent in six key riding skills. These skills are essentially the see-think-do skills you learned about in *Learn to ride smart* — observation, hazard perception, speed control, steering, space margins and communication.

Because you've been riding in an off-street site where you didn't need to worry about traffic, the main skills you've been practising so far are speed control and steering (which includes balance). However, you've also had to think about space margins as you tried to keep a safe distance from the markers, and observation as you shoulder checked and looked in the direction you wanted to go.

In session 9, when you combined all of your riding skills in the practice circuit, you added communication. You'll be practising hazard perception (the sixth key riding skill) in session 11. Full definitions of the key riding skills are included on the inside front cover of this book.

You and your supervisor can use the following **rider report card** to assess your progress on the off-street manoeuvres you've practised, and to identify the ones you need to work on more before you move onto the road. You should be able to rate yourself as competent before progressing to the next level.

Learn to ride smart review

Need to brush up on the personal factors that will keep you safe on the road? *Learn to ride smart*:

- **the solutions** in **chapter 1**
- **personal strategies** in **chapter 7**.

To review the key riding skills, read *Learn to ride smart*, **chapter 6**.



Rider report card

Pre-trip	Yes	No
Identifies controls correctly		
Carries out a pre-trip check		

Manoeuvres Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent	Observation	Speed control	Steering	Space margins	Communication
	Pushing the motorcycle forward, backward and in turns				
Putting the motorcycle on the stand					
Low-speed straight ride					
Slalom					
Figure 8					
Starting on a hill					
Turns — (rolling and from a stop)					
Turn and stop					
U-turn					
Gear change (up/down) in a straight line					
Stopping with both brakes at a stop point					
Quick stop					
Weaving					
Riding through a curve					
Practice circuit					

notes

low-traffic practice



It's now time to apply your basic riding skills to riding on the road. You'll need to plan your routes and decide how best to practise and work effectively with your supervisor.

Planning your routes

Before you start these sessions, plan a few safe, low-traffic training routes with your supervisor. Remember also to make a plan for getting to your routes along safe, low-traffic roads.

To practise all the manoeuvres in sessions 11 to 14, choose routes that have:

- very little traffic
- long, straight stretches to practise acceleration and deceleration
- a wide shoulder to practise pulling off and back on the road
- a variety of intersections
- a wide dead-end, a cul-de-sac or a wide, safe section of road to practise U-turns
- curves and hills
- a section of unpaved road and a railway track, if available.

Learn to ride smart review

How can you make sure you are visible to other road users? Read these **Learn to ride smart** sections to learn to maximize your visibility:

- **lane position and communication** in **chapter 6**
- **other motorcycles** in **chapter 7**
- **reduced vision and visibility** in **chapter 9**

Planning your practice

Once on the road, it will be difficult to practise one or two manoeuvres individually. Depending on the route you've chosen, it's more likely that you will combine several of the basic manoeuvres — pulling on and off the road, riding straight, turning and riding on curves and hills — in a single practice session.

Read sessions 11 to 13 before going out on the road. That way, you'll be familiar with all the basic traffic manoeuvres you may need. Practise each of the manoeuvres in detail, doing them each several times and completing the **How are you doing?** scale with your supervisor. Then move on to session 14, which is a review of all the manoeuvres you've practised in a low-traffic setting.

Reminder — Reviewing your basic skills at your off-street training site will help in your on-road training.

Riding with your supervisor

Riding position

When you're on the road with your supervisor, it's a good idea first for the supervisor to ride in the lead position and for you to ride behind in a staggered position. That way your supervisor can be a model for you. As you gain skill and confidence, you should move into the lead position more often. This is the "solo" rider position you'll use for most of your riding.

Communication tips

Before you start out, decide with your supervisor on the signals that both of you can use to communicate with each other. For instance, choose a signal that indicates when either of you wants to pull over. Here are some other ways to communicate:

- opening and closing your hand — your turn signal is still on
- pointing down — obstacle on the road
- index finger raised — move into single file
- two fingers raised — return to staggered position
- a long loud blast of the horn — indicates an emergency.

Learn to ride smart review

Before you start out, there are a few **Learn to ride smart** sections you should review:

- **signs, signals and road markings** in chapter 4
- **right-of-way at intersections** in chapter 5
- **other motorcycles** in chapter 7.



coaching tips

- Make time in these lessons for fairly long, relaxed rides to help the rider build up confidence on the road.
- Always be prepared for the "teachable moment." When anything happens that you should point out to the rider, signal that it's time to pull over and then discuss the situation.

notes



See-think-do

Now that you're riding on the road, you can start using the full see-think-do strategy. Using this strategy for the rest of your riding career will help you prevent and avoid dangerous situations.

A key part of the see-think-do strategy is the observation cycle. Use it to make sure you scan the whole riding environment accurately. Remember that the on-road riding environment is much more complex than off-road.

The observation cycle

Keep your eyes moving all the time:

- Look well ahead (12 to 15 seconds in the city, more on highways) and keep your eyes up.
- Scan for potential hazards both on the road and to the sides.
- Glance in your mirrors to see what is happening behind you.

Then start all over again. You should complete this observation cycle every five to eight seconds. Don't forget to glance at the instrument panel occasionally.

Watching for hazards

As you ride along, pay attention to:

- **Other road users** — Even in a low-traffic situation, you need to keep scanning for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, animals and anything else that might come your way.
- **Road surfaces** — Pay attention to the condition of the road as surfaces vary.
- **Wind and weather** — When travelling at higher speeds on the open road, you'll feel the effect of wind gusts that you never noticed at your off-street site. Also, you'll notice how rain and other weather conditions can affect your riding on the street.

When you are on the road, keep scanning for hazards. What are the hazards in this scene?



As you ride along, observe carefully for potential hazards. At the end of the session, record the six most dangerous hazards that you encountered.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____



Learn to ride smart review

Read **reduced traction** in *Learn to ride smart*, **chapter 9**. Pay special attention to the strategies for handling rough and irregular road surfaces.

Moving straight ahead

Pulling onto the road from the shoulder



choosing a route

Choose a straight, smooth section of two-way road. At this stage, avoid sections where the pavement rises abruptly from the shoulder.

- Mirror check for a safe gap in the traffic.
- Signal left.
- Shoulder check to the left.
- When it's safe, gradually move onto the road, keeping your eyes up.
- Cancel the signal.

Learn to ride smart review

Read up on gears and lane positions in *Learn to ride smart*:

- review **gearshift lever** in **chapter 3**
- review **speed control** and **lane position** in **chapter 6**.



coaching tips

Tell the rider to move onto the roadway at an angle of about 45 degrees if the level of the roadway is different from the level of the shoulder, or if the rider is moving between a soft shoulder and the pavement.

Riding along

- Smoothly accelerate to an appropriate speed.
- Choose a safe lane position. (Remember: visibility, dominance, space, vision and road surface.)
- Keep using your observation cycle.
- Maintain a safe following distance.

Reminder — As you ride, pay attention to the sound of your engine. Shift at the appropriate r.p.m.



coaching tips

Encourage the rider to maintain a safe speed. On a quiet road, have the rider practise accelerating and upshifting to third gear and back down again. Increase the speed and the gear level as the rider gains confidence.

Pulling over

- Check your mirrors to see the traffic behind you. Ask yourself: *Is it safe to slow down and pull over?*
- Tap the brake to alert the driver behind you.
- Signal in the direction you want to go.
- Gradually slow down.
- Shoulder check in the direction you want to go.
- Steer in a straight, smooth angle onto the shoulder, keeping your eyes up.
- Apply your brakes and downshift to first gear as you stop.

using see-think-do

Where do you need to be especially aware of hazards?

Reminders — If the shoulder is gravel:

- Allow plenty of stopping distance.
- Slow down before you reach the shoulder.
- Release the brakes before you ride onto the gravel.
- Reapply the brakes gently to come to a full stop.



coaching tips

- Watch the rider's head and eyes to check that they're systematically observing the riding environment.
- Check that the rider is leaving safe space margins.

Roadside parking

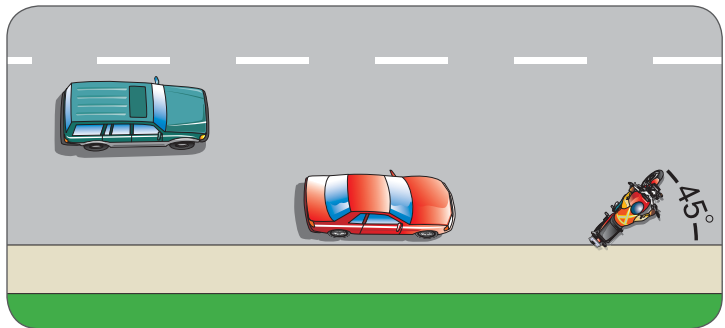
You're able to park your motorcycle in small spaces that cars can't fit into. But be cautious about parking where you're not clearly visible or where you may block traffic or another parked vehicle.



choosing a route

Choose two spots: a flat area with parking spaces next to a curb, and a hill where it is safe to park uphill.

Parking at a 45-degree angle will help you see others as you pull out into traffic, and will help others see your motorcycle.



- Choose a safe lane position to leave traffic.
- Check your mirrors to see how close traffic is behind you.
- Signal.

warning!

Avoid parking on a downhill slope because it is difficult to stabilize the bike.

- Slow down.
- Shoulder check.
- Steer into the parking space, then turn back toward the road at about 45 degrees.
- Back up until the rear tire is near the curb.

Reminders —

- When parking on a hill or an incline, adjust the angle of the motorcycle so that it won't fall over.
- Turn the handlebars in the direction that'll provide the most stability and allow the steering lock to work.

Making a U-turn

Be careful when making a U-turn. Avoid attempting a U-turn in traffic, around pedestrians, near intersections or where your sight is limited.

Learn to ride smart review

Where are you permitted to do a U-turn? Check **U-turns** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 5.



choosing a route

Select a cul-de-sac, a dead-end road or a quiet residential street that's wide enough so that you can do a U-turn without having to back up. Make sure there are no parked vehicles in your way.

- Mirror check, signal and shoulder check.
- Keep safe space margins — allow plenty of space between you and any obstacles.
- Look through the turn as you do the U-turn.



coaching tips

- At first, have the rider stop before attempting a U-turn. This'll provide them a chance to make accurate observations. Eventually the rider should be able to do a U-turn without stopping or putting their feet down.
- A cul-de-sac is the easiest place to practise U-turns. Once the rider gets comfortable, move to a dead-end street or another safe section of road.



How are you doing?

Rate how you're doing so far, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Pulling onto the road from the shoulder

- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Chooses a safe gap in the traffic. 1 2 3
- Maintains smooth speed control. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly. 1 2 3

Riding along

- Accelerates and decelerates smoothly. 1 2 3
- Uses the appropriate gear for speed. 1 2 3
- Chooses the appropriate lane position. 1 2 3
- Maintains a safe following distance. 1 2 3
- Uses the observation cycle. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly. 1 2 3

Pulling over

- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Decreases speed smoothly. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly. 1 2 3
- Applies and releases brakes appropriately. 1 2 3

Roadside parking

- Chooses a safe parking location. 1 2 3
- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Signals in good time. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly. 1 2 3
- Angles bike at 45 degrees. 1 2 3
- Uses side or centre stand correctly. 1 2 3
- Turns handlebars correctly. 1 2 3

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

U-turns

- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Looks through the turn. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly. 1 2 3
- Uses good speed control. 1 2 3
- Turns without stopping or putting feet down. 1 2 3

notes



Intersection research

In this session you'll practise riding through intersections. But before you ride, observe the traffic habits of others. This'll help you understand the complexities of intersections.

Spend some time with your supervisor at a busy intersection with traffic lights. Watch the traffic and rate the drivers on how well they observe, communicate and follow the rules.

Spend at least 10 to 15 minutes observing and rate at least 10 drivers or riders. To do this research, you'll need to pick one vehicle at a time and track it through the intersection. Use this chart to record your observations by putting an A, B or C in the appropriate box.

Learn to ride smart review

Read **right-of-way at intersections** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 5.

Driving/riding habits	Number of drivers/riders									
	Rating scale: A – doesn't do it B – does it, but not well C – does it well									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Observation										
Scans intersection before moving.										
Shoulder checks before turning.										
Communication										
Signals well ahead.										
Cancel after turn.										
Space margins										
Maintains a safe following distance.										
Stops before the stop line.										
Follows the right-of-way rules.										
Uses correct lane tracking.										
Speed control										
Chooses a safe speed.										
Stops for the yellow light if it's safe.										

What were the three most common good habits drivers missed? (Add up the As.)

What was the most dangerous bad habit that you saw?

How would these habits affect you if you were riding through the intersection?



Practising at intersections



choosing a route

Include several intersections for you to practise right and left turns. Make sure there's a variety of intersections — both uncontrolled and ones with traffic lights and yield signs.

Riding straight through

As you approach the intersection

- Look well ahead for signs, signals and other road users.
- Mirror check for traffic behind.
- If there's a vehicle behind and you may have to slow or stop, tap your brake to activate the light. This may alert the driver.

If you're not required to stop

- Make sure you're in the lane position that gives you the most room and visibility.
- Scan left, centre, right and left again.
- Before going through, make sure there's no oncoming traffic turning left. If there's oncoming traffic, shoulder check and move slightly to the right to give yourself a larger space margin, and cover the brakes and horn.

If you're required to stop

- Before moving on, scan left, centre, right and left once more.

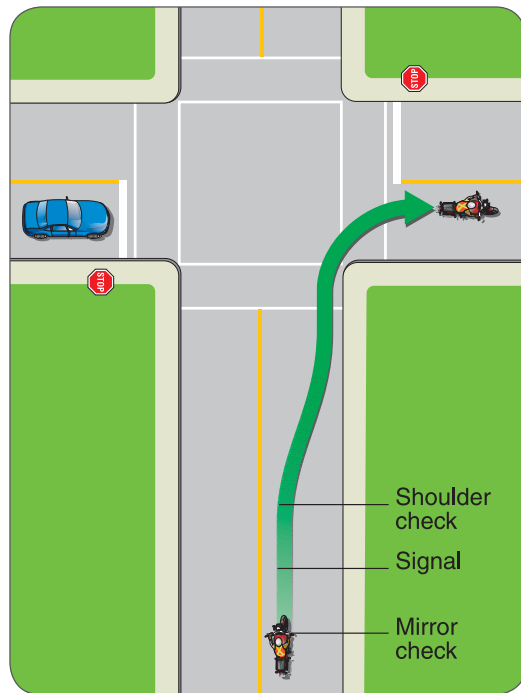
Reminder — Don't stop on a grease strip.

warning!

A common type of intersection crash for motorcycles involves an oncoming vehicle turning left in front of a motorcycle. Always be cautious when you see an oncoming driver signalling to turn left.

Right turns

When turning right, anticipate, scan the road, choose the correct lane position and then turn.



- Look well ahead for signs and signals, traffic and pedestrians.
- Mirror check and signal right.
- Reduce your speed, downshift if necessary.
- Shoulder check.
- Move to the right. You should be about one metre from the curb.
- Stop if required.
- Scan the intersection 180 degrees — left, centre, right and left again.
- If you've changed position or stopped since your earlier shoulder check, shoulder check again to the right.
- Look in the direction of the turn.
- Make your turn.
- Move to a dominant lane position as you exit the turn.
- Cancel your signal.

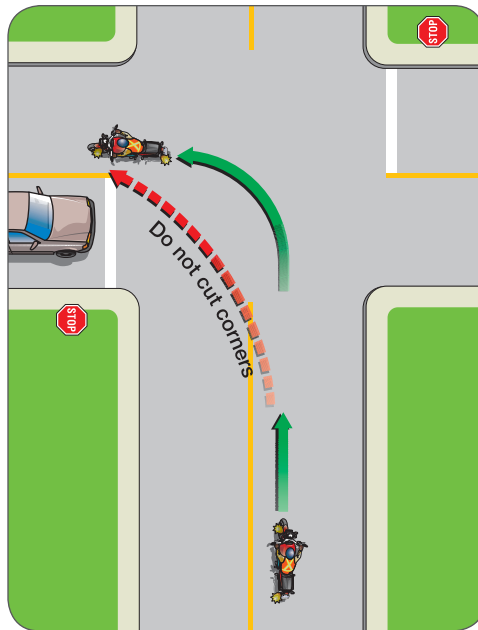
using see-think-do

Why's it not a good idea to signal when changing lane positions within the same lane?

Reminders —

- You'll need to mirror check and shoulder check more than once if too much time has elapsed since your previous checks.
- If you plan to slow down when approaching an intersection, tap your brake to alert other drivers.
- If you're facing a yield sign, you must slow down and make sure the intersection is clear of pedestrians and traffic before moving ahead. Stop if necessary.

Left turns



When you turn left, don't cut the corner or swing wide.

warning!

Keep your motorcycle and front wheel straight as you wait for a safe gap in the traffic to make your turn. (If you're rear-ended with a turned wheel, you could be pushed into oncoming traffic.)

- Look well ahead to check for signs, signals and potential hazards. Check the oncoming traffic to see if you'll need to wait for a gap.
- Mirror check and signal left.
- Reduce your speed and downshift if necessary.
- Shoulder check to the left and move to the left lane position.
- Stop if required.
- Scan the intersection 180 degrees — left, centre, right and left again. Pay attention to pedestrians in crosswalks as well as to traffic.

- ❑ Just before you move forward, do a final intersection check to make sure nobody has moved into the gap where you plan to go.
- ❑ Look in the direction of the turn.
- ❑ Make your turn.
- ❑ Move to a dominant lane position as you exit the turn.
- ❑ Cancel your signal.

Reminder — You'll often need to mirror and shoulder check more than once if too much time has elapsed or if you've changed lane position since your previous checks.

warning!

Failing to turn off your signal after a turn or lane change is potentially dangerous. If you ride through an intersection with an incorrect turn signal, oncoming vehicles will be confused and may turn in front of you.



coaching tips

- Make sure the rider practises both rolling turns and turns from a stopped position (see session 6).
- Don't ride through the turn side-by-side with the rider. You should be in single file or in a staggered position.



How are you doing?

Rate how you are doing so far, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Riding straight through intersections

- Mirror checks for traffic behind. 1 2 3
- Chooses the correct lane position. 1 2 3
- Scans the intersection — 180 degrees. 1 2 3
- If a stop's required: 1 2 3
 - Taps brake. 1 2 3
 - Stops in the correct position. 1 2 3
 - Scans the intersection before moving on. 1 2 3

Turns

- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks correctly. 1 2 3
- Chooses the correct lane position. 1 2 3
- Scans the intersection — 180 degrees. 1 2 3
- Chooses a safe gap in the traffic. 1 2 3
- Looks through the turn. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly in a safe path. 1 2 3
- Decelerates before and accelerates after the turn. 1 2 3



Understanding curves

Riding safely through curves takes knowledge and skill. Prepare yourself by making sure you know the different types of curves and how to respond to them.

Curve research

Take some time to think about curves and observe the way other drivers and riders take curves.

Tell your supervisor how you would ride through both a decreasing-radius and a multiple curve.

As you go through this session, stop along the side of the road just before the exits and entrances of a couple of curves and watch the vehicles as they come and go. Take note of:

- the path the vehicles take
- the speed of the vehicles
- whether drivers and riders apply their brakes and when.

During the session, have your supervisor demonstrate the best way to ride through curves as you watch.

Correcting your path in a curve

If you get partway through a curve and find you aren't following the correct path, you can use countersteering to correct it:

- To tighten your turn, increase the lean angle by applying more pressure to the inside handlebar.
- To widen your turn, decrease the lean angle by reducing the pressure on the inside handlebar and pushing gently on the outside handlebar.

As you practise riding through curves, pay attention to how well you assess the path you should take. How often do you need to correct your path?

Learn to ride smart review

In *Learn to ride smart*, read:

- **road design** in **chapter 9** — for information on riding through curves.
- **steering** in **chapter 6** — pay special attention to the section on handling curves.
- **warning signs** in **chapter 4** — look for signs that will provide useful information as you approach a curve.



Taking curves



choosing a route

Select a winding road with a variety of curves and hills.

warning!

Many motorcycle crashes happen in curves. A rider may go off the road, or cross over the centre line and ride into oncoming traffic. Avoid this by observing the road ahead, slowing down and choosing the correct lane position.

using see-think-do

Why should you avoid heavy braking while the bike is leaned over in a curve?

- Assess the curve. Does it look sharp or gradual? Does it stand alone, or is it part of a series? Is it banked? If you can't see the entire curve, predict as best you can.
- Slow down to a safe speed that you can maintain through the curve. Remember that you may have to stop for hazards on the other side of the curve.
- Choose your lane position before you enter the curve. Keep in mind:
 - **Vision and visibility** — What position will allow you to see through the curve and be seen by oncoming traffic?
 - **Space** — What position will keep you safe from oncoming traffic? If you choose the left lane position (which will probably give you the best vision on a right curve), make sure you're safe from oncoming vehicles that might cross the centre line. If you can't see around the curve, the best choice is usually the right lane position, away from oncoming traffic.
 - **Traction** — Make sure the road is free of debris and uneven or slippery patches.
- Look through the curve to where you want to exit.
- Countersteer to lean the motorcycle in the direction you want to go.
- Roll the throttle on to accelerate smoothly out of the curve.

Reminders —

- When you're riding in a group, single file is usually the safest position for going through a curve.
- Always keep a safe following distance.

Learn to ride smart review

Read **speed control** in *Learn to ride smart, chapter 6*. Make sure you understand how gravity affects your speed.

using see-think-do

What are the most serious hazards to watch for when riding up hills?

Learn to ride smart review

Review **reduced traction** in *Learn to ride smart, chapter 9*. Pay attention to the different types of road surfaces, including railway tracks.

Riding over hills

When you ride over hills, gravity slows your speed on the way up and increases it on the way down. Unless you take action, you can find yourself going too slow or too fast.

- Choose a gear that will keep you within the power band as you go up the hill.
- Move into the right-hand lane position if your visibility is limited. This will create space between you and any oncoming traffic that may wander over the centre line.
- Scan for hazards as you ride over the crest of the hill.
- Choose a gear that will keep your motorcycle moving at an appropriate speed while you ride down the hill. (Avoid gearing down to first gear — it may be too low and could cause you to skid.)
- Return to a dominant lane position when it's safe.

Riding on rough surfaces

Make sure you practise riding on unpaved surfaces and over railway tracks if available. To prepare, practise until you feel confident that you can ride safely in reduced-traction conditions.



choosing a route

Your practice route should have:

- unpaved or rough surfaces (gravel, dirt, roads with broken pavement, etc.)
- a railway track if available.

Riding on unpaved surfaces

Ride along a quiet stretch of rough road until you feel confident about riding on that surface. The various kinds of unpaved surfaces (such as packed hard dirt, loose sand or gravel, metal or wood surfaces) each feels different, but the basic rules are the same:

- Keep your speed steady and the motorcycle as straight as possible.
- If you need to brake, do it gently.

Reminders —

How to ride on low-traction surfaces:

- Reduce your speed.
- Avoid sudden moves.
- Grip the tank with your knees.
- Keep your body relaxed.
- Look well ahead to find a safe path.

Riding across tracks

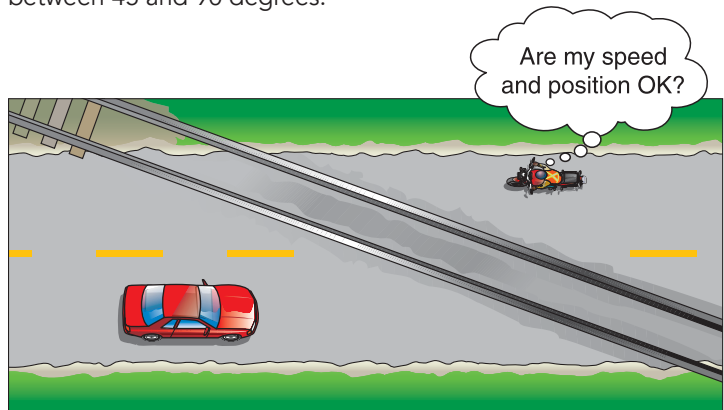
To ride across railway tracks safely, you need to be able to judge angles. The ideal angle to approach an uneven surface is 90 degrees — a right angle. However, it's not a good idea to swerve and risk putting yourself in the same lane as oncoming traffic. Usually you can ride safely across tracks at any angle between 45 and 90 degrees.

When crossing a track:

see — Scan the track.

think — What's the best way to cross this track?

do — Choose the best angle and the safest speed.



- Check the signals and scan to make sure there isn't a train coming.
- Mirror check.
- Reduce your speed and stop if necessary.
- Assess the crossing:
 - the angle of the tracks
 - the height of the tracks relative to the road surface
 - the surface between the tracks, which is sometimes slippery

- traffic: if you need to angle toward oncoming traffic, slow down to avoid crossing the tracks at the same time as the oncoming vehicles.

- Decide whether you need to change the angle of your approach.
- Ride carefully across the tracks.



How are you doing?

Rate how you are doing so far, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Taking curves

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| • Chooses an appropriate speed to enter the curve. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Chooses a safe lane position. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Looks through the curve. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Steers smoothly through the curve. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Accelerates smoothly out of the curve. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Riding over hills

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| • Chooses an appropriate gear and shifts smoothly. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains a safe speed. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Chooses a safe lane position. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Riding on unpaved surfaces

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| • Chooses an appropriate speed. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|

Riding across tracks

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| • Chooses an appropriate speed. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Chooses an appropriate path. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

notes



Using smart riding skills

You are now at the point where you need to decide if you're ready to leave the low-traffic setting you've practised in for the last few sessions and move into a more complex setting with heavier traffic and greater risks. In this session, practise hazard perception and using the "What if?" strategy. Then check your risk profile to explore your decision-making skills.

Hazard perception

To ride safely, scan continuously for possible space conflicts, surprises, vision blocks and poor road conditions.

In this session practise naming the hazards as you see them. As you ride, scan well ahead, check your mirrors, and identify any potential hazards you see ahead, beside or behind you. Ask your supervisor to do the same and after a few blocks, pull over to the side of the road and compare what you saw.

Learn to ride smart review

In *Learn to ride smart*, read:

- **hazard perception** in chapter 6
- **collision avoidance** in chapter 10.

Predicting — using the "What if?" strategy

Use the "think" part of the see-think-do strategy to avoid emergency situations. If a hazard appears suddenly, you'll have very little time to think and do. Practise using the "What if?" strategy in safe-riding environments, so that if an emergency happens, you can react quickly and safely.

see — Observe the riding environment and look out for hazards. As you scan, you'll probably see situations that could become hazards, e.g., a car backing out of a driveway ahead.

think — As you ride, predict what might happen. Ask yourself "What if ...?" In this example, you might ask: *What if that driver doesn't stop?* There are usually three choices: brake, steer or accelerate. Which would you do?

do — Be ready to take the safest action as quickly as possible. In this case, you'll probably cover your brake and be prepared to stop.

Before starting, tell your supervisor what you might do in these situations:

- A cat runs onto the street in front of you.
- A small child breaks away from her mother and runs into the intersection in front of you.
- A large truck turns onto your street. It has crossed the centre lane and is coming towards you.
- The driver in front of you suddenly slams on the brakes.






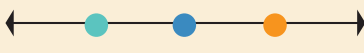
Self-check

In session 10 you started assessing your risk profile. Below, part 2 will give you an idea of how you make decisions. Ask your supervisor to rate you too, and then compare ratings.

Exploring your risk profile, part 2

Read each of the paired statements. Put an X on the position along the line that best describes you. If you think the statement on the left describes you, put your X on the green mark. If you're closer to the statement on the right, put your X on the orange mark. If you're somewhere between the two statements, put an X on the blue mark.

Making decisions

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 7. I stay within the speed limit. |  | I often speed if I think I won't get caught. |
| 8. I don't let other drivers pressure me to speed. |  | If other drivers speed, then I'm going to speed, too. |
| 9. I make my own decisions about riding. |  | I try to keep up to my friends even if they speed. |
| 10. I always stop for a yellow light if it's safe. |  | If I'm in a hurry, I'll run a yellow light. |
| 11. I try to leave lots of space between other vehicles and my motorcycle. |  | I weave in and out of traffic because I'm a pretty good rider. |
| 12. Before I start off, I plan my route. |  | I don't like to plan; I like to take it as it comes. |

How did you do?

Statements 7 to 9 help you think about how well you make decisions when there's pressure from peers or other drivers. Statements 10 to 12 help you think about how well you plan. If your Xs tend to be toward the right-hand side in either area, you may be willing to take dangerous risks.

What area of decision-making do you need to work on? _____



Practising your skills

You've now learned all the basic riding manoeuvres that you'll need. Take time to become really confident with these skills in low-traffic environments. Extra time spent practising at this stage will pay off in safety for you.



choosing a route

Your practice route should have:

- straight stretches, intersections, curves and hills
- unpaved or rough surfaces (gravel, dirt, roads with broken pavement, etc.)
- a railway track if available.

Skills check

Before you move into busier traffic, you should be competent in all of the key riding skills. This will allow you to concentrate on the "think" part of the see-think-do strategy.

When you're ready, have your supervisor stage a road test for you on a low-traffic route. Use the **rider report card** to score yourself. (Look on the inside front cover for key riding skill definitions.) Don't move on from this stage until you have mostly 3s and you're confident that your skills are second nature.



Rider report card

Pre-trip	Yes	No
Carries out a pre-trip check		

Manoeuvres Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent	Observation	Speed control	Steering	Space margins	Communication	Hazard perception
	Pulling onto the road from the shoulder					
Riding along						
Pulling over						
Roadside parking						
U-turns						
Riding straight through intersections						
Right turns						
Left turns						
Taking curves						
Riding over hills						
Riding on rough surfaces						
Riding across tracks						

moderate-traffic practice



Sessions 15 to 17 are designed to get you riding in the everyday traffic environment. This is challenging for new riders. You have to handle your motorcycle with skill and watch out for tricky road conditions and unpredictable road users.

You shouldn't move into moderate traffic until you have full control of your riding skills in low traffic, because once you're out in traffic, there's little room for error.

Reminder — It's a good idea to return to an off-street area for additional review before riding in moderate traffic. Practise your observing skills, shifting, braking and turning until they're second nature to you.

Planning routes

With your supervisor, map out several routes that progress from easier to more difficult. Aim for as much variety and complexity as you're confident you can handle. Make sure your routes include:

- residential and commercial areas
- multi-lane roads
- a variety of multi-lane intersections controlled by traffic lights
- a traffic circle (if there's one in your area)
- a parking lot
- a hill suitable for parking.

Learn to ride smart review

Not sure of the rules of the road? Review **Learn to ride smart**, chapters 4 and 5.

Planning your practice

Review — Because you'll be riding in normal traffic with many other road users, you'll need to know how to share the road. Review the right-of-way rules and the meaning of signs, signals and road markings.

Read first, ride later — Read through sessions 15 and 16 before planning your route and before going out to practise. Get a good idea of the manoeuvres you can expect to practise and how much time you should set aside.

Vary practice times and conditions — Traffic patterns change throughout the day and at different times of the week. Vary your practice times and ride in different weather conditions. This will help you assess your skills and tell you what skills you need to practise more.



Reducing vulnerability

Riders are vulnerable in traffic. Reduce your vulnerability by using the “think” part of see-think-do to plan how to make yourself visible to other road users.

Being visible

You have a friend who’s just starting to ride. What are four things you would tell your friend about being visible? (Think about: blind spots, lane position, riding gear, communicating.)

see-think-do

During session 15 watch for potentially hazardous situations. At the end of the session, recall three of them and what you did.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How many of the hazardous situations involved poor visibility?



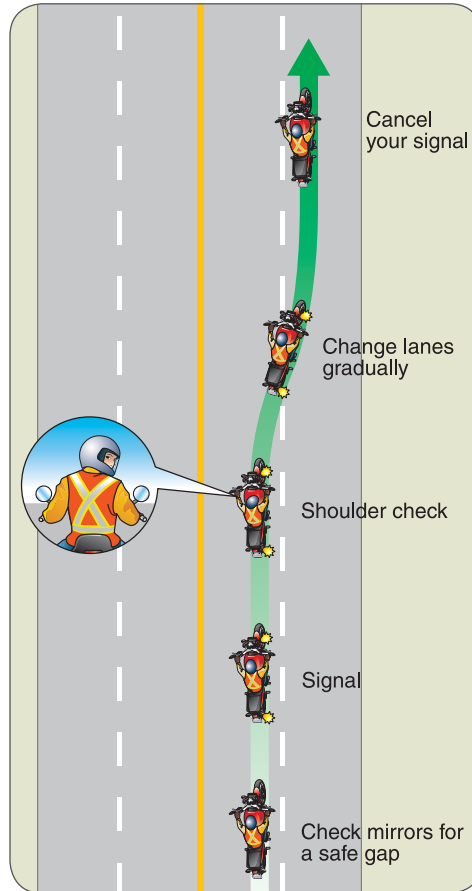
Changing lanes

These exercises will help you learn to move in and out of traffic by changing lanes safely without interrupting other road users.



choosing a route

Select a long stretch of uninterrupted multi-lane road where you can enter the flow of traffic, change lanes from the left lane to the right lane or vice versa and pull over safely.



Use your observation skills to change lanes safely.

- Decide well in advance that you need to change lanes and look ahead for potential problems.
- Move to the correct lane position — if you're planning to change to the right, move to the right lane position, and vice versa for changing to the left. (Remember to mirror and shoulder check before changing lane position.)
- Check your mirrors for a safe gap in the traffic.
- Signal the direction you want to move.
- Shoulder check in the direction you plan to move.
- Look in the direction you want to go.

- Steer gradually into the adjacent lane, maintaining your speed.
- Maintain at least a two-second following distance.
- Choose a dominant lane position.
- Cancel your signal.

Reminder — Avoid changing lanes at an intersection or at a crosswalk.



coaching tips

- Have the rider change lanes to the right and left.
- Discuss how the traffic situation can change if too much time has passed since making a shoulder check. Remind the rider to make a second shoulder check (if necessary) to ensure that no one has moved into their path.
- Take this opportunity to discuss how to judge safe lane positions.

Stall parking

When you're entering or leaving a parking stall, you need to think about being visible and communicating clearly, just as you did when changing lanes. Minor collisions can easily occur in parking lots, so observe carefully, use good speed control and signal.

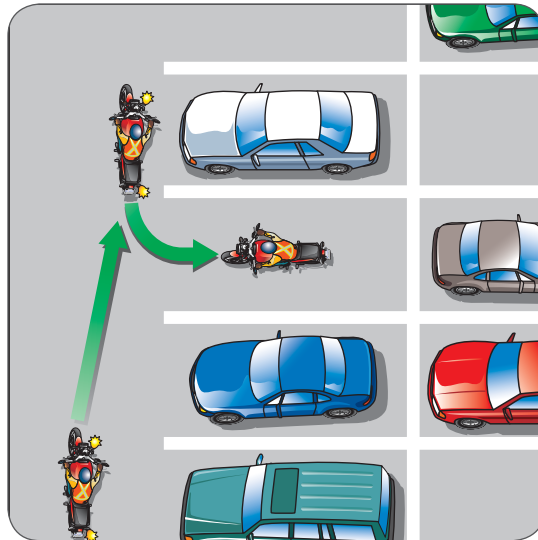
When you're parking in a stall, look well ahead and assess the incline of the stall. If it slopes downhill, back in so that you can get out easily. It's usually safer to back into a stall than to back out into traffic. Another option is to ride through one stall into an empty facing stall.

Reverse stall parking

Follow these steps to reverse into a parking stall. Find it difficult to back up while straddling the bike? Dismount and push the bike backward.

using see-think-do

How can you make sure you are visible when you leave a parking space?



- Check your mirrors for traffic behind you.
- Signal.
- Shoulder check.
- Pass the stall so that the back of the motorcycle is about one metre past the stall.
- Do a 360-degree vision check.
- Looking over the correct shoulder, turn your bike in the direction you want to go.
- Back into the centre of the stall and stop so that the bike is clearly visible.

Forward parking

- Use your mirrors to check the traffic behind you.
- Signal.
- Shoulder check.
- Pull into the centre of the stall and stop so that the bike is clearly visible.

Reminders —

- Leave enough space beside your bike so that you stay clear of car doors.
- Make sure that your side stand doesn't sink into soft asphalt. Your bike could tip over. (Carry a flattened tin or a piece of wood and place it under the side stand to distribute the bike's weight.)
- Avoid oil patches when parking. They're slippery.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Changing lanes

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| • Begins from a safe lane position. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains safe space margins. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Mirror checks. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Signals well ahead. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Shoulder checks. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Chooses an appropriate gap to move into. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Steers smoothly into the new lane, ending in a safe lane position. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains speed. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Cancels signal. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Stall parking

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| • Chooses a safe parking location. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Uses systematic observation skills. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Maintains safe space margins. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| • Signals when entering and leaving. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

notes



Reading the intersection

Multi-lane intersections are dangerous for motorcycle riders because so many road users want to share the same space while turning or going straight through. Look out for potential hazards before you reach them by “reading” the intersection. Look well ahead. Then, as you near the intersection, scan 180 degrees — left, centre, right and back again to the left.

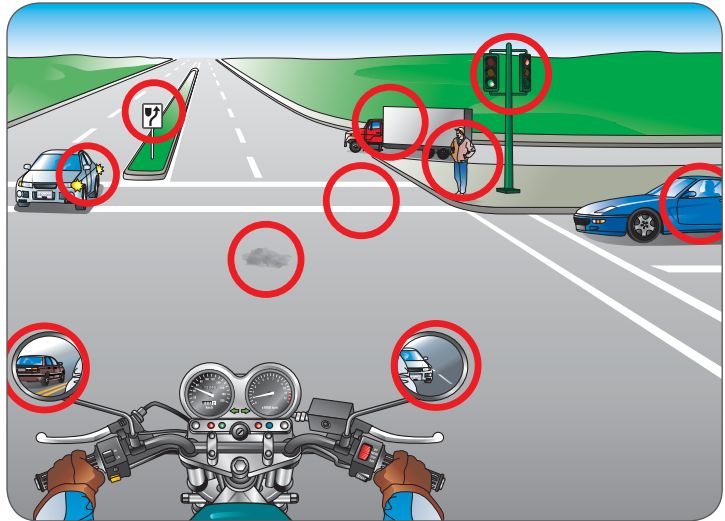
Learn to ride smart review

In *Learn to ride smart*, read:

- **traffic lights and road markings** in chapter 4
- **understanding intersections** in chapter 5.

Ask your supervisor to ride behind you and check your “reading” by watching your head movements while you approach and enter an intersection. Your supervisor should see you turn your head to do a 180-degree scan (left, centre, right and left again) and shoulder check to change position or turn.

As well, you could observe your supervisor’s head movements by riding behind.



“Read” the whole intersection for information about other road users, road surfaces, traffic lights, signs and markings.



Practising at multi-lane intersections



choosing a route

Plan your ride so that you'll go through a variety of multi-lane intersections. You should plan to go straight through as well as make left and right turns.

using see-think-do

When you approach a busy intersection, how can you use the see-think-do strategy?

see — Where should you look as you approach the intersection? How should you observe when you reach the intersection?

think — What do you need to think about?

do — What actions could you take to keep safe?

Riding straight through

In session 12 you practised in low-traffic intersections. Use the same skills in multi-lane intersections, but be extra alert to traffic. Pay special attention to:

- **Lane choice** — Read the traffic carefully to see what lane will be the safest.
- **Lane position** — Maximize your space margins. Always move away from other vehicles to give yourself as much space as possible. Move away from anything that could block your view or make you invisible.
- **Being visible** — Don't ride in others' blind spots.

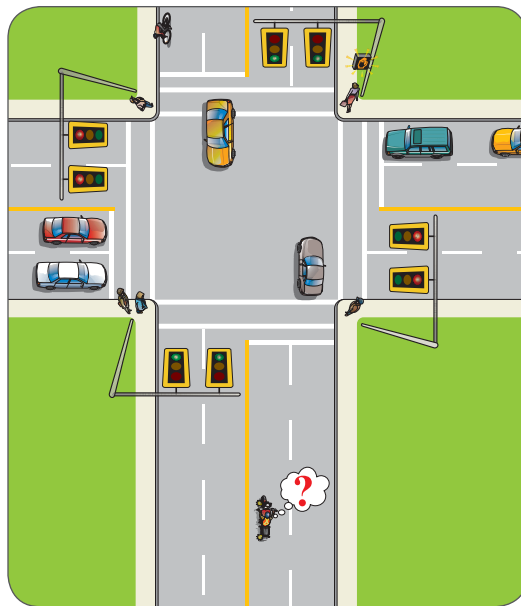
Turning right

- Make the necessary lane changes so that you're positioned in the curb lane.
- "Read" the intersection — look well ahead for signs, signals and other road users.
- Mirror check and signal right.
- Shoulder check.
- Position your bike in the right portion of the lane about one metre from the curb.
- Slow down.
- Stop if required.
- Continue, following the steps for turning right as described in session 12.

Reminders —

- If you're approaching a stale green or a yellow light, check carefully behind you for traffic that may not be able to stop as quickly as you can. Continue to check your mirrors to see what is happening behind you.
- If you need a better view of the intersection before moving off from a stop, creep ahead until you can see clearly. (Make sure you've checked for pedestrians in the crosswalk.)

Turning left



Turning left in a multi-lane intersection is one of the most complex and dangerous intersection manoeuvres. “Read” the approaching traffic so that you can anticipate when a safe gap will come.

Turning left on a green light

- Make the necessary lane changes so that you're in the left position of the left lane.
- “Read” the intersection — look well ahead for signs, signals and other road users.
- Mirror check and signal left.
- Slow down.
- Before you enter the intersection shoulder check and do a 180-degree scan.

warning!

If you're caught partway into the intersection on a red light (not blocking traffic) and are unable to safely complete your turn, it may be better to stay where you are. Don't back up.

If the intersection is clear

- ❑ Turn into the correct lane of the cross street.

If there's oncoming traffic

- ❑ Enter the intersection, keeping the motorcycle and the front wheel pointed straight ahead.
- ❑ Use your judgment to decide how far to move into the intersection while waiting. Stop at a position that will allow an approaching vehicle to make a left turn.
- ❑ Wait for a safe gap in the oncoming traffic. Make sure you have a clear view of the oncoming traffic in all lanes. If you can't see, don't go.
- ❑ If you're in the intersection and pedestrian and vehicle traffic prevents you from finishing your turn on the green light, you may complete the turn on a yellow or red light. However, watch for oncoming drivers trying to go through the light before it turns red.
- ❑ Turn into the correct lane of the cross street and move into the dominant lane position.

Reminders —

- If yours is the second vehicle turning left, don't move into the intersection unless you can get the front of your motorcycle well beyond the crosswalk. This will make it easier for drivers on the cross street to see you.
- Be careful not to cut corners.

Turning on a green arrow

A green arrow means that you may turn in the direction of the arrow. Oncoming traffic will be facing a red light. However, before turning, always check that the intersection is clear of pedestrians and oncoming traffic.

Reminder — If yours is the only vehicle waiting for a red light to change, you may need to activate the sensor under the pavement that controls the lights. Look for a rectangular, diamond, or circular outline of tar on the pavement just before the intersection. Position your motorcycle on top of the tar outline to activate the sensor.



coaching tips

If the rider is not sure that a left turn is safe, suggest going straight through the intersection and turning right at the next corner, then going around the block. Point out that “three rights make a left.”

Traffic circles



choosing a route

Plan your ride so that you can practise using a traffic circle.

- Scan the traffic circle for other road users.
- Mirror check and shoulder check to the right.
- Slow to an appropriate merging speed.
- Yield to any traffic in the circle and choose a safe gap in the traffic to enter.
- Go around the circle in a counter-clockwise direction.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Riding straight through

- Mirror checks for traffic behind. 1 2 3
- Chooses correct lane position. 1 2 3
- Scans the intersection — 180 degrees. 1 2 3
- If a stop's required: 1 2 3
 - Taps brake. 1 2 3
 - Stops in correct position. 1 2 3
 - Scans intersection before moving on. 1 2 3

Turns

- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks correctly. 1 2 3
- Chooses correct lane and lane position. 1 2 3
- Scans the intersection — 180 degrees. 1 2 3
- Chooses a safe gap in traffic. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly in a safe path. 1 2 3
- Ends up in the correct lane. 1 2 3

Traffic circles

- Scans well ahead. 1 2 3
- Chooses correct lane position. 1 2 3
- Yields to traffic in the circle. 1 2 3



Mastering hazard perception

In the last few sessions you practised your manoeuvres in traffic settings and were challenged to use the see-think-do strategy all the time. Now you need to decide if you're confident and skilled enough to move onto high-speed roads. Take time to develop your hazard perception skills to help you be safe in any traffic setting.

Learn to ride smart review

Not sure what hazards to look for? Check **hazard perception** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6.

When you're riding in traffic, protect yourself by using your hazard perception skills all the time.



Once you feel confident in traffic, try practising hazard perception again. Choose a route that includes some tricky intersections and multi-lane roads. Practise in two stages:

1. As you and your supervisor ride through your route, identify all the hazards you see. Compare notes with your supervisor every few blocks.
2. Go for a drive in a car with your supervisor. During the drive, both of you should identify each hazard out loud. You can have someone else drive the car if it's more convenient. As each of you identifies a hazard, check with each other for agreement and fill in this survey.

Hazard survey

Make a checkmark on the appropriate box for every hazard you see. When you're finished, total the number of hazards you identified, and discuss the two questions at the end of the chart.

	How many?	Final total
Space conflicts		
Surprises		
Vision blocks		
Poor road conditions		

What is the most common kind of hazard?

What was the most dangerous hazard?

Self-check

In sessions 10 and 14, you assessed two parts of your risk profile. Below, you get to evaluate how fit you are to ride.

Exploring your risk profile, part 3

Read each of the paired statements. Put an X on the position along the line that best describes you. If you think the statement on the left describes you, put your X on the green mark. If you're closer to the statement on the right put your X on the orange mark. If you're somewhere between the two, put an X on the blue mark.

Being fit

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 13. I never ride if I've been drinking. | | I think I'm okay to ride after a few beers. |
| 14. I always try to be rested and focused when I ride. | | I ride whenever I need to — being tired doesn't affect me. |
| 15. If I had the flu I wouldn't ride. | | Feeling lousy with the flu doesn't stop me from riding. |
| 16. I wear suitable gear when I'm riding. | | I don't bother with clothing that protects and makes me visible. On a hot day I'll wear a T-shirt, shorts and sandals. |
| 17. I get annoyed when someone cuts me off in traffic, but I don't let it affect my riding. | | When someone cuts me off I let them know it. |
| 18. If I've had a bad argument I'll stay off the bike until I cool down. | | Being really angry and upset doesn't affect my riding. |

How'd you do?

Statements 13 to 16 help you think about your fitness to ride. Statements 17 and 18 assess your emotional control. If your Xs tend to be toward the right-hand side in either area, you may be willing to take unsafe risks.

- Where are your strengths? _____
- What areas should you work on? _____



Practising your skills

City traffic can be the most challenging. Be prepared to devote a lot of time to improving your skills in this setting. Rate yourself critically on the key riding skills (see the definitions on the inside front cover) to make sure you're competent in moderate traffic.



choosing a route

To review riding in moderate traffic, work with your supervisor on new routes that include all the environments and challenges you've practised so far.

Your routes should include:

- low-volume and high-volume traffic areas
- a wide range of intersections, both controlled and uncontrolled
- a parking lot.

Skills check

When you feel confident about your skills in normal traffic, you and your supervisor should stage another “road test” to make sure that your skills will keep you and others safe. Plan a test route together. Ask your supervisor to rate your riding manoeuvres in the same way that an examiner might assess you on a Class 6 road test. An examiner will want to know that you:

- obey the rules
- observe and respond to hazards
- steer smoothly, with good balance
- change gears, brake and accelerate and decelerate smoothly
- keep a safe distance from road edges, objects and other road users
- turn on and cancel the signals correctly
- use a speed that is appropriate for the riding conditions.



Rider report card

Pre-trip	Yes	No
Carries out a pre-trip check		

Manoeuvres Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent	Observation	Speed control	Steering	Space margins	Communication	Hazard perception
	Changing lanes					
Stall parking						
Intersections — riding straight through						
Intersections — turning right						
Intersections — turning left						
Traffic circles						

Getting feedback

After you've checked your skills and rated yourself, spend about 15 minutes discussing your riding with your supervisor. Talk about what you can do well and identify what needs extra practice. Together, plan your next practice steps. For example, you may decide to go back and review some exercises in an off-street location so that you can improve your weaker skills. Or, you may decide that you need more practice going through multi-lane intersections. Even if you have done very well, there'll still be more you can learn about being a safe and competent rider.



coaching tips

Three good ways to give effective feedback:

- Use questions — ask the rider which skills need improving.
- Be positive — start with positive comments and then move on to areas the rider needs to work on. Try to end with a positive comment.
- Give specific pointers on how the rider can improve.

higher-speed practice



Now that you have practised your riding skills in traffic, it's time to move on to a driving environment that requires you to adjust your sense of space and timing — the highway or freeway.

Planning routes

Choose routes with:

- entrance and exit lanes or ramps
- speed limits of 80 km/h or more.

The challenges

In some ways, highway riding is easier than in residential and commercial areas because traffic operates under more controlled conditions. However, riding at higher speeds has its challenges. Three of these are:

- adjusting your sense of time and space
- handling the effects of wind and turbulence
- seeing and being seen.

Adjusting timing and space

Travelling at 80 km/h instead of 50 km/h means more than just applying a bit more throttle. You also need to adjust your sense of timing to accommodate higher speed riding environments. When you enter a freeway, for example, it's important to remember that while an approaching car may appear to be far away, it's moving fast.

If you're riding at highway speeds and you need to stop suddenly, you'll need a lot more space to stop than if you're travelling at 50 km/h. Remember that when you double your speed, you multiply your braking distance by four. This means that you need to think big when it comes to your following distance on the highway. Increase your following distance to at least three seconds.

It's important to have an escape route that allows you to steer out of a hazardous situation. When riding on a multi-lane road, always try to position yourself so that you have plenty of space in front and an empty stretch of lane beside you.

Learn to ride smart review

Read *space margins* in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 6.

Learn to ride smart review

For more information on turbulence, read **Learn to ride smart**:

- **large vehicles** in **chapter 7**
- **turbulence and crosswinds** in **chapter 9**.

Taking on turbulence

When you ride on a highway or freeway, you'll often share the road with large vehicles. Because they're travelling at high speeds, the turbulence they create is increased.

Trucks aren't the only cause of turbulence. Wind gusts are common on highways and freeways. They can blow your motorcycle sideways. Do you know how to handle turbulent conditions?

Seeing and being seen

When you're riding down the highway, you never know what might appear ahead. A vehicle may break down, cargo might fall off the back of a truck or an animal could run onto the road. You need to be constantly alert and looking well ahead.

When the drivers around you are travelling at high speeds, it's more difficult for them to see you because their peripheral vision may catch you as only a blur.

Seeing ahead

Look at least 20 seconds ahead when you're riding on highways or freeways. This means you're looking about half a kilometre up the road. This should give you time to stop or steer around most hazards.

Avoid riding in any situation where your vision is limited. If you're close behind a big truck, your view ahead will be blocked. Allow plenty of following distance so that you can see around and beyond large trucks.

Being seen

Take extra care to make sure you're seen:

- Choose a dominant lane position wherever possible.
- Wear a high visibility garment such as a safety vest.
- Communicate — flash your brake light when you're about to slow down, and signal your intentions well ahead. Consider using hand signals.

notes



Using judgment

When you're riding, you often have to make fast decisions. Sometimes there's no perfect choice, only risky ones. You must decide very quickly which is safest. As you enter a freeway, for instance, you may have only a second to decide whether to move into a gap that looks a bit small, or slow down in the acceleration lane and take the chance of being rear-ended. Use the "think" part of see-think-do to make decisions — assess the risks and choose the best solution.

During this session, keep track of the quick riding decisions you have to make. At the end of the session, discuss your choices with your supervisor using this chart. (An example is given to start you off.)

Situation	What is your assessment of the risk?	What solutions could you have chosen?	What solution did you choose?
Situation 1: You've started to pass a slow vehicle and the driver suddenly speeds up.	If you can't pull in front of the vehicle, you could be caught in the lane of oncoming traffic.	Slow down and drop back behind the vehicle. Speed up and pull ahead of the vehicle.	Your answer depends on the traffic situation. Usually the first solution is safest. But if another vehicle has pulled up behind the vehicle you are passing, you may have to choose the second solution.
Situation 2:			
Situation 3:			



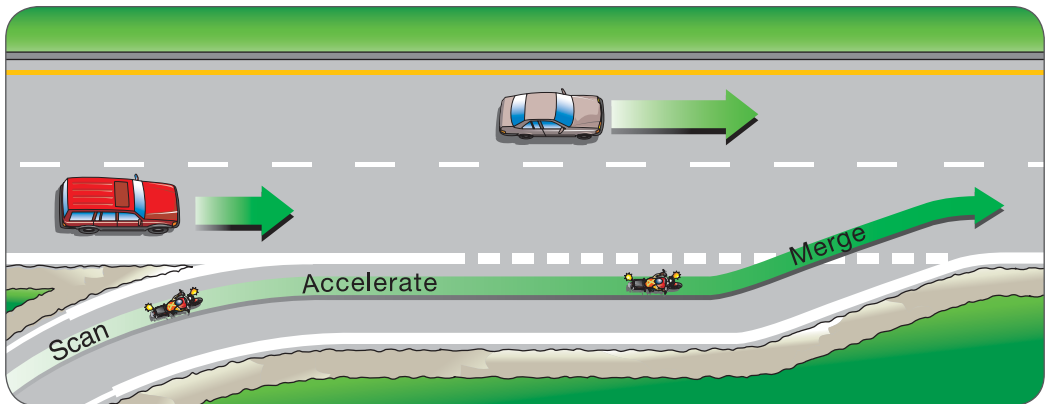
Entering the highway/freeway



choosing a route

Pick a section of highway or freeway that includes an entrance and an exit.

Entering a major highway or freeway can be challenging. Practise observing well ahead, judging the gaps in traffic, and adjusting your speed so that you move into the highway traffic smoothly and safely.



Use the see-think-do strategy as you enter a highway or freeway.

Learn to ride smart review

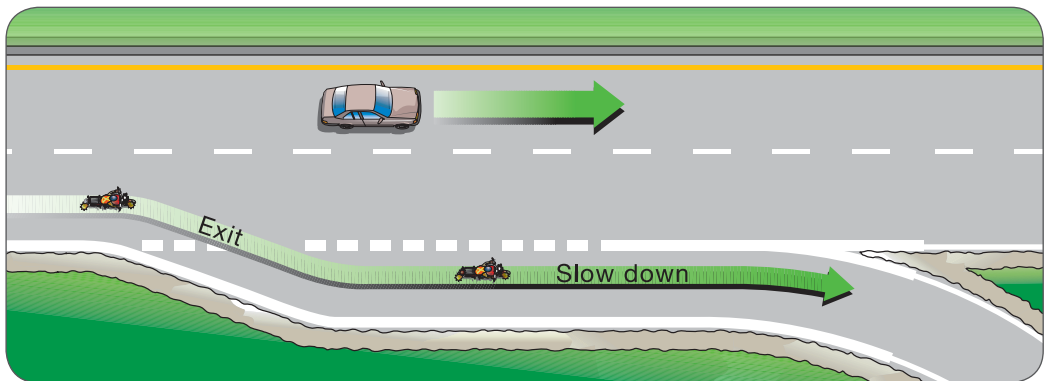
Read **highway or freeway entrances and exits** in *Learn to ride smart*, chapter 5.

- Leave plenty of following distance on the ramp when entering.
- Scan the highway traffic for a safe gap.
- Accelerate to the speed of highway traffic, keeping within the posted limit.
- Check your mirrors, signal and shoulder check in the direction you plan to move.
- Merge into the nearest lane of the highway, making sure you don't cross on a solid line.
- Look well ahead and move into a dominant lane position.
- Re-check your following distance.

Reminders —

- Avoid slowing or stopping at the end of the merge section of the entrance lane. You could be rear-ended and leave yourself with no room to accelerate onto the freeway.
- Watch for traffic ahead on the entrance lane. If drivers misjudge the merging gap, they may have to stop. Make sure you don't rear-end them.

Exiting the highway/freeway



To exit a freeway safely, think ahead. Don't get caught in the wrong lane.

using see-think-do

When you're riding near a highway entrance and see that there's traffic waiting to enter, what could you do?

- Make the necessary lane changes so that you're positioned in the correct lane.
- Mirror check, signal and shoulder check before moving into the exit lane.
- Maintain your speed until you're in the exit lane, then gradually slow down to a safe speed. Check your speedometer to make sure you're travelling within the posted speed.

Reminder — Before going out on a highway or freeway, check your map for the number of your exit. Plan an alternate route in case you miss it. Never stop and back up on a highway.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Entering the highway/freeway

- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Accelerates in the entrance lane. 1 2 3
- Chooses a safe gap in the traffic. 1 2 3
- Steers smoothly onto the freeway. 1 2 3
- Adjusts speed and lane position appropriately. 1 2 3

Exiting the highway/freeway

- Changes lanes well in advance of the exit. 1 2 3
- Maintains speed until the exit lane. 1 2 3
- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Reduces speed in the exit lane. 1 2 3



Self-check

You now know how challenging riding can be. You also know that you can help protect yourself and others by making safe choices. Have another look at the amount of risk you're willing to take and assess whether you need to make some changes.

Step 1: assessing your risk

In sessions 10, 14 and 17 you examined three parts of your risk profile. Use these results to assess your overall risk profile.

Exploring your risk profile, part 4

	Green	Blue	Orange
Responsibility Knowing your limits (1 to 3) Responsibility to self and others (4 to 6)			
Making decisions Pressure (7 to 9) Planning (10 to 12)			
Being fit Fitness (13 to 16) Emotional control (17 to 18)			
Total			
Rating scale: Green = low risk; Blue = moderate risk; Orange = high risk			

Check back on the three previous parts of **Exploring your risk profile** in sessions 10, 14 and 17. Add up the number of Xs you put on each colour. Tally them on this chart.

Of the three risk areas (responsibility, decision-making and fitness), where do you have the:

Lowest risk? _____

Highest risk? _____

Step 2: strategies to manage risk

Keeping in mind your higher-risk areas, describe to your supervisor (or to yourself) some strategies that you can use to help protect yourself. Here's an example to start you off:

Problem: I know I have a problem saying no to my friends when it comes to riding fast.

Strategy: Before starting out on a ride, I'll mention that I may not keep their pace and will arrange to meet them at an agreed time and place.

Your turn

Problem: _____

Strategy: _____

Problem: _____

Strategy: _____



Passing

Passing on a two-lane road (requiring you to pull out into oncoming traffic) is an advanced manoeuvre that demands a high level of skill and good judgment. You should not try to pass on a two-lane road until you have lots of riding experience.

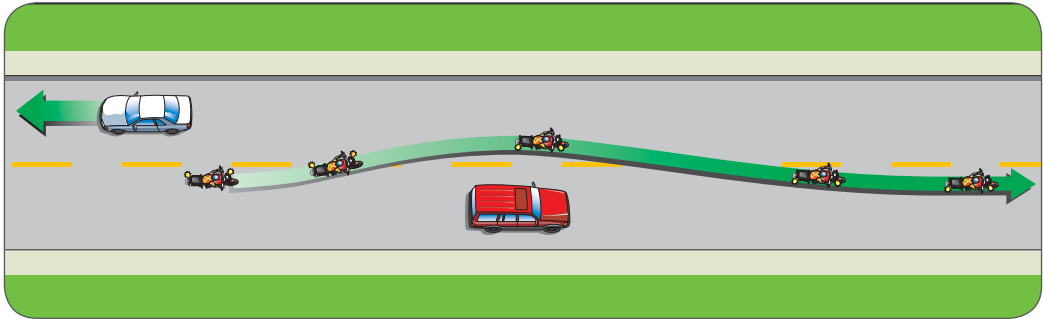
Assess the risks

- Do you really need to pass?
- Is the vehicle in front going substantially slower than the speed limit? (It is illegal to exceed the speed limit when you pass.)
- Do the pavement markings and signs allow you to pass legally?
- Can you see well ahead?
- Is there a long safe gap in oncoming traffic?
- Is there space to pull back safely into your lane?
- Is the road in good condition?
- Are all driveways and side roads clear of incoming traffic?
- Unless the answer to all of these is yes, don't pass.

warning!

Don't pass:

- any place where your vision is obstructed
- at intersections or railway crossings
- on bridges or underpasses (side escape routes are limited here).



To pass safely, use your observation skills each step of the way.

Learn to ride smart review

For more information on passing, read **Learn to ride smart:**

- check **large vehicles** in **chapter 7**
- review group riding in **other motorcycles** in **chapter 7**.

Do the manoeuvre

- Mirror check, signal left and shoulder check to the left to make sure there's no vehicle already passing you.
- Steer smoothly into the left lane, moving to a dominant lane position.
- Accelerate to overtake the vehicle.
- Keep looking ahead for hazards as you pass. If conditions change — if the vehicle you're passing speeds up, or if a vehicle appears in the oncoming lane — you will need to use your judgment to decide on the best action to take.
- Check your right mirror. When you can see the front of the vehicle you're passing in your mirror, signal right, and shoulder check to make sure you have enough space to pull in.
- Return to the original lane and establish your lane position.
- Cancel the turn signal and adjust your speed.



coaching tips

Never encourage a rider to pass in a risky situation. A good way to practise passing is to use a multi-lane road and ask the rider to imagine a slow vehicle in front or be the slow vehicle yourself and get the rider to pass you.



How are you doing?

Rate your skills, then compare your results with your supervisor's.

Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent

Passing

- Passes only when the conditions are safe. 1 2 3
- Mirror checks, signals and shoulder checks. 1 2 3
- Steers into the passing lane smoothly and with good control. 1 2 3
- Keeps within the speed limit. 1 2 3
- Is well beyond the vehicle being passed before returning to the original lane. 1 2 3



Riding guidelines

By now you have been introduced to the skills you need to be a safe rider. Before you take your road test, it's a good idea to create a set of personal riding guidelines. To create your guidelines:

1. **Check your risk profile again.** What risks do you particularly need to guard against (speeding, accepting small space margins, impairment, peer pressure, tailgating)? You may want to review the results of your risk profile from session 19.
2. **With your supervisor, discuss the areas you need to watch out for.** Your supervisor has watched you learn to ride and probably has a good idea of what areas you need to pay attention to and guidelines you need to follow. Together, think of personal guidelines that will work for you.
3. **Write your personal guidelines.** _____



The road test

Skills — The Class 6 road test will assess your ability to perform the key riding skills: observation, hazard perception, space margins, speed control, steering and communication.

Manoeuvres — Here are some of the manoeuvres you may be tested on when taking the Class 6 road test:

- intersection manoeuvres (riding straight through, turning right, turning left)
- entering and leaving traffic
- entering and exiting a highway or freeway
- changing lanes
- parking at the side of the road
- parking on a hill
- reverse stall parking
- making U-turns
- general riding (e.g., straight riding, riding on hills and curves).

Testing method — In the Class 6 road test, the examiner will tell you where to go and follow behind you in a car.

Length — The Class 6 road test is about 45 minutes long.

Preparing for the test

To prepare for a road test, you and your supervisor should plan a practice test route together. Both of you should rate your riding manoeuvres using the following **rider report card**.



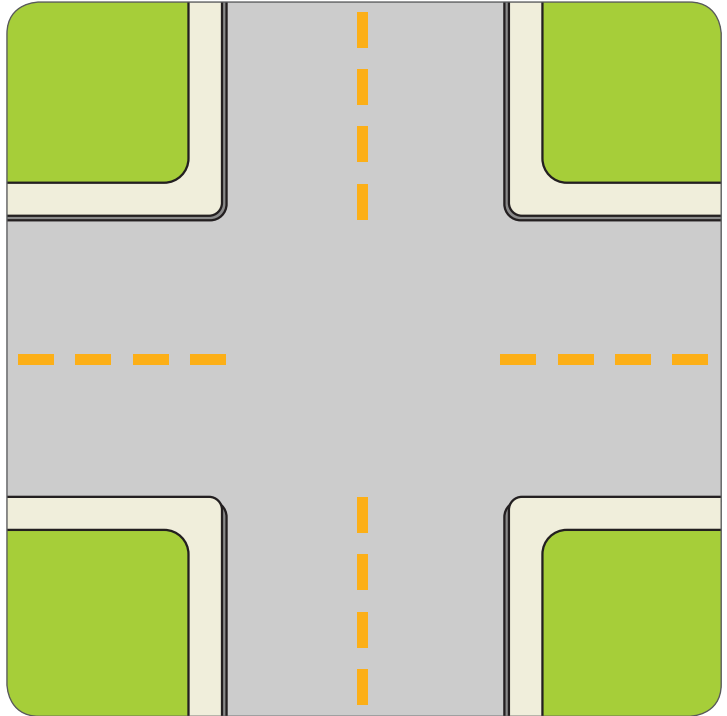
Rider report card

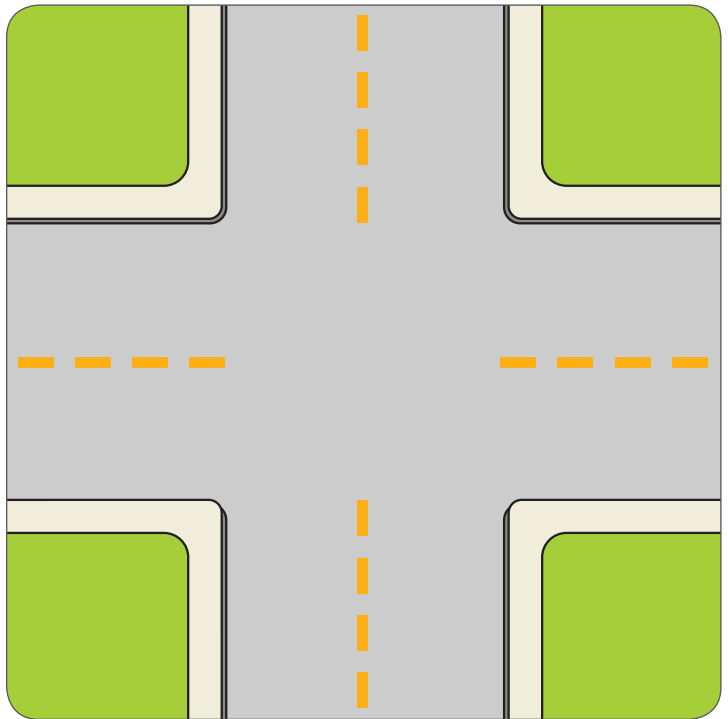
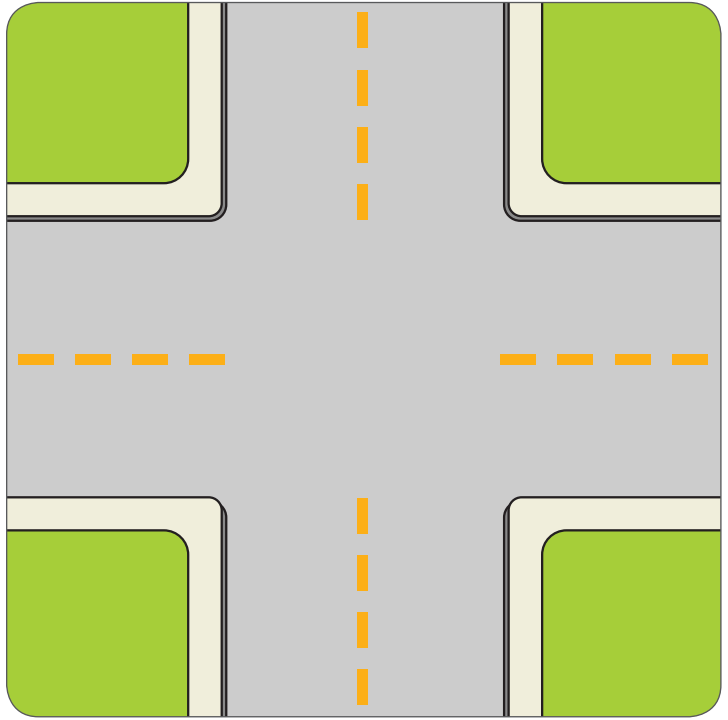
Pre-trip	Yes	No
Carries out a pre-trip check		

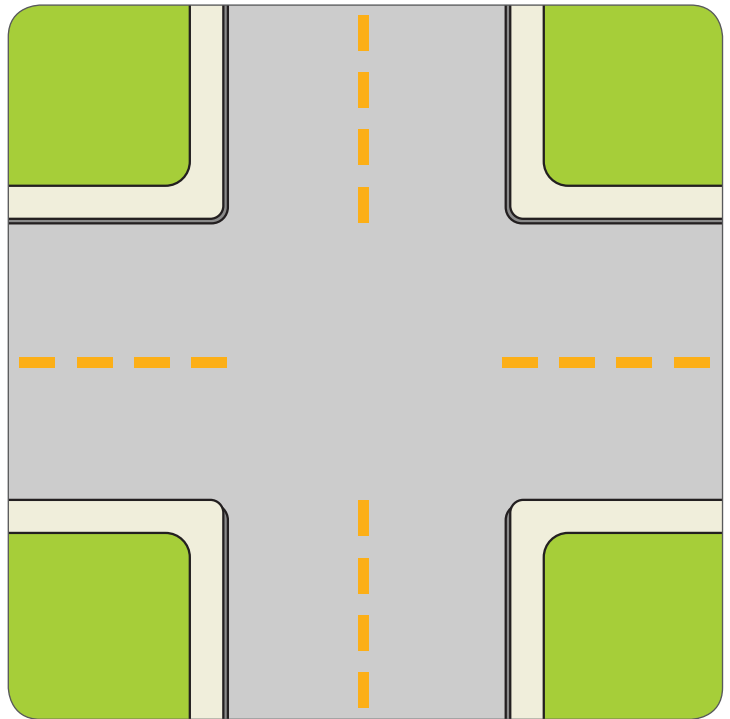
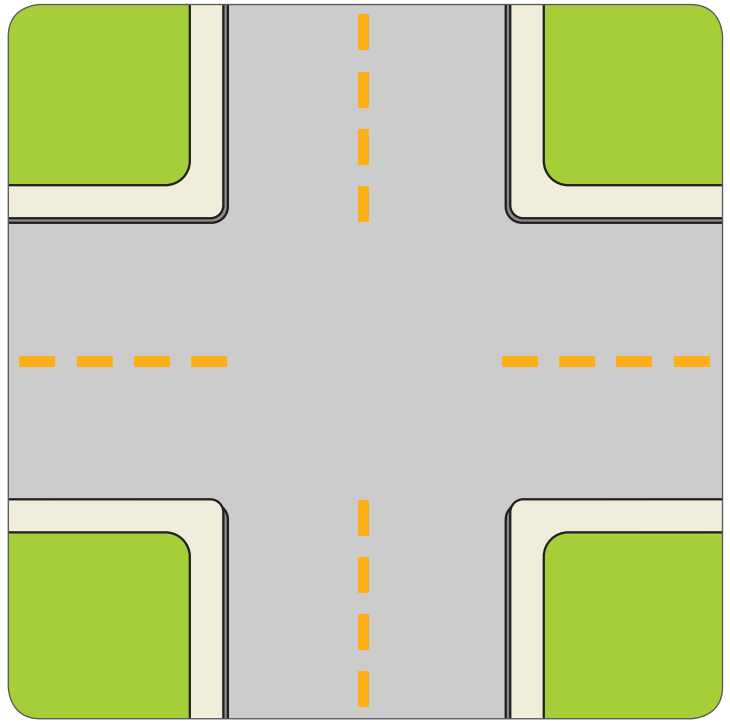
Manoeuvres Rating scale: 1 – needs work 2 – getting closer 3 – competent	Observation	Hazard perception	Speed control	Steering	Space margins	Communication
	Entering traffic					
Pulling over						
Stall parking						
Roadside parking						
Hill parking						
Riding straight through intersections						
Right turns						
Left turns						
Traffic circle						
U-turns						
Taking curves						
Riding on hills						
Riding on rough surfaces and over tracks						
Changing lanes						
Entering a highway or freeway						
Exiting a highway or freeway						
Passing						

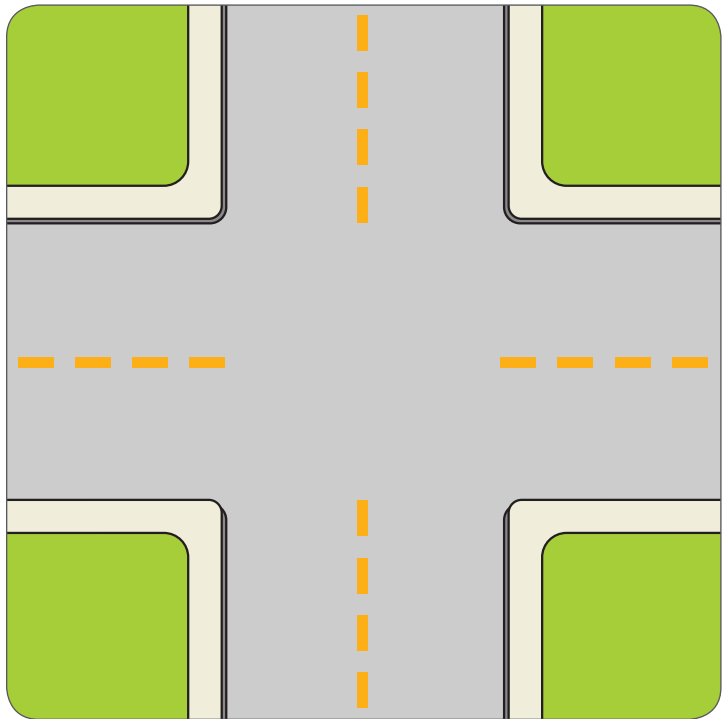
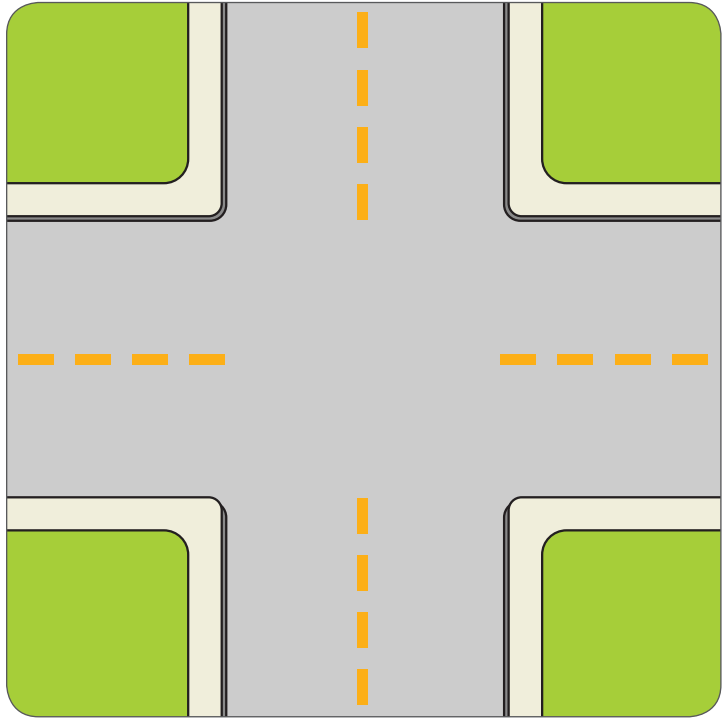
Use the blank diagrams on the following pages to help you plan right and left turns, lane changes, lane position and so on. Draw in traffic lights, road signs and other vehicles.

Your supervisor can also use these diagrams to review a move with you, and to point out ways you could improve.









Licensing information

Contact your nearest Yukon Motor Vehicles office to get information on licence classifications and requirements.

For general information call:

- Whitehorse, 667-5315
- toll-free throughout Yukon: 1-800-661-0408, ext. 5315

Booking road tests

- Whitehorse, 667-5315
- other communities, contact the territorial agents or territorial representatives

Yukon Territorial Agents

Dawson City Liquor Store, 993-5348

Faro Liquor Store, 994-2724

Haines Junction Liquor Store, 634-2201

Mayo Liquor Store, 996-2276

Watson Lake Liquor Store, 536-7311

Yukon Territorial Representatives

Carmacks Community Housing Office, 863-6411

Carcross Community Housing Office, 821-4281

Teslin Community Housing Office, 390-2024

Old Crow, VGFN Office, 966-3261

Ross River Community Housing Office, 969-2347

Website addresses

- Visit Motor Vehicles, www.hpw.gov.yk.ca/mv
- Road Safety information, www.hpw.gov.yk.ca
- Yukon road report, www.511yukon.ca