

TRAINING QUICK TIP

BRAKING IN A CURVE

Visualize yourself on a glorious sunny afternoon, shined boots and a freshly waxed motorcycle. Your direction is taking you into a long sweeping turn and you are unable to see the other side. As you travel around the continuous radius you identify gravel across the path of travel and the only option available is emergency braking.

Emergency stopping in a curve must be completed immediately to be effective. Good posture boots flat on the boards and looking at the horizon must be present. First action is to straighten the motorcycle to an upright position and then using all four fingers squeeze the front brake and follow-up with the rear brake. Look straight brake straight. If this technique is performed incorrect you may end up in a low side. While leaning the motorcycle traction is limited, therefore, you must make sure you straighten the cycle prior to braking in an emergency situation to take advantage of all traction available.

Do not cover the rear brake during normal day to day operations. Covering the rear brake may produce a rear wheel lock-up.

Of course the most important objective of this technique is to practice, when is the last time that the Motor Officers in your unit conducted braking in a curve?

SIX R'S TO SUCCESSFUL TRAINING

Training must be continuous and on going and training cannot end upon completion of a basic motorcycle school. During in-service training instructors must focus upon six different areas to provide valuable training to their students.

- 1- Relevant – the training being instructed must be relevant to the subject matter. Motorcycle training must focus on various tasks to prepare the Enforcement Officer in the tour of duty. An example of relevant training is Counter Steering.
- 2- Recent – training concepts change and instructors must adapt and change also. A technique that I have used for years and recent training to others is instructing your students to operate the motorcycle without using the rear brake. Begin this technique during breeze-outs then transition into the slow, offset and intersection.

- 3- Repetition – in order to react in a stressful situation an individual must have performed numerous repetitions of that required skill, some studies identify several hundred repetitions. Remember practice becomes permanent and you will react the way you train. If you do not practice braking there is a strong chance you will not brake with success in a threatening encounter. Apply the front brake first every time you stop and in an emergency situation you will perform that technique.
- 4- Realism – Officers must have their heart rate elevated to understand the concept of stress and ability to react. Realism can be achieved while conducting the Evasive Maneuver. The student must react to the threat (instructor) with one of three choices: countersteer to the left, countersteer to the right or conduct emergency braking. The particular exercise provides realism and stress to training.
- 5- Review – Instructors must provide immediate feedback to students during basic, in-service and advanced courses. Instructors you also must be able to accept review. While conducting any training exercise if any officer identifies an error on my skill, I want their review; it will only improve your ability. As an instructor I continue to learn everyday.
- 6- Responsibility – Remember you chose to be a Motorcycle Officer. If your agency does not provide the training that is required for you to survive, then you must provide the training. Each day you can go into an open parking lot and practice slow-controlled maneuvers, braking and countersteering.

Jim Polan is a 24-year Law Enforcement veteran and currently a Captain with the Fort Lauderdale Police Department, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.