



Cornering

Let's talk about cornering and how it's done. Most of the single vehicle accidents happen because the motorcyclist goes too wide in a curve, and wipes out, usually colliding with the road way or some other fixed object. Ouch!

Question:

If you go into a curve too hot (fast), what do you do?

- a. Brake
- b. Pull in your clutch
- c. Downshift
- d. Roll off your throttle
- e. Lean more

Hint: When you go through a curve most of your traction is being used up by the curve. The faster you go the more traction you use.

Question:

When you use brakes, where does the weight go?

- a. Forward
- b. Backward
- c. To the inside
- d. To the outside

The correct answer is "a- Forward". The same as when you are in your car. But on the bike the weight shift forward, lightening the rear wheel.

Question:

In a curve, do you want:

- a. More weight on the front tire
- b. Less weight on the front tire
- c. More weight on the rear tire
- d. Less weight on the rear tire
- e. Equal weight on both tires

Of course the answer is "e - equal weight on both tires". Lightening the rear wheel during a curve will cause it to skid out from under you. You want to maintain equal weight on both tires in order to stabilize your suspension and keep both tires sucking to the ground.



Question:

Braking in a curve is the only thing that will lighten the rear wheel?

Yes or No.

No, your bike doesn't know the difference between braking or shifting or rolling off your throttle or pulling in you clutch. Any form of deceleration will cause the same reaction- lightening of the rear wheel.

So the answer to the original question is "e)- lean more". Start on the outside of the curve, look as far through it as you can, lean the bike over by pressing on the handgrip in the direction of the turn and begin a steady roll-on of the throttle. The time to slow, braking or otherwise, is before the curve, before you lean the bike over to the side of the tire. If you didn't slow down enough before and you are too hot, just lean it more, look through the curve and maintain steady throttle throughout the curve. Think about the motorcycle racers, how far do they lean the over? So far that they have metal studs on their knees.

Just a couple of cautions:

You can't do much leaning on loose or slippery surfaces. So if you are going through a curve and you see sand, gravel or oil in you path, go around it. If you can't go around it, straighten the bike then apply your brakes.

Your tires are a critical part of your riding. Good tires that are properly inflated are the only thing between you and the road. Motorcycle tires have tread around the sides of tire for turning. When they are under-inflated the sides of the tire are riding on the road and wearing out the tread. When you re-inflate them the part of the tire you use for turning is worn off.

Remember SMOOTH equals COOL and it's

Slow.....Then...Look, **Lean**, and Roll

Not

Look, **Lean**, Slow, and Roll

nor,

Slow, Look, **Lean**, Slow, and Roll