



ANY QUESTION ANSWERED

If we don't know the answer, we'll find the person who does
Send your questions to: advice@motorcyclenews.com or 01733-468002

Q Why has my cover trebled in cost?

I started my latest insurance policy in May. The annual multi-bike cover costs £490 for a 2013 BMW R1200GS LC TE, a 2016 BMW R1200RS Sport SE and two older bikes. I've since changed the GS to a Honda Africa Twin for an extra £120, and then the RS to a new R1200GS Rallye. I was stunned to be told I'd get £71 back for the RS, but the lower-spec GS would cost £335 to add for six months. Apparently, this is because the GS is a 'group 34' with Aviva, whereas the RS was a group 13. Running the GS Rallye alone through MCN compare on exactly the same details resulted in a full-year policy being offered for £114-£267. How come I've forked out £335 within a multi-bike policy for half the time?

Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN
Your current policy is underwritten by Aviva

as an 'open-market' scheme that has the one-to-17 groups that we've grown up with. However, as well as open-market schemes, different insurers will develop bespoke schemes to target different sectors of the market, and the groups in those schemes could go up to 65. Brokers will often have mid-term switching arrangements, so you don't lose the no-claims discount you've built up. When the insurance agent at the broker checked and saw the Rallye wasn't on the open-market scheme, they found it on a new scheme where it was in group 34, but failed to spot the anomaly. Although you drew a blank when speaking with the broker's customer services department yourself, I'm happy to say that when we contacted it an operative told us they were able to refund you £205 – so that means the 'cost to change' was same as for the Honda Africa Twin.



Don't take insurance premium rise sitting down

KIT CHOOSER

Q Which motorcycle gloves are both warm and sporty?

Does anybody know if there is a glove on the market that is designed for use with heated grips? Gloves that are sports-like on the palm, but winter glove-like on the back of your hand? My hands are freezing at the moment if I use my sports gloves, but I hate wearing true winter gloves due to their clunky feel.

Answered by Keith Roissetter, Infinity Motorcycles
Your best bet would be some dual-pocket gloves such as the Rukka R-Stars or the Held Twins. These very high quality Goretex-lined

gloves both feature two hand slots; a lower one designed for maximum feel with all the insulating material on the back of the hand, and an upper chamber that surrounds your hand with insulating material which will keep you a bit warmer, at the expense of a slight loss of feel. Be careful not to put a wet glove palm on a heated grip, as reverse osmosis will cause the moisture to come through the membrane and give you damp hands. The other option is to fit some handlebar muffs so that you'll only be battling the ambient temperature rather than the much lower wind chill.



Q Why does my Panigale snatch?

I have a one-year-old Ducati 1299 Panigale, on which I have done 1300 miles. I am quite used to it now, but riding in traffic on low revs or stop/starting it is very snatchy. Coupled with the stiff clutch lever, this means it's easy to stall. Would I benefit from a dyno tune, or Power Commander or similar, or do I just accept it as a Ducati? **Vic Lock, email**

Answered by John Burrows, Ducati Coventry
I'm sure the bike's had its initial service, but looking at the low mileage makes me wonder whether the Ducati's also had its first service, which is due after 12 months regardless of mileage? It's tempting to wait until a model has built up some more miles, but these days there are many software updates for a new bike that could cure such an issue.



Check 1299 Panigale for software updates

Q Will a paddock stand give me a flat spot?

I've got a Suzuki GSX-R600, which I keep on a rear stand only. Does this do any harm to the front tyre? I've been told it could cause a flat spot with all the weight bearing down on it. **Barry Fletcher, email**

Answered by Chris Dabbs, MCN
If left for long enough, the tyre could possibly acquire a flat spot. The easy way to prevent this is to lift the front end slightly and rotate the wheel to different positions every week or so. If the bike is parked on a hard, cold surface, it's also worth placing a carpet off-cut under the tyre.



Flatten off your knee sliders, not your tyres

MCN LAW

Your legal questions

Q Can I get two offences treated as one?

I have just received court papers telling me I must appear in court for not being in proper control, and driving without due care and attention. I was seen by a police officer performing two wheelies on the same stretch of road. I was not stopped and reported at the time, and I didn't know he was there. The summons refers to two counts of each offence, presumably for each wheelie. Is there anything I can do to get off this – or, if not, as I suspect, to lessen the penalty? **Jonnie, email**

I take it you agree you performed the wheelies? If so, an early guilty plea could reduce the penalty'

A You are very lucky to be charged only with driving without due care and attention – otherwise known as careless driving. Within the Crown Prosecutors' manual, a wheelie is a specific example of dangerous driving. This is a more serious offence, with which they could have charged you with, and the consequences could have been far more severe. I take it that you agree you performed the wheelies? If so, an early guilty plea could reduce the penalty.

You could also try to persuade the authorities that you will plead guilty to just one of the offences, as these were so close in time it is arguable they constituted the same act. This is known as a 'same occasion offence'. This defence can be found under Section 28 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. The court may or may not agree with you, but it is definitely worth a try.

Andrew Campbell
Solicitor and author of the MCN Law column for the last ten years

Andrew Campbell, Bikelawyer.
Visit www.bikelawyer.co.uk or email andrew@bikelawyer.co.uk or call 01446 794169



Bikelawyer

Motorcycle Accident Solicitors

EXPERT'S GUIDE TO Counter-steering

Why 'turning left to go right' actually makes perfect sense – and how it can improve your riding



THE EXPERT



Mark Edwards
An instructor for Rapid Training for over 20 years, after 18 years as a police driver. He's also raced to a national standard.

Except when at a virtual standstill with the bike vertical, you don't actually steer a motorcycle by turning the handlebars. Instead, you turn by leaning the machine and using the profile of the tyres to arc around a curve. To negotiate a turn successfully, the combined mass of a rider and their bike must first be leaned into the

turn. Steering briefly in the opposite direction causes that lean. Counter-steering, or pushing the bars opposite to the way you want to turn, is how this lean is initiated, and it is used only on single-track vehicles such as motorcycles and bicycles. It's also a useful technique for steering quickly at speed.



It's a useful technique for steering quickly

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW...

Counter-what?

Counter-steering is the term given to initiating a turn by moving the bars the opposite way to that which you intend to travel.

In other words, it's the technique of initiating a turn by steering opposite to the direction of the corner, or if you're already in a turn, to then change your course during the turn. It is really weird when you first hear of it, but when you think about the physics, it does make sense.

This is not a new phenomenon, and I was first taught it back in 1981 at the Brands Hatch racing school by Jeff Crookbain. If you are going round a corner and are running out of road, he said to pull the outside bar and that would kick your steering round a bit more and get you out of bother.

Most riders are aware of it these days, even if at first they didn't realise they were

doing it, and I also refer to it on my courses.

Why is it important?

Once you understand how counter-steering works, you can then use it consciously as a tool. Some people use it quite a lot deliberately, to turn the bike quite sharply.

That could be when a corner isn't what you expect it to be, and you need to put some extra steering in. This

technique is an effective way of doing exactly that.

It's one of those things that, once you're aware of it, you can keep in the back of your mind as a technique that you can use when and if circumstances require it. You don't consciously use it all the time.

Does it matter what sort of bike you have?

No, but it can have a more

pronounced effect on some motorcycles. For example, you can counter-steer very easily on big adventure bikes, because of the leverage available through their high, wide bars.

Steering normally on them can sometimes be quite awkward because they're so large. However, you've got such a lot of leverage, counter-steering is a good way of making the bike do what you want, quickly.

Go out and practice it. Just ride along in a straight line on a quiet road and pull gently on the left bar. You'll see how quickly the bike will turn to the right. This is a good way to see how it feels, what effect it has and how sharp it's going to be.

What's it good for?

You can use counter-steering as an avoidance technique. If you see an object in the road in front of you, you can steer round it because

it does make a lot of difference straight away. It's a good way of getting yourself out of bother, but you have to have the presence of mind to use it.

Some people use it a lot – in fact, I've seen some people overuse it and then it can be a bit harsh. Some riders, once they discover it, go a bit crazy with it. They go round yanking the handlebars all the time, and the bike ends up tipping really suddenly. You've just got to balance out how you use it. Stay smooth and don't be too sharp.

Next week Counter rotating crank shafts



Counter-steering is counter-intuitive – until you think about it...