

# Riding posture is determined english language essay

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



A number focus on a narrow range of topics - I do not know of any that cover from a Learner to a Road Racer and everyone in between. There is also no Australian book that covers riding technique in detail (remember this as Australians ride on the other side from the U. S. and most of Europe). This book is aimed at an audience ranging from people who have not started riding through to people already racing. It will not go into how to improve the performance of your bike. Most modern bikes do not need much modification. A good rider on an average bike will be faster than an average rider on a good bike. I am not the fastest rider around (far from it) but I have been riding for 45 plus years in almost all forms of the sport and I am still racing and keep learning from it. After all this time I thought I should pass on this information rather than keeping it to myself. This book is written from my perspective and is not meant to be a hard and fast set of instructions, but rather provide guidelines. You might not agree with everything in this book but if you learn something and can apply it or even if it only makes you think about how you ride, than I have achieved what I set out to do!" Believe nothing, no matter where you read it, or who said it, no matter if I have said it, unless it agrees with your own reason and your own common sense." -

Buddha (536 B. C.-483 B. C.)The book is grouped into 6 main sections:

Learning to ride - start here if you have never ridden before or just starting  
Bike Control - for intermediate to advanced riding skills  
Road Riding - specific lessons for urban and country riding  
Track Riding - if you venture onto a track for ride days or racing  
Racing - only required for racers to be or current racers  
Appendix - group of topics such as choosing riding gear  
There is also a web site WWW. L2RR. COM. AU that will have current information. It

<https://assignbuster.com/riding-posture-is-determined-english-language-essay/>

has videos to demonstrate more clearly what is described in the book. You will also be able to provide feedback, ask questions and link to other sites. If you are using the softcopy version, you can link directly from the E-book.

Dedication This book is dedicated to a few people in my life that have influenced why and how I ride. In no particular order: My father - Roger My partner - Michelle Family friend - Paul Giles

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My father was racing before I was born and was still racing not long before he passed away back in 1988. He was a real club racer. He raced on all types or tracks on all types of bikes. If you have seen the movie " The World's Fastest Indian" it was close to the type of person he was - very clever and eccentric. The biggest difference between Burt Munro and my dad was focus. Where Burt worked on the one bike almost 100% my father had up to 18 motorcycles in our back yard at a time. They ranged from a slider (JAP Hagon), 450cc Honda MXer, 1100 Suzuki Katana, 900Z1 Kawasaki, 350cc Bridgestone, Model 19 Norton, Manx Norton attached to a sidecar etc. To give you the idea of how he was both clever and eccentric I will give you two examples. One was when in the 1960s he shoehorned a Datsun 1000cc car engine into a Norton featherbed frame. I was not overly fast but quite an engineering feat by one person. Another was that he believed a sidecar was not an efficient design so he got an old Renault and chopped one wheel off the rear and moved the other to the centre - similar to the current Can Am Spyder except front wheel drive. This was back in 1970 and was the " car" that I learnt to drive in. My earliest memory of " riding" a motorcycle was

when he put me on his 1964 Honda 250 and pushed me down the driveway. Seeing my feet only just reached the footrests there was a good reason not to start it. Michelle was my pillion on the way back from Phillip Island for one and a half days when she blurted out " I want to get my bike licence". I was taken aback. For many years I did not even realise she liked being a pillion. I was also worried if she took up riding, people would " blame me" for pushing her into it. Being the determined person she is, within 8 weeks she had a VTR250 and her L's. Following her progress from L's to now riding an FZ600 Yamaha has taught ME a lot about the process and things you know by habit after many years that a learner does not know. Michelle was worried about riding mainly because she had not ridden a push bike in her youth and felt she would not be able to lean the bike. Quickly she realised that was the easy part - trying to co-ordinate the throttle, clutch and brakes all at the same time was much harder. The day Michelle went for her licence she made up a story she was doing something else so she did not have the added pressure of me worrying about it. Having gone through university to become a lawyer you would think this would be a piece of cake but as the instructor noted, breathing was going to help her pass the test. Luckily she relaxed enough to pass. Without her to bounce ideas off this book would be a lot smaller and less clear. When I was growing up, Paul Giles had a large impact on both my life and motorcycling in general. Paul was larger than life. If you were lucky enough to hear him call bike races - he made an average race seem like it was the most exciting race you had ever witnessed. Paul started an event called the Alpine Rally way back in the sixties and it is still going. Before it was even called the Alpine Rally, Paul organised friends to ride

down to the Snowy Mountains in NSW on the long weekend in June (start of the ski season). Dad wanted the whole family to attend so we were the only people in a car. Sometimes that came in handy like the time we had to take a rider who ended up on the railway tracks trying to keep up with Paul. We took the poor rider to the nearest hospital in the back of the station wagon. Too many stories to tell here but one was when I was 17 and old enough to ride to an Alpine Rally. Riding home I was following the Giles' family. They were in their sidecar - Paul riding, Coralie on the back seat and the 2 kids in the sidecar - Simone and Sean. They were famous for bringing everything including the kitchen sink but obviously that was too much, so the kids started to throw the excess gear out of the sidecar. I stopped and picked it up. Many kilometres down the road they finally stopped and could not work out what had held me up... So you want to ride a motorcycle...Do you know why? I ask the question because I believe many people start riding for the wrong reasons. For example buying a motorcycle to save a lot of money as a mode of transport is not as clear cut as it might appear. The cost of buying the right protective gear is expensive if done properly (and it should be). You might want to ride because it seems like a "cool" idea. It might be just the achievement of getting a licence and there is nothing wrong with that. For a very few, you might want to be a World Champion or at least to get into Road Racing. Always remember that a motorcycle is NOT inherently dangerous but can be if not treated with respect and ridden by someone with competent skills and the right attitude. This book is aimed at helping you to ride, whichever path you take. Can and should you ride? Not everyone should ride a motorcycle. Just like there are people who should not be driving

a car. In the case of motorcycling it can mean your life. It does not mean you have to be great at it but you need to understand the skills that are required. If you want to be World Champion, than you need the same skills " in spades". Balance This might seem a bit too obvious but you should be able to ride a push bike. Reactions They must be at least average. You need to make the right decision as fast as possible Spatial You need to be able to judge distances at varying speeds. Fine Motor Skills Using the front brake, clutch and throttle with your hands and the feet are moving the gear lever and rear brake (sometimes all at the same time) requires more co-ordination than is required to drive a car. Concentration You might be able to get away with not focusing 100% of the time in a car but you cannot on a bike. Fear Factor This does not mean you should not have fear. We should all fear falling off but not let it paralyse us. If you want to test some of these skills, check out links on the web site. Before you get on a bike There are four elements that need to be prepared: Your Mind, Your Body, Your Gear and Your Machine. The Mind Make sure you are in the right frame of mind before starting your bike. You should be excited at the idea but not too agitated or worked up. At the other end of the spectrum, you should not be so nervous that all you can think about is the consequences of getting it wrong. Relax and focus on the process of riding." know and ride within YOUR limits" You should know and ride within YOUR limits. There are three such limits: Your skills, Your machine Your environment. This book will try to improve your knowledge and thereby your skills. Only you know your machine and the environment (road surface, weather conditions, bumps, camber etc.) you are riding in. The Body You need to always concentrate when riding but no more

so than when learning. Do not ride for long periods when you're starting out. Have decent breaks and review what you have done both well and not so well. Think about what you are going to work on the next time you ride. Dehydration is a big cause for losing concentration so stay well hydrated. Drinking coffee will give you a lift but not keep you well hydrated. Drugs or alcohol should be out of your system when riding. As much as drink driving is bad, riding whilst under the influence makes no sense at all. The skill level required to ride is that much higher and if a mistake is made the repercussions are so much worse. The GearWhen people think about how clothing protects them from injury, they tend to think in two areas: impact resistance and abrasion resistance. Both of these can be classed as secondary safety (i. e. if I have an accident, how can I minimise injury). Primary safety (i. e. what can I do to avoid an accident) is what this book is about. Clothing can play an important role in both primary and secondary safety. You are far more likely to be seen if you are wearing bright colours and some have reflective and fluorescent properties which make them easier to see especially at night. A lot of clothing is black. At least make sure it has reflective piping. A bright helmet is a good idea as it is the most visible part of you when on the bike. If you have riding gear, then USE IT. Not going to help if it is sitting in the wardrobe. There is a detailed section on choosing your gear in the appendix. The gear you purchase needs to take into account a number of factors such as are you commuting, track days, racing, touring, riding in the rain, temperature, fashion statement and so on. It is a shame that the time you need the best gear - when we are learning - is when we often do not pay for the appropriate gear! Beg or borrow gear to make sure

you are covered. The BikeWhen learning, have someone experienced to check the bike for you and have them show you the controls. Make sure they ARE experienced rather than think they are. There is a bike checklist on the website [www.l2rr.com.au/Handylinks](http://www.l2rr.com.au/Handylinks) that you can print for checking off each time you go for a ride. Have the person help you set up the controls to ensure they are suitable for you. Refer to the next chapter on where they should be set. Tyre condition and pressures are critical. They are the main thing keeping you on top of the bike, so make sure they are right. Before you rush out and buy a bike, try it first. I have seen a number of people waste a good chunk of money then decide it is not for them. Beg, borrow but not steal a bike first. When you are ready to buy a bike go to my website and check out " What bike should I buy" at [www.l2rr.com.au/HandylinksBefore](http://www.l2rr.com.au/HandylinksBefore) ridingIf you have never ridden a pushbike then that is the place to start. Get someone to show you and get confident with that. The balance, turning and leaning is similar to a motorcycle. If you are confident on a pushbike then you are ready to start. Try and find someone who can teach you. You can start by doing the pre learners course if you have not ridden before, but I would not recommend it. It puts too much pressure on you to learn a lot in a short period of time and the chance of failing is greatly increased. It is hard to easily describe how to ride a bike - you need to be on the bike and have someone to teach you. Do not try to learn by yourself. If there is nobody you know that can help teach then there are many clubs that you can contact that can assist. Check on the L2RR web site or search the net for one in your area. The following just gives you some clues. If you have a teacher, get them to read this section (if not the whole book!) to ensure they do not



forget anything and do it in the right order. There is a "learner checklist" on the web site at [www.L2RR.com.au/HandyLinks](http://www.L2RR.com.au/HandyLinks) that can be printed off so you can tick off as you progress and make notes on. I have also created a device called the Simu-cycle. This allows you to learn to ride without moving forward! Simply it is a real motorcycle on a roller that allows you to simulate taking off, changing gears, braking, using the controls etc. What it does not teach is how to lean or turn. You can learn that on a bicycle. It is also impossible to teach leaning on a stationary machine because there is no way (easily) to simulate gravitational force whilst leaning. Check out [WWW.SIMU-CYCLE.COM.AU](http://WWW.SIMU-CYCLE.COM.AU) for more information. Where to Learn Rather than starting on a hard surface and with a bike that can easily get damaged, if possible start on a dirt bike on dirt / grass. Somewhere relatively soft and away from things to hit such as other vehicles, fences, people etc. It should be at least far enough away the objects do not affect the learning process. If that cannot be arranged at least learn in an empty car park or similar, and on a small old bike that does not matter if you drop it. Better still, one with crash protection such as crash bars. Before you move off if you need help with the controls refer to "What's what on a bike" under [www.L2RR.com.au/HandyLinks](http://www.L2RR.com.au/HandyLinks). This section will assume you have a basic understanding of the controls and where they are on the bike. Even before you even sit on the bike it is a good habit to put the front brake on, turn your head to the right and look over your shoulder to ensure nothing is about to "run over" you. This is especially the case if you go to the Pre-learner course as they will drill it into you. You will get used to the term "head check" very quickly. Depending on your height and the motorcycle's seat height, throwing a leg over a bike can be

an awkward manoeuvre. Starting at the left side of the motorcycle, stabilize your balance by leaning gently against the tank and/or the handlebars and push the bike vertical from the side-stand. With all your weight on your left leg, lift your right leg up and over the bike. Putting all your weight onto the right leg, push the side-stand fully up with your left foot. Another habit is to have the left leg on the ground and the right foot on the rear brake. That allows you to stay still and release the front brake. That makes it easier to use the throttle when taking off. Once you are straddling the bike, you can rest on the seat and get a sense of the motorcycle's ergonomics. Acquaint yourself with foot peg position and the location of turn signals, horn, and lights. Every bike is different, and spending a moment to become familiar at this stage is a must do. The right hand is responsible for two crucial functions in motorcycling: acceleration and braking. By twisting the grip towards you (so your wrist moves down), you apply throttle (or "gas"). A little twist goes a long way, so be delicate with this control, since sudden engine revs can lead to instability, accidental wheelies or crashing! When learning, keep the right wrist below the knuckles to restrict the amount of throttle you can accidentally twist on. Once you have mastered the throttle, adjust the wrist based on the information on riding position in the next section. The right hand also controls the front brake. Pulling the lever applies the front brake, and smoothness is crucial here: yank the lever too hard and the front wheel can lockup, causing the bike to skid, and potentially crash. Some people use one, two, three or four fingers to brake. Use whatever technique works best with you and your bike. The pre-learner course might tell you to use four but it is only a guide - there is NO RULE that you have to use all four.

## **PICTURES OF LEARNER RIDER STUFF LIKE Sitting wrists, rear brake.**

This pic is from Armstrong's Driver Education When you first start to ride, only use the rear brake. This is because you can accidentally pull on the throttle when you apply the front brake. The action of pulling the front brake on tends to turn the throttle on. Practice using the front brake whilst stationary. Rear brake application is more useful during low speed manoeuvring. During normal stopping always apply both brakes. The front brake is the most effective way to stop a motorcycle, so do not be afraid to use it. Whenever possible brake whilst the bike is vertical (not leaning over or turning). If the bike accelerates more than you want it to, pull the clutch in straight away. All that will happen is for the engine to "rev up" but will stop accelerating. Squeezing the clutch lever towards you with the fingers of your left hand will disengage the clutch and disconnect the engine power from the rear wheel. Releasing the lever will engage the clutch and provide power to the rear wheel. Practice pulling the clutch with your left hand, and do so slowly and gradually without the engine running. Imagine it is a dimmer switch rather than an "On-Off" switch. You will be able to engage gears and take off much more smoothly. It should be in fast and out slowly and gradually. If you have driven a manual car the action is the same except you use your fingers rather than your foot. It is OK you don't need to know all the parts of a gearbox or how to put them back together...Motorcycles shift gears differently than cars. Whilst changing gears is the same principle (allowing you to match engine power to road speed) you cannot change more than one gear at a time. Motorcycles shifts are executed by moving the

gear lever up or down with the left foot. (There are a few old English bikes that have the gear change on the right side.) The vast majority of motorcycles incorporate this pattern, which is referred to as "1 down, 5 up". Find out how many gears your bike has. They normally range from one to six. Finding neutral with your left foot will take some getting used to. Sometimes you need to rock the bike back and forth to make it easier. While some motorcycles can change gears without using the clutch, make it a habit of engaging the clutch every time you need to change into a different gear. You use first gear to take off and a higher gear once you have gained speed. Changing smoothly through the gears is a skill that will improve with practice. Shifting should be done in the following order starting from standing still: Engage clutch using left hand by pulling into the handlebar grip Push the gear lever down (into 1st gear) and lift foot off the lever allowing the lever to return to original position Twist throttle slightly to raise engine speed to about double idle speed Feed clutch out slowly until fully out Once at a speed that requires another gear, roll off the throttle slightly Engage clutch Change up one gear by lifting the gear lever until you feel it click into the next gear, then release allowing the lever to return to original position Disengage clutch by letting it right back out Re-apply throttle (gently) Rolling off the throttle slightly while the clutch is engaged and disengaged will add smoothness to the shifting process. Be sure not to over-rev in each gear. Likewise do not change too early else it will "labour" the motor and not accelerate smoothly. Do not look at the gear lever. It might sound obvious but the same as dancing, it is much better to look where you are going! Practice using the gear lever, before you take off. To do so

without actually riding you may have to rock the bike back and forth to allow it to go into the next gear. If all this seems complicated, don't worry; it's easier than it sounds! Check out the video about the dual transmission Honda on the L2RR web site. Ignore the automatic part by viewing the first minute. There is a split screen showing left foot, left and right hands and tachometer. Time to start the bike Ensure the bike is almost vertical and the side stand is pushed fully up and out of the way. Most modern bikes will not start if the side stand is down when the bike is put into gear. If your bike isn't equipped with this feature, make sure you retract it; not doing so can be a serious safety hazard. The bike won't start unless the kill switch is in the "on" position, so ensure it is. Now check the bike is in Neutral. Turn the key to the "ignition" position, which is typically clockwise. Now the ignition is on, check that the "N" light is green to double check you are in Neutral. Use your right thumb to push the start button, which is typically located below the kill switch. Some bikes (mostly Suzuki's) will require you to engage the clutch while you start the engine; this is a precaution to prevent the bike from accidentally lurching forward because it is in gear. Ask your instructor if this is the case. As you hold the start button, the engine will turn over and as long as everything's working correctly, it will start to run. Carburetted bikes might require some "choke" and a slight twist of throttle as the engine turns over in order to run properly. Fuel injected bikes are designed so that no throttle is required at start-up. In summary before you take off, ensure the: bike is vertical side stand is fully up bike is in neutral kill button is switched to On You are ready to go forward! This is the time when you will need to recall the functions of throttle, brakes, clutch, and shifting, and develop a fluid

relationship between them. Engage the clutch and press the shifter down to first gear. Twisting the throttle slightly might be needed to keep it from stalling - roughly twice the idle speed. Your skills here should be that you are able to hold a constant throttle (engine speed) before feeding out the clutch. Now release the clutch slowly, and start to feel the motorcycle move forward. This is called the "friction point". Pull the clutch back in after moving just a metre or so! Repeat till you are confident and are not lurching or stalling. Once you feel comfortable, keep feeding the clutch until it is fully out and as the bike gains forward momentum, put both feet up on the pegs. You are now riding a motorcycle! An alternative to the above is to keep the rear brake on, feed on the throttle and when the engine starts to stall (reaches friction point), release the brake. You will then move forward, so gently release the clutch fully. Turning is just like riding a pushbike. Just look where you want to go and you will go there. Do not look at obstacles such as gutters, posts etc. Keep your head and eyes up - do not look just in front. If you are not confident, get that old pushbike out before you start to practice your turns and leaning. This is an example of looking where you are going and using rear brake. (note: the visor should be down) Use the rear brake to help turning at low speeds. If you have to do a tight turn, (U turn for example) then drag the rear brake through the turn. You might have to "slip the clutch" as well so you do not stall. This means pulling the clutch in partially whilst turning throttle on a little more. It is a juggle between too many or too little engine revs. Doing a U turn is a good way to practice using your vision to turn. Look at the point where you want to start turning (marked with X in diagram). Once at that point, turn your head around 180

degrees looking directly behind you - looking over your right shoulder in this example (travelling in the direction of the V). You will be surprised at how easy and tight the turn will be. Remember to always check behind you before doing a U turn. Shifting, braking and throttle control takes some practice, but the key rule is to manoeuvre your motorcycle with a smooth touch and gradual input. Doing so will not only make you a safer rider; it will make it more graceful and effortless. Make sure you practice turning in both directions. Most people prefer to turn one way rather than the other. If you find that make sure you practice as much if not more in the direction you least prefer.

### **" Don't let all of this information daunt you"**

Once you are comfortable with starting, taking off, turning and stopping, it is time to add the extra controls. Learn and practice using them whilst stopped. For example, learn and practice how to use the blinkers so that you do not have to look at the button. Also practice horn, high/low beam and kill switch. Don't let all of this information daunt you; motorcycling can be a challenge but one worth mastering. It takes practice to do it safely and correctly. Once you feel comfortable with the above you are now ready to try and get your learners permit. You do not have to feel like an expert - the course will go over a lot of what you have already done. For detail on getting your Learners permit, the MOST test, what bike is right for you, what gear you should purchase plus what's what on a bike can be found on the web site at [www.L2RR.com.au/HandyLinks](http://www.L2RR.com.au/HandyLinks). Once you have your L's you are ready to read the next section on Bike Control. Teaching ChildrenChildren are a lot easier to

teach. They have little fear to interfere with the learning process but you also have to be careful of that lack of fear. Make sure you have read everything before this and adapt such as making sure they learn in a large enough area. If you start young enough the bikes will be automatic which simplifies the process a lot. If they are older and the bike has gears go back to the section on gear changing when they get to that. How old should they be? My belief is that they MUST be able to ride a pushbike. That is not much of a limitation as that can be 2 but it means they understand the concept of turning and leaning. That also means they will not require training wheels which I am no fan of. If they can ride the bicycle they will be balancing a motorcycle within minutes. It is easier than a bicycle as they are not disturbing the balance with the pedals. Before starting ensure they can use the throttle and brakes on command. Have them use the throttle in neutral and when you say "slow" they must be able to release the throttle. Likewise "brake" and they will apply them right away. Do not let them take off before you are confident they will always follow your command. If the bike and child are small enough I will walk with them and if they pull the throttle on too hard I will simply lift the rear of the bike so the rear wheel just spins. As pointed out, make sure they practice doing figure eights. Children are very quick at finding they prefer one direction of turn and will stick to it. If they get very keen there are junior motorcycle clubs they can join. Refer to the section on racing for more details. The clubs are worthwhile to teach your child more skills in a controlled environment without having to get serious about competing.

**SECTION TWO** Introduction This section is dedicated to riding skills for riders of ALL levels of experience. It covers EVERYTHING about riding other than



specifics concerning road riding, track riding and racing. They each have a section dedicated to them. In the previous section I touched on the four elements that need to be prepared: Your Mind, Your Body, Your Gear and Your Machine. Some might be repeated but I will go into them in more detail. I will discuss riding position in a lot more detail as well as how to properly use the controls. This changes the more you ride. Braking is the next topic covered. It is the most undervalued skill to riding. It is the one thing that can save you from having an accident over EVERYTHING else. Different situations will call for using brakes on different wheels - sometimes front only, sometimes rear only and sometimes both. Next will be steering - how many ways do you think you can steer a motorcycle? 1, 2, 3 or more? Which is the most important way? There is a section is on being smooth and whatever that means...Leaning and hanging-off are discussed - mainly why NOT to hang off. Finally in this section there is a bit on dirt riding for those that want to advance their riding skills without learning the hard way on a hard surface. You might have read other books, read articles in magazines and on the net or been given advice by other riders. No two riders will agree on every aspect of riding. Please do not discount my ideas without trying them. There is also no one right way to ride. The very best have different riding styles. In my lifetime the way people ride has changed dramatically and will change into the future. For example, up to the 1960's nobody hung off the side of a bike but could still ride very fast. Mike " the bike" Hailwood. My greatest moment racing was being presented with a trophy by Mike. Ok it was only Most Promising C grader at Bathurst but it meant a lot to me.

Preparation There are three limits: your skills, your machine and your

environment. Only you know your machine and the environment (road surface, weather conditions, bumps, camber etc) you are riding in. My job is to improve your skills but first you have to be prepared. The MindMake sure you are in the right frame of mind before starting your bike. You should be excited at the idea but not ready to go out and go as fast as you think is possible.

### **Do not ride when you are angry, upset, distracted, sick, tired, drunk or high.**

Do not try to follow someone who is riding at a speed above your limits. It is OK to have someone you respect show you the way but if you cannot easily keep up, then don't. When riding in a group it can be a dangerous environment if you do not keep within YOUR limits. It is too easy for peer pressure, even if self-imposed, to make you do things you would normally not do. At the other end of the spectrum there are the over confident riders that want to "show off" how well they can ride only to prove they are not as good as they thought. Being in front of a crowd can be intimidating and make you nervous so do not succumb and stay focused and calm.

Concentration is extremely important - one slip and it could have terrible consequences. Keep your mind on the job and not let yourself be distracted. Before you start riding, plan what you are going to focus on improving. Every time you get on a bike, think about what you are doing and whether it could be done better. After the ride, review what you have done both well and not so well. Think about what you are going to improve the next time you ride.

The BodyRiding a motorcycle is quite physical - much more than driving a car so the better physical shape you are in the better you can ride. You do

not need to be an athlete (unless you plan to be a professional racer) but good general fitness will help. Be careful on long rides and have good breaks. Dehydration is a big cause for losing concentration so stay well hydrated. Drinking coffee will give you a lift but not keep you hydrated. If you feel yourself tense up try focusing on your breathing - in through your nose, out through your mouth. Also try flapping your arms up and down. This will help if you tend to grip the handlebars too tightly plus give riders behind a good laugh. Drugs or alcohol should be out of your system when riding. As much as drink driving is bad, riding whilst under the influence makes no sense at all. The skill level required to ride is that much higher and if a mistake is made the repercussions are so much worse. The Gear

When people think about how clothing protects them from injury, they tend to think in two areas: impact resistance and abrasion resistance. These can both be classed as secondary safety (i. e. an accident is unavoidable, so how can I minimise injury). Primary safety (i. e. what can I do to avoid an accident) is what a lot of this book is about. Clothing can play an important part in both primary and secondary safety. You are far more likely to be seen if you are wearing bright colours and some have reflective and fluorescent properties which make them easier to see at night. A lot of clothing is black so at least make sure it has reflective piping. A bright helmet is a good idea as it is the most visible part of you when on the bike. Do not rely on the gear to make you visible. It does not matter what you wear some drivers will never see you! If you have the misfortune to fall off your bike you need some way to minimise injury from the impact which will occur during the time it takes you to hit the road the first time, until the time you stop. The gear you purchase

needs to take into account a number of factors such as are you commuting, track days, racing, touring, riding in the rain, what seasons, fashion statement etc. There is a detailed section on choosing your gear in the Appendix. The Bikels the bike in the best possible condition? Have you checked over all the critical nuts and bolts? Are the fluid levels right? Are there leaks of any sort? Chain condition, tension set and lubed? Are the brakes in very good condition? Are the mirrors in the right place? I have put up a checklist on the web site [www.l2rr.com.au/Handylinks](http://www.l2rr.com.au/Handylinks). Print it off so you can check it off before you go for a ride. Set up your controls properly. Are the levers in the right position? Set them up whilst you are in the same position as when you are braking. Are you using the front brake lever when your fingers are able to apply maximum squeeze? For example if your fingers are fully outstretched when the brake lever is hard you need to move the lever further in. If you leave your little finger on the handlebar and test to see if you will squash it. If you do (let go before you crush it!) then either the lever needs to be moved out or the brakes need "bleeding". Likewise is the clutch take up where you have maximum control? Do you have to stretch to reach the levers? Clutch and throttle free play correct? Is the rear brake lever the right height so you don't have to lift your foot off the footrest or have to push too far to make it work? Tyre condition and pressures are critical - they are the main thing keeping you on top of the bike. Think about the type of tyres you have. Some sports tyres with little tread need to be warm before they grip well. Suspension is very important to how your bike responds to the surface you are riding on and your inputs. Most modern bikes handle well and many have plenty of range to be adjusted (not all).

Before rushing out spending a lot of money on "fixing" the suspension, find someone who is skilful enough to adjust the settings to suit you and your riding style. Make small changes and try them out before making further changes. If you need help with any of the above find someone experienced or better still some qualified.

### **Know and ride within YOUR limits.**

Riding position Riding posture is determined by the bike and you. The bike will dictate some things about your posture. For example a sports bike will make you lean forward due to the bars being lower. The approach you take should be the same no matter what type of bike it is. Overall you should be as relaxed as possible. There is no point in putting undue effort just to sit on the bike - you will tire very quickly. Going from the top, your head and eyes should be up to allow you to look as far ahead as possible. Your shoulders should be relaxed - tension in your shoulders will affect everything you do. Your arms should have a slight bend in them - it allows you to have some suspension in your body. To get an idea how much, let your arms hang by your side fully relaxed. The amount of bend in them should be about the same on the bike or slightly more. Similarly the elbows should not be raised out or pulled in. There should be no effort to keep your arms in position. It takes effort to fully straighten your arms. Straight arms will also mean you have to move your body to turn a corner. It will also put too much weight towards the back of the bike. Some people will tell you to have your forearms parallel with the ground. This is good if it occurs naturally but it is not the number one consideration. Make sure the rest of you posture is

correct and your forearms will be close to horizontal. Your hands should rest on the bars so that if you drew a line through your lower arm it would go through the middle of the handlebar. Do not have your wrist above or below your hand. You might have been taught to have your wrist low when learning but this was to stop you from grabbing a handful of throttle. Now you are over the learning stage, bring the wrist back up to level. The clutch and front brake levers should be setup so they are in the same line as your arms. This means you do not have to raise or lower your fingers or wrists to use them. Your back should be relatively straight but if you're most relaxed position is to slouch a little then so be it. Most women ride with a straighter back but there is no right or wrong way. Lying down on the tank like a racer will not be good for your back if you ride like that all the time. Your "back side" should be as far forward as practical - close as possible to the tank without being uncomfortable. This places weight over the front of the bike making it more stable than if you sit too far back. Your knees should rest against the tank whilst riding along. Make sure they do not flap out but also you do not use too much effort to keep them against the tank. Save the effort of using your knees when braking. The legs will find their own angle based on the distance from the seat to the footrests. The arch of the feet should be over the footrests. Some people will say you should ride on the balls of your feet but this achieves very little on a road bike and means that every time you change gear or apply the rear brake you have to move the feet forward and back. The feet should also be turned slightly out from the controls so you do not accidentally rest on them. The weight on the pegs should also be relaxed - the same as when sitting on a chair and your feet are on the ground. To put

weight on them means you are exerting undue effort. There are times when you need more weight on the pegs. For example, if you need to raise your body off the seat over a rough surface or speed hump. Doing so allows the bike to move around without trying to kick you off or at least make you bounce more than is required. Further into the book I will explain how the posture will change for a variety of reasons such as cornering and braking. Here I will go into specific details for different bikes. These pictures and words are from <http://www.innova-pain.com/2012/03/02/motorcycle-riding-posture/> This posture is very neutral. It keeps the back straight. The shoulders and elbows are held comfortably on the grips without overreaching or over-extending the elbows. Elbows are flexed, and forearms are parallel to the ground. It is important that the shoulders be neutral. If you have a small frame or you are riding a bike that is too big, the controls may be slightly out of reach for you. This will cause you to lean forward or, worse, over-reach in order to gain access to the controls. Prolonged overreached posture can lead to shoulder injuries. Sport posture looks fun and exciting but it can put strain on the body. The body is in a forward lean, the feet are typically behind the knees and head is in extension. At higher speeds, the weight of the body is supported by air pressure rushing onto the torso but at low speeds the rider is supporting their upper body weight on the wrists and by extending the lower spinal posture muscles. Also the muscles in the top of the neck are supporting the head. This posture has the pelvis in extension, which can aggravate certain types of disc injuries. If the roads are not well maintained you have to deal with bouncing through potholes putting strain on the wrists and can be pain in the butt. This posture

has the rider in a slightly reclined position. The feet are often forward relative to the knees. The grips and controls are slightly higher. The head is upright and neutral. The hips and pelvis are relaxed, with the legs held close to the fuel tank. This posture looks and feels comfortable, especially for older riders, and at lower speeds. With the pelvis in a minimal flexed posture, there is decreased pressure on the intervertebral disc. At higher speeds, riding without a fairing causes a huge increase in air pressure on the rider's chest. As a result, the rider must lean slightly forward to maintain appropriate grip on the controls. This can cause some fatigue issues for the muscles on the front of the neck and abdomen. Without the footrests below your body you are unable to stand up and absorb through your legs.