

Motorcycle Skill Test

PRACTICE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

This booklet describes several exercises which you can practice by yourself or with a friend. The exercises will help you develop the skills you need to pass the motorcycle skill test and receive your license.* The proper execution of these exercises will also help prepare you for various traffic situations. **Do not attempt these exercises unless you can already perform basic skills such as using the clutch and throttle correctly, shifting, and riding in a straight line. If you do not have these basic skills, be sure to seek instruction before practicing the skills in this guide.** Of course, the best place to learn to ride is in a quality rider education program.

Call 1-800-446-9227 toll-free to find the RiderCourse offered in your area.

Read the entire guide before you practice. Take the guide with you for reference when you practice.

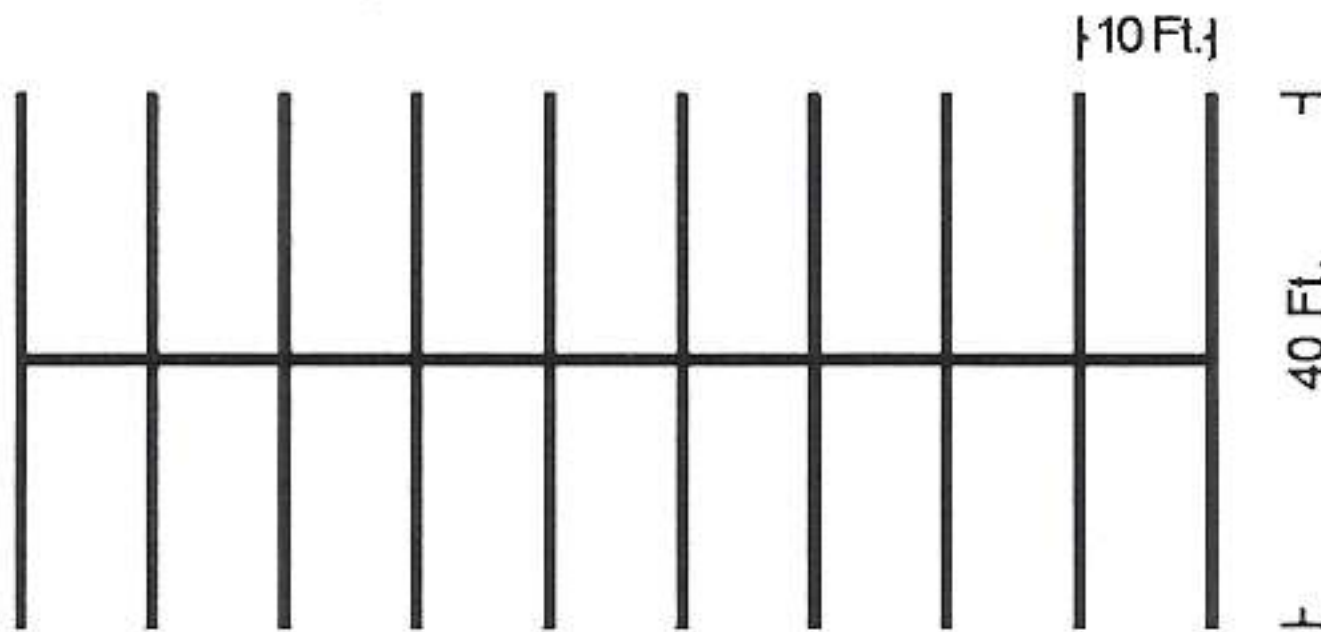
Keep practicing until you can do each exercise without a problem. Do not practice for more than one or two hours at a time. When you get tired, you cannot practice effectively.

Choosing a Practice Area

A well-marked parking lot is the best practice area. Be aware, however, of grease left by parked cars. Look for parking lots that are not used all the time at shopping centers, schools, churches or community centers. For instance, you might use a school lot in the evening hours, or a shopping center early in the morning.

Once you've selected a suitable location, it's important to gain permission from the owner.

Keep this basic parking lot diagram in mind when setting up the exercises.



If the parking lot you choose doesn't have lines, use the dimensions diagrammed here. Mark them using a tape measure and chalk.

Traffic is your greatest concern. Make sure you check to the front, sides and rear before doing an exercise. Also, make sure you watch out for children and animals and be considerate of others in the area.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The practice exercises are not dangerous. However, a few safety precautions should be followed:

- Wear proper protective clothing that includes: helmet, eye protection, gloves, boots or shoes that cover the ankles, long pants, and long-sleeved shirt or jacket.
- Inspect the motorcycle for defects before you start. If you are not familiar with the inspection procedures for your motorcycle, check the owner's manual.
- Check the practice area for loose gravel, glass, grease left by parked cars, or other things that could be a problem.
- If possible, take a friend along to:
 - (a) Watch out for traffic.
 - (b) Help you if anything goes wrong.

WHAT TO BRING

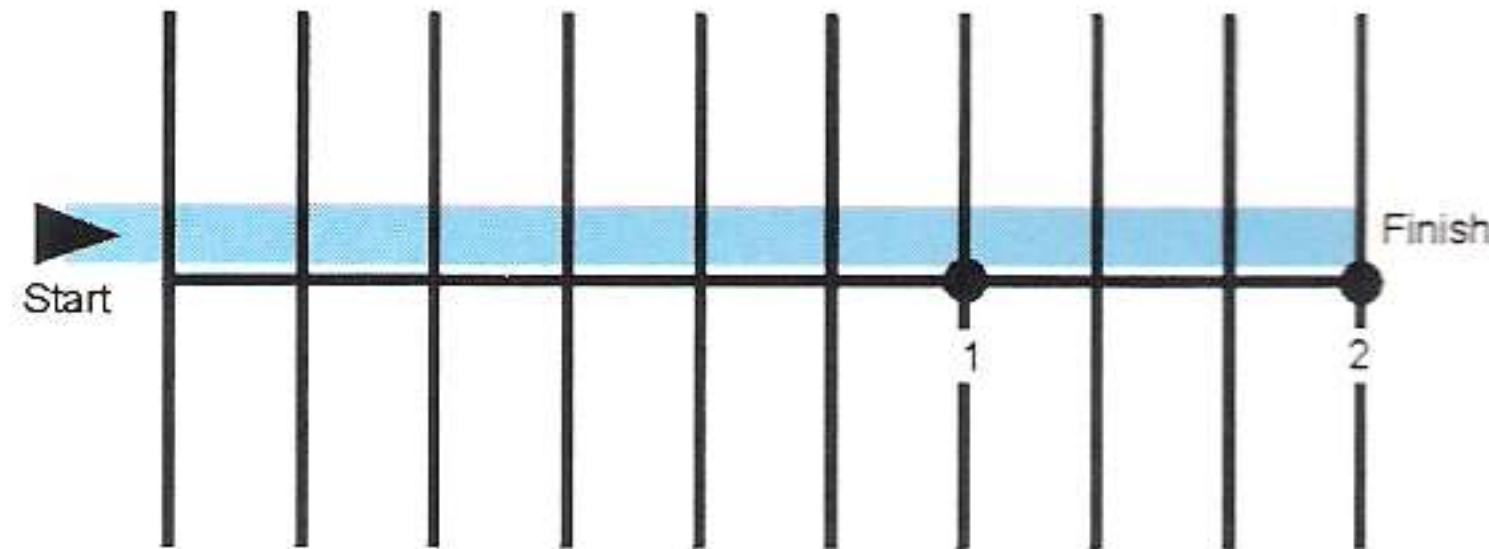
Bring 6 small objects that you can use as markers. Milk cartons or plastic bottles with a little water or sand in the bottom work well. Do not leave them at the practice area when you leave. If you cannot find any small objects, bring some chalk to draw markers on the pavement.

EXERCISE 1: NORMAL STOP IN A STRAIGHT LINE

Practicing this exercise will help you stop smoothly, such as for stoplights and stop signs.

Directions

Accelerate straight ahead across the parking lot between **15-20 mph** (shift to second gear). Begin to slow down and downshift at the first marker. Try to come to a smooth nonskidding stop with your front tire next to the last marker.



Coaching Tips

- Keep head and eyes up.
- Keep the motorcycle on a straight course.
- Gradually apply **both** brakes and squeeze the clutch, downshifting to first gear at the same time. Keep the clutch squeezed in.
- Do not release the front and back brakes until you come to a complete stop.
- When stopped, the left foot should come to the ground first.

Common Problems

1. Rear tire skids.
2. Overshooting marker.
3. Unstable during stop.

Basic Corrections

1. Apply less pressure on the rear brake.
2. Begin slowing and braking sooner, or try slightly more pressure on the brakes.
3. Keep head and eyes up during stop. Delay braking until necessary.

EXERCISE 2: QUICK STOP IN A STRAIGHT LINE

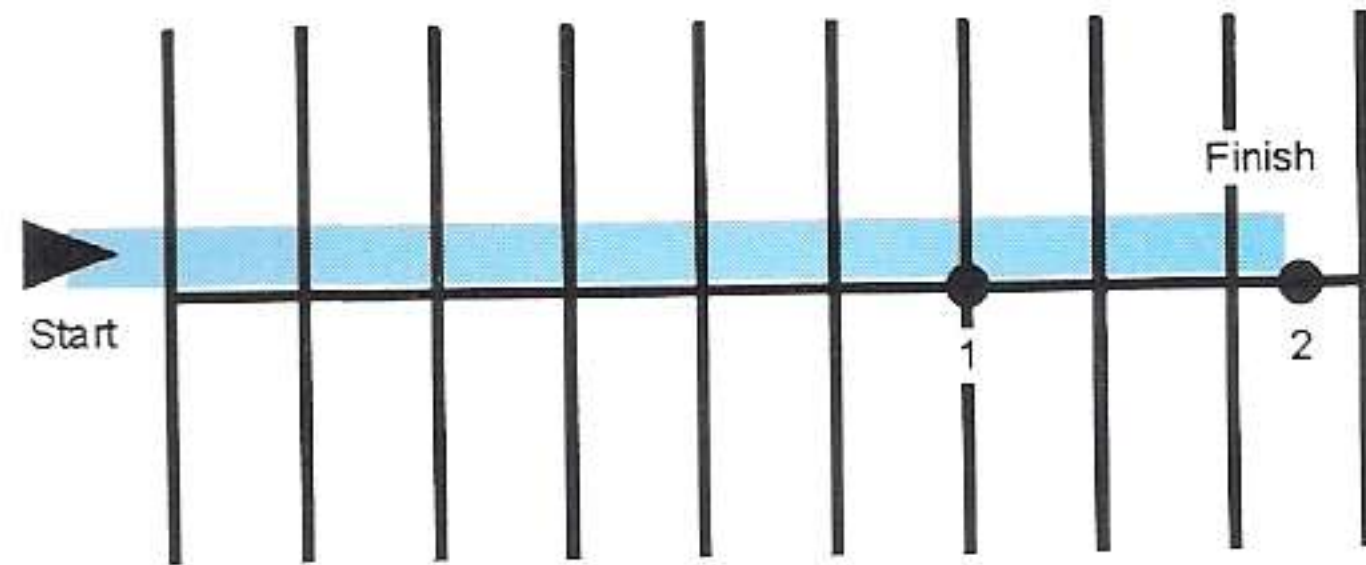
Practicing this exercise will help you stop quickly when something suddenly appears in your path.

Directions

Approach marker 1, upshifting to second gear. As your front tire passes marker 1, downshift and begin braking. Try to stop before marker 2. Practice this at **10 mph**, then **15 mph**, then **20 mph**. **Do not exceed 20 mph.**

Coaching Tips

- Keep head and eyes up.
- When stopping, apply both brakes and squeeze the clutch, downshifting to first gear. Keep the clutch squeezed in.



- Keep handlebars straight. Squeeze front brake – don't grab.
- Do not release brakes until fully stopped.
- When stopped, the left foot should touch the ground first.

Common Problems

1. Overshooting the final marker.
2. Motorcycle slides sideways, or leans to one side.
3. Engine overrevs when using the front brake.

Basic Corrections

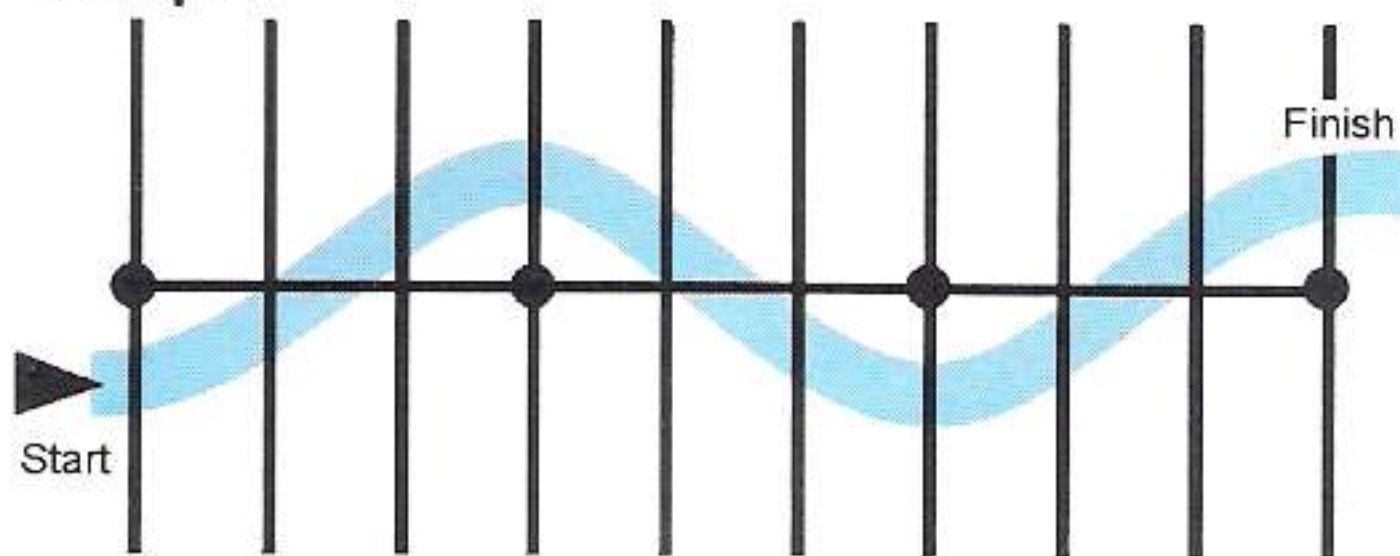
1. Apply more pressure to brakes; however, avoid locking **front** brake by squeezing, not grabbing, the lever.
2. Sit straight on seat and **do not turn handlebars**, look straight ahead. NOTE: If the **rear** wheel inadvertently locks, keep steering the motorcycle **straight**.
3. Close the throttle before braking. Squeeze the front brake with all four fingers. Avoid pulling back on the throttle when applying pressure to the front brake.

EXERCISE 3: WEAVES

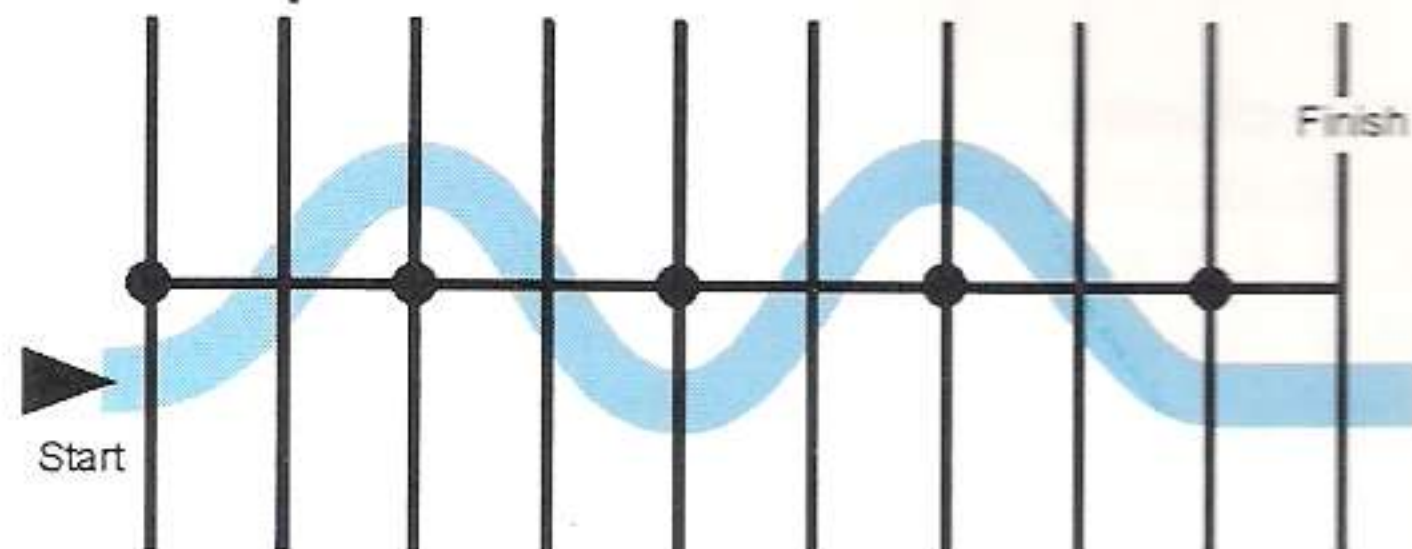
Practicing these exercises will help you in making lane changes in traffic or changes in direction.

Directions

Drill 1—30-foot Weave—Begin at one end of the parking lot lines or markers. Go to the right of the first marker, left of the second, right of the third, and so on. Practice this at 15 mph.



Drill 2—20-foot Weave—Proceed the same as you did in the 30-foot weave. Practice this at 15 mph.



Coaching Tips

- Keep head and eyes up and knees in.
- Weave by pressing on the handlebars in the direction you want to go. (Press right to lean right; press left to lean left.)
- Maintain a steady speed.
- Do not brake while performing weave.

Common Problems

1. Swinging too wide away from markers.
2. Hitting markers.
3. Too much handlebar movement.

Basic Corrections

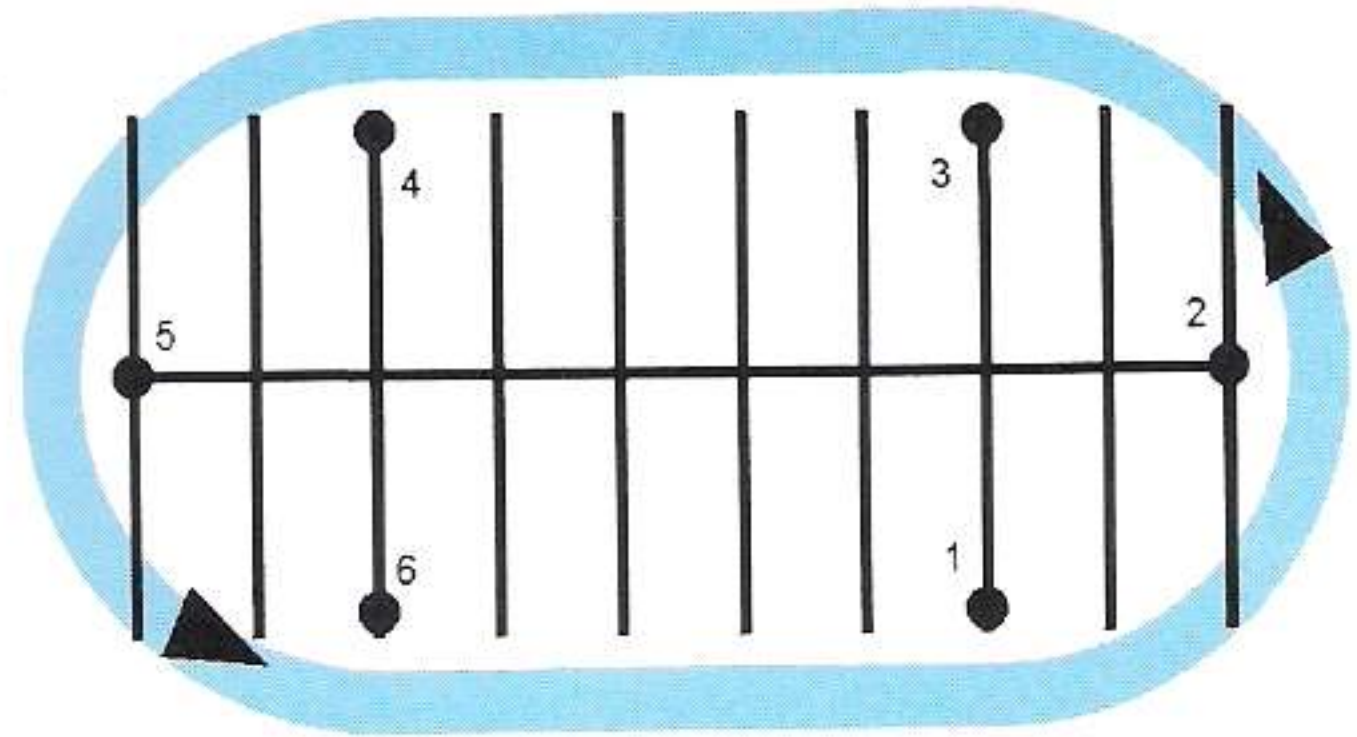
1. Keep eyes up, looking forward, **decrease** lean angle; press less on the handlebars.
2. Keep eyes up, looking forward, **increase** lean angle slightly; press more on the handlebars.
3. Maintain a steady, stable speed. Don't slow down or brake.

EXERCISE 4: BASIC TURNS

Practicing this exercise will help you with turning such as in curves on highways and winding roads.

Directions

Ride around the oval indicated by markers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Adjust your speed on the straightaways by braking as necessary before the turn. Hold a steady throttle around the markers at the ends of the oval. Repeat the exercise in the other direction.



Coaching Tips

- Beginning speed of **10-15 mph**.
- Slow down before the turn. Brake if necessary.
- Look through the turn to where you want to go. Lean with the motorcycle.
- Hold a steady speed or roll on the throttle gently through the turn.

Common Problems

1. Swinging wide of the turn.
2. Cutting corner too close or turning too sharply.
3. Exiting wide out of the turn, making the oval into a circle.

Basic Corrections

1. Look to the exit point. Apply more pressure on the inside handlebar to lean more.
2. Look to the exit point. Do not look down. Apply less pressure to the inside handlebar. Keep a steady throttle.
3. Slow more before the turn. Look where you want to go. Apply more pressure on the inside handlebar to lean more.

EXERCISE 5: NORMAL TURNS

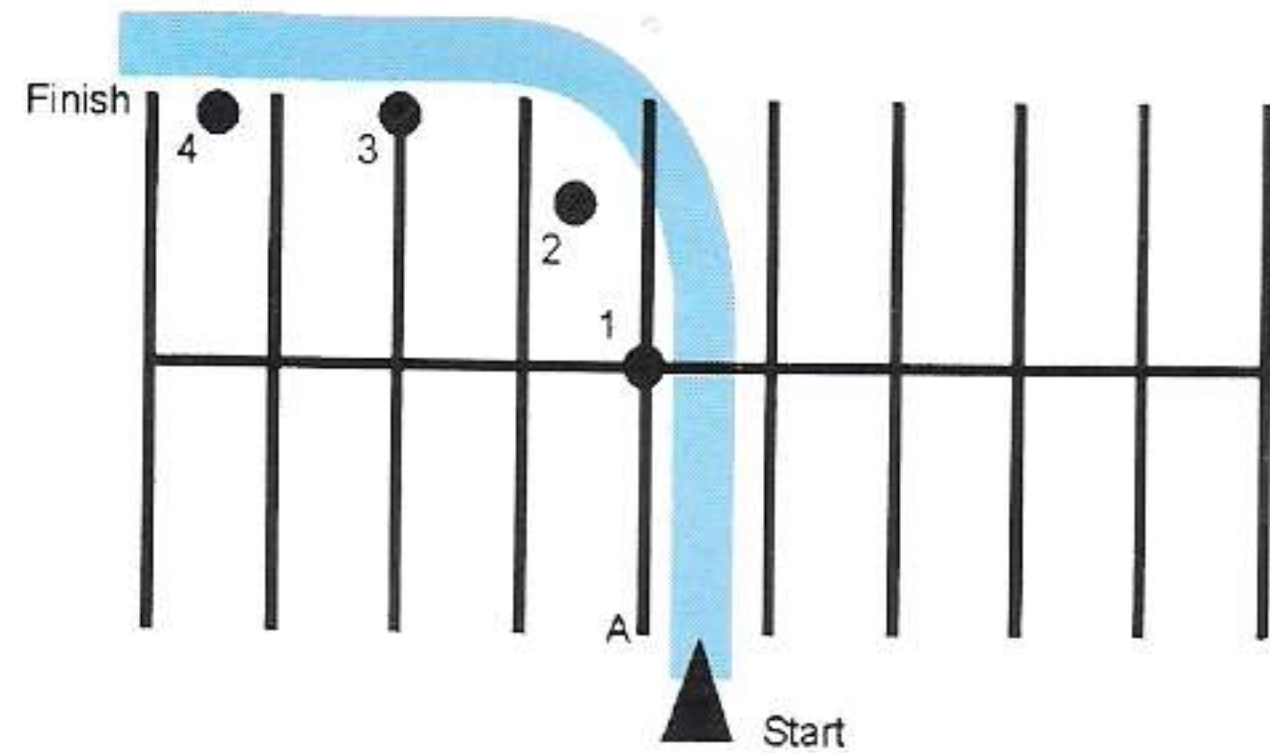
Practicing this exercise will help you further refine your turning skills.

Directions

Start, facing marker 1 at a distance sufficient enough to increase speed to **15-20 mph**. At point "A," reduce speed, using both brakes. As you start your turn at marker 1, look to the exit point and **gently** roll on the throttle throughout the turn. Roll on past marker 3 and stop beyond marker 4. Practice turning in both directions.

Coaching Tips

- Slow down before the turn using both brakes. (Before marker 1.)
- Look through the turn to the exit.



- Lean with the motorcycle.
- Gradually increase speed throughout the turn. (Past marker 3.)

Common Problems

1. Swinging wide of the turn.
2. Cutting corner too close or turning too sharply.
3. Slowing and motorcycle tends to straighten up.

Basic Corrections

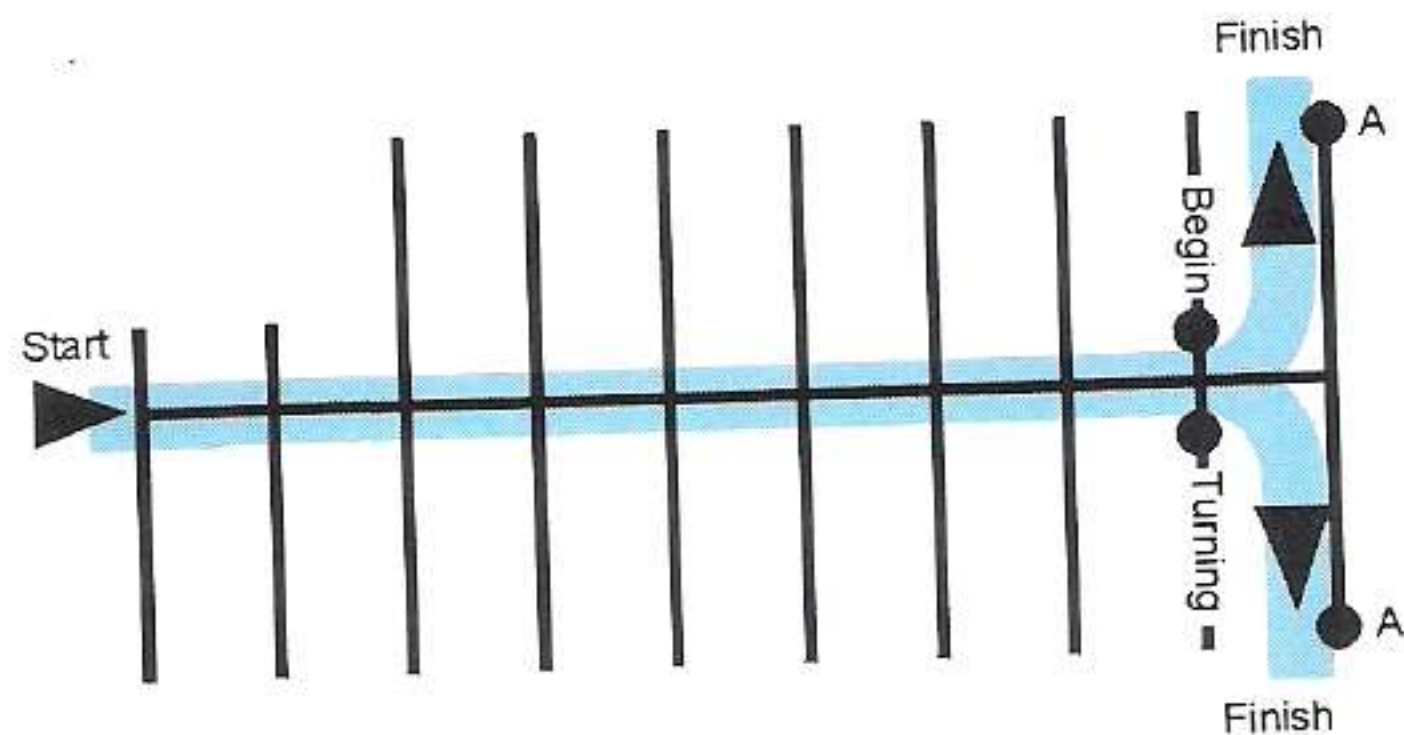
1. Slow down more before entering the turn, look to the exit point, press more on the inside handlebar.
2. Keep head and eyes up. Do not look down. Look to the exit point. Press less on inside handlebar.
3. Keep a smooth, steady throttle or slightly increase throttle to stabilize motorcycle.

EXERCISE 6a: SHARP TURNS WITHOUT STOPPING

Practicing this exercise will help you to make sharp turns such as pulling out of parking spaces or driveways, and turning into a driveway or onto a narrow street.

Directions

Directions
Begin riding straight across the parking lot, increasing speed to approximately **10 mph**. Just before reaching the "Begin Turning" markers, slow down and use both brakes to adjust your speed. Then release the brakes, turn the handlebars, lean the motorcycle slightly in the direction of the turn and turn your head, looking through the intended path of travel. Use controlled clutch release and



throttle as you make the sharp turn. Practice finishing your turn inside line “A,” without touching it.

Common Problems

1. Turning too short or too long.
2. Motorcycle stalls.
3. Motorcycle begins to fall into the turn.
4. Traveling too fast to make turn.

Basic Corrections

- ### Basic Corrections
1. Keep head and eyes up and look through the turn.
 2. Use clutch and throttle smoothly to maintain necessary power to rear wheel.
 3. Keep eyes up and look through the turn, keep just enough momentum after braking to carry you through the turn.
 4. Slow adequately with both brakes before turning.

EXERCISE 6a: (cont.)

Coaching Tips

- Use both brakes to reduce speed before the turn.
- Keep head and eyes up; look through the turn.

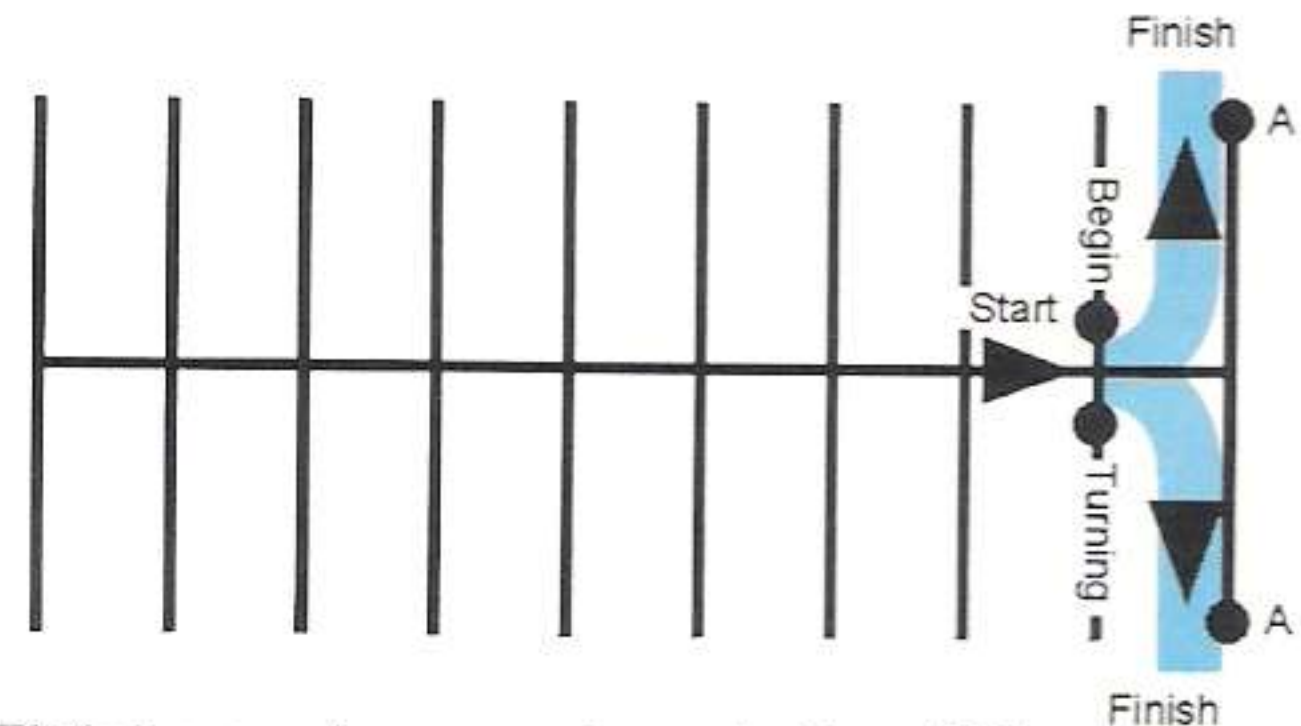
- Turn the handlebars and lean the motorcycle in the direction of the turn.
- Use smooth clutch release and throttle as you exit.

EXERCISE 6b: SHARP TURNS FROM A STOP

Practicing this exercise properly will help you make sharp turns from a stop such as exiting a parking lot or turning into a narrow street.

Directions

Start at "Begin Turning" markers with the motorcycle straight. Turn the handlebars, lean the motorcycle slightly in the direction you are turning, and turn your head to look through the intended path of travel. Use controlled clutch release and throttle as you make the sharp turn.



Finish your turn as close to line "A" as you can without touching it.

Common Problems

1. Turning too short or too long.
2. Motorcycle stalls or begins to fall into the turn.

Basic Corrections

1. Keep head and eyes up and look through the turn.
2. Concentrate on maintaining steady speed or slight acceleration and smooth clutch release. Look through the turn.

EXERCISE 7: OBSTACLE SWERVE

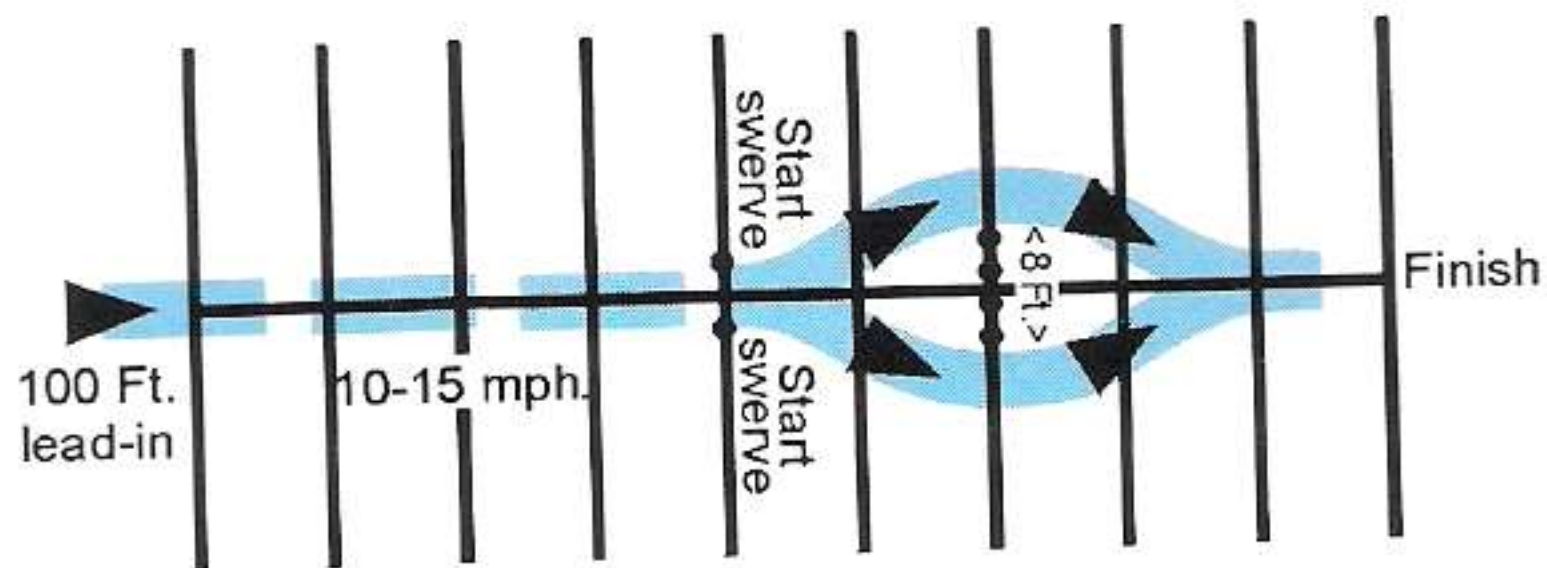
Practicing this exercise will help you swerve to avoid a potential hazard.

Directions

With about 100' lead-in, approach the first pair of markers. As you reach the markers you should be going **10-15 mph**. As your front tire passes the first pair of markers, make a swerve (right or left) avoiding the imaginary barrier or obstacle. Make sure you've decided on which direction you intend to go before starting the exercise. Do not stop or apply brakes while performing the swerve.

Coaching Tips

- To swerve right, press right until you have cleared the markers, then press left to resume straight ahead.
- Keep head and eyes up and knees in against the tank.



- Press on the handlebar in the direction you want to go. (Press right to go right; press left to left.)
- **Do not brake and swerve at the same time.**

Common Problem

1. Unable to properly complete the swerve.

Basic Correction

1. Keep a steady speed. **Maintain pressure** on the handlebar until you have cleared the marker, then press on opposite handgrip to straighten into the new path.

EXERCISE 8: NORMAL STOP ON A CURVE

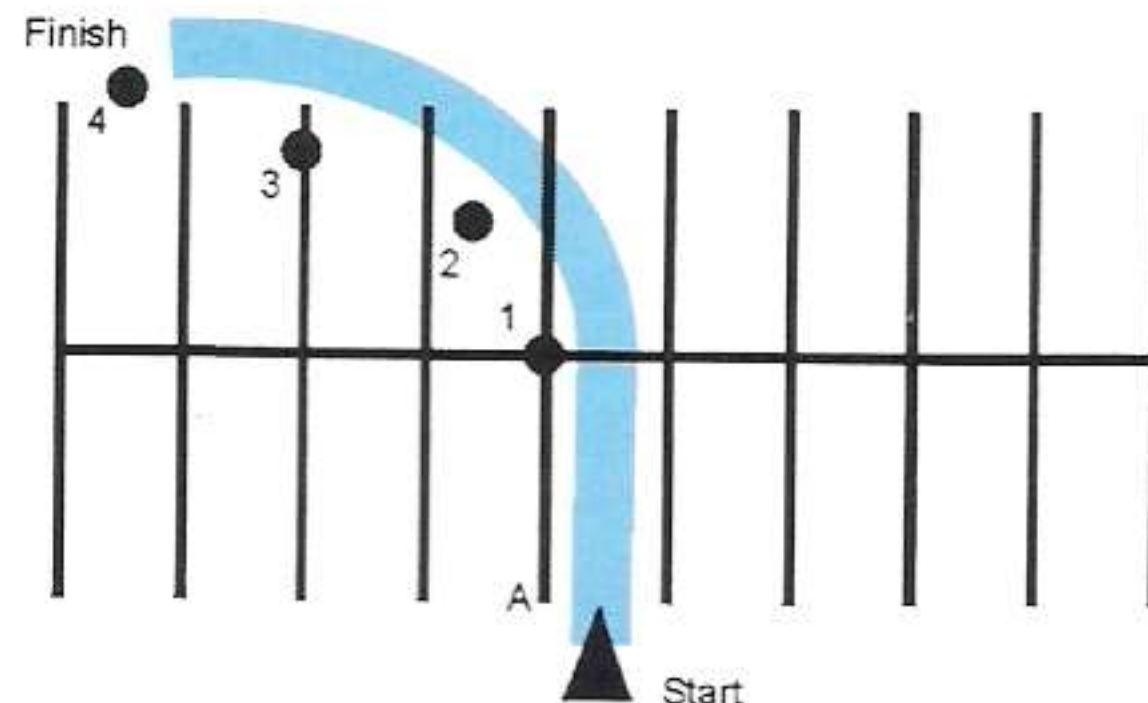
Practicing this exercise will help you stop smoothly in a curve.

Directions

Ride to the outside of line "A," upshifting to second gear. As you reach marker 1, turn in the curved path indicated by markers 2, 3, and 4. Once you enter the curved path, gradually apply both brakes and downshift. Do not release the clutch. Try to come to a smooth stop with your front tire next to marker 3. Practice this at **10 mph**, then at **15 mph**.

Coaching Tips

- Keep head and eyes up; focus on where you want to go.
- Straighten up the motorcycle and square the handlebars before you stop completely.



- Use both brakes smoothly to stop.
- Keep feet on pegs until almost stopped.
- When stopped, the left foot should touch the ground first, and you should be in first gear.
- Do not grab the front brake or skid either tire.

Common Problems

1. Overshooting the final marker.
2. Motorcycle nearly falls over.
3. Rear wheel skids.

Basic Corrections

1. Gradually apply more pressure to the brakes as motorcycle straightens more.
2. Just before stopping be sure the handlebars are **square** with the motorcycle. Keep eyes up. Don't grab front brake.
3. Apply less pressure on the rear brake and make sure the motorcycle is straight up as you stop.

EXERCISE 9: QUICK STOP ON A CURVE

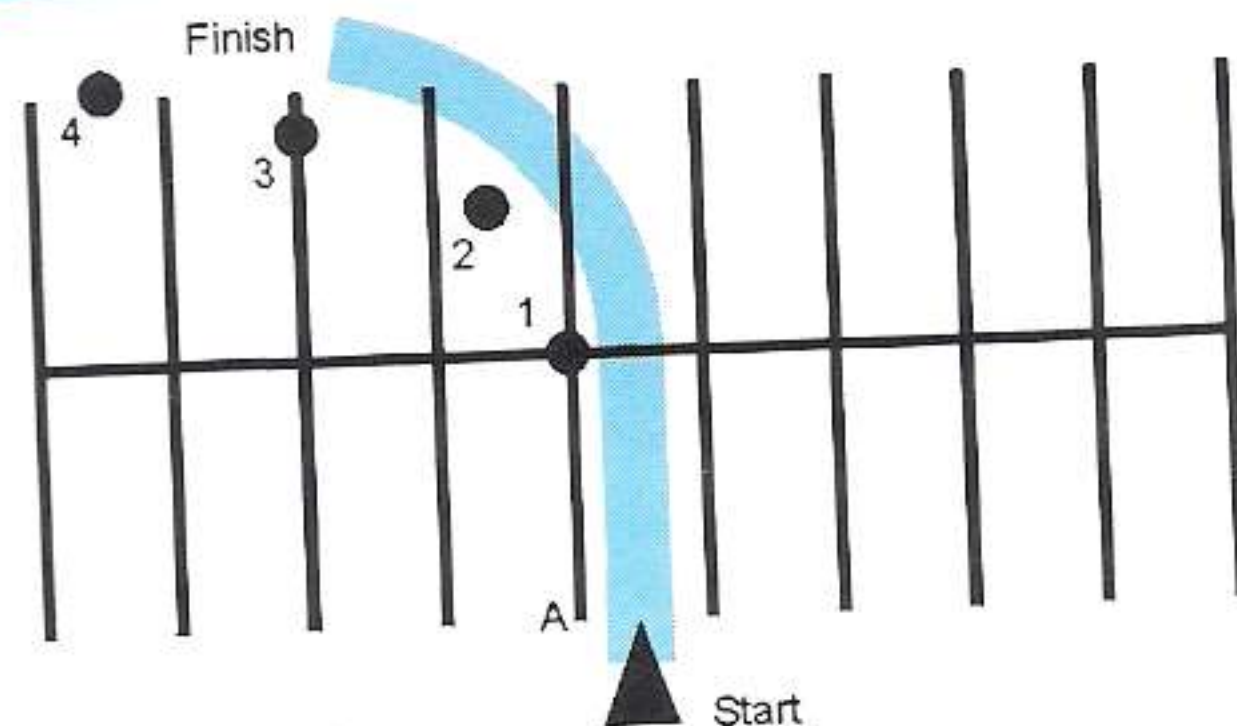
Practicing this exercise will help you stop quickly when something suddenly appears in your path on a curve.

Directions

Ride to the outside of line "A." Start, facing marker 1 at a distance sufficient enough to increase speed to 10-15 mph in first gear. As you reach marker 1, turn in the curved path indicated by markers 2, 3, and 4. When your front tire passes marker 2, first straighten the motorcycle, then begin braking. You should be stopped before marker 3. Practice this at 10 mph, then 15 mph. Do not exceed 15 mph.

Coaching Tips

- Keep head and eyes up; focus on where



you want to go.

- Straighten motorcycle, then apply both brakes, stopping as quickly as possible.
- Keep feet on pegs until almost stopped.
- When stopped, the left foot should touch the ground first.
- Do not grab the front brake or skid either tire.

Common Problems

1. Overshooting the final marker.
2. Motorcycle nearly falls over.
3. Rear wheel skids.

Basic Corrections

1. Apply maximum pressure to the brakes **once motorcycle is straightened from the lean angle.**
2. **Straighten up the motorcycle first**, then apply the brakes. Be sure the handlebars are **square** with the motorcycle. Keep eyes up. Don't grab front brake.
3. Apply less pressure on the rear brake and make sure the motorcycle is straight up as you stop.