

KENOSHA HOG CHAPTER



Safety Article – Not Riding in a Straight Line

Anybody can learn to ride a motorcycle in a straight line. Hop on, give it some gas and release the clutch and chances are they will be riding...but it is the turning that starts making things interesting. Ever heard the word Apex? Line? And even more familiar... Slow, Look, Lean and Roll? Here are some tips for proper cornering that are always worth practicing.

Many curves have limited visibility for you and the car coming the other way. In addition to not being able to see traffic ahead there may be animals and other road hazards around that corner. You can reduce the risk of collision with a wandering car or road hazard up ahead by adjusting the line you take as you travel through the curve. Picture the line as the path that your tires have traveled through the turn. The best Line to take is one that:

- Keeps you away from the area that a vehicle crossing the center line most likely will be.
- Puts the sharpest part of your turn in an area you can see as you enter the turn.
- Takes the largest radius, to allow for extra traction if you do need to suddenly avoid a hazard.

The road's Apex is the tightest point in the turn. Many bikers that drift wide in a turn head toward that Apex too early and are pointing the bike in a direction that takes them straight across into the oncoming lane. It's easy to focus on the inside edge of the turn as you try to see your way around it, but we all know what happens when we get fixed on a certain place... we go where we look. The best Line is to delay the sharpest point of your turn just past the road's Apex, rather than heading towards it. Start wide in the third of the lane that's to the outside of the turn, and by pushing your Apex farther around the corner, you will be heading the right direction coming out of the turn. This also puts you the farthest away from the point oncoming traffic would cross into your lane if they drift wide, or cut the corner too soon. Since this line takes the largest radius going around the curve, you won't be leaned over as far, and will have some extra traction available to push the bar harder if you see an obstacle coming your way. Your line of sight will also allow you to see the road surface at the point where you need the most traction...your Apex.

Also remember to **Slow** by easing off the throttle and braking before the turn, **Look** through the corner towards your delayed Apex, then **Lean** the bike to start the turn, and **Roll** on the throttle as you lean over and exit the turn. If you're still braking as you enter the curve, you didn't slow down enough or soon enough. Keep your eyes up and head pointed where you want to go, rather than down at the pavement or shoulder. Look ahead to the next turn and where your next Line will be, and you will smoothly execute those Twisties. Ride Safe!

