



Five Motorcycle Safety Tips That Could Save Your Life

Riding a motorcycle is an exhilarating experience. You are removed from the comfort of riding inside the shell of an automobile and placed directly on top of an engine, roaring and vibrating, with almost nothing separating you from the road. It is a feeling like no other. It an experience that can also easily cost you your life if you are not careful. What follows are five of the most important safety tips to remember when riding a motorcycle so that you and other people on the road stay free from harm.

1. Check your tire pressure regularly. For maximum drivability and tire longevity, you should inflate your tires according to the recommendations stamped on the tire. If a range of tire pressures is given, you should aim for the high end of the range. Having adequate pressure in your tires gives you better control of your motorcycle. Tires naturally lose pressure over time, so if you don't check tire pressure periodically, you could find yourself driving on dangerously under inflated tires. The effect of losing tire pressure is exacerbated during wide swings in temperature. So it is extra important to check tire pressure if it was a different season when you last rode.
2. Control your lanes. Drivers of cars tend to try to share lanes with motorcycles, such as in turning lanes, assuming that it is acceptable since there is often enough physical room to accommodate a motorcycle and car or truck at the same time. But this creates a dangerous situation for motorcyclists. For maximum safety, control your lane by positioning your bike so that others cannot occupy the lane at the same time. When making a right turn from a turning lane, for example, position your bike to the left side of the lane so that another vehicle doesn't attempt to pull right next to you in the same lane.
3. Make sure your brake lever works properly. If the lever gets closer than a half-inch to your grip, then you could catch something on it or your ability to stop may be limited. If the lever moves too far, you likely have air in your brake fluid. You should inspect and correct the problem immediately.
4. Reduce distractions during times when your attention should be focused. Any time you are in a situation that requires maximum concentration and focus, whether it is navigating busy city streets or driving during a rain storm, you should minimize any external distractions, such as listening to a radio.
5. When riding in groups, always follow the lead bike, and stay at a safe distance from the motorcycle in front of you. Being too close to another bike or veering from the path the rest of your party is following can cause serious accidents.

Obviously, there is MUCH more to know about riding a motorcycle than what we have discussed here. If you are just learning to ride, then it is important for you to take a class. But the above tips may be some things you don't always think about when riding. So follow this advice, obey the law, and ride safe.

Submitted by Martin Hobbs