

Motorcycle Roadcraft

THE POLICE RIDER'S HANDBOOK
TO BETTER MOTORCYCLING

London: TSO

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This edition of *Motorcycle Roadcraft* has been approved by the Association of Chief Police Officers, which is satisfied that it reflects current best practice in police rider instruction and takes into account the relevant views of civilian experts.

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About *Motorcycle Roadcraft*

How can *Motorcycle Roadcraft* help your riding?

The aim of *Motorcycle Roadcraft* is to improve the skill and safety of your riding so that you can make the best use of road and traffic conditions. Riding safety and riding skill are aspects of the same ability – the ability to control the position and speed of your bike relative to everything else on the road. An accident or even a near miss usually represents a loss of this control – a lapse in riding skill. *Motorcycle Roadcraft* aims to help you improve your skills by increasing your awareness of the range of factors that affect your riding – your own capabilities, the characteristics of your machine, and the road and traffic conditions.

Motorcycle Roadcraft is the textbook for police riders undertaking police rider training. In police training, *Motorcycle Roadcraft* is combined with practical instruction. This edition is designed so that it can be used for self study either before or during a course, and for ready reference afterwards.

What machines does *Motorcycle Roadcraft* cover?

Motorcycle Roadcraft is written with a modern motorcycle in mind but the advice it contains is relevant to both older and smaller bikes. You do, however, need to adapt your riding to the different characteristics of these machines.

The basic design and the supplementary aids built into a bike affect its handling characteristics. These vary widely between machines and it is not possible in a book of this size to cover every variation in bike geometry, traction control, linked braking or antilock braking system (ABS). To ride well you need to understand these characteristics, so it is important to know and follow the manufacturer's guidance and the advice of your instructor.

What *Motorcycle Roadcraft* does not include

Motorcycle Roadcraft assumes that you are thoroughly familiar with the current edition of the *Highway Code* and the *Know your Traffic Signs* booklet. Advice and instructions contained in these publications are not generally repeated in *Motorcycle Roadcraft*.

Special techniques, such as those used in emergency response or pursuit, are not covered in *Motorcycle Roadcraft*. We recommend that riders consult their instructors and the appropriate codes of practice for guidance in these areas. Techniques which require a high level of instructional guidance to ensure their safety have also been excluded. Your instructor will introduce you to these techniques when appropriate.

Using *Motorcycle Roadcraft* for self study

Motorcycle Roadcraft has a number of features to make it easier to use and to help you check your learning.

- At the start of each chapter there is a *Use this chapter to find out* section. This identifies the main learning points of the chapter. Use it to help you select the chapters or sections that you need to concentrate on.
- Illustrations and diagrams are used to explain complex ideas. They are an essential part of the book and often contain information not explained elsewhere.
- Key points are **highlighted in colour.**
- Throughout the text you will find questions and activities. These are designed to help you check your understanding and assess your progress. Many of the activities are practical, helping you to transfer the advice in *Motorcycle Roadcraft* to your everyday riding.
- At the end of each chapter there is a review of the key points and questions to help you check your understanding.

We suggest that you keep a notebook for making your own notes and for completing the written activities. This will help you to organise your work and will provide a readily available record for reviewing your own progress.

Working through the chapters

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 set out the basic principles and information on which later chapters build, so ideally you should read these first. If you are using *Motorcycle Roadcraft* as part of a riding course, consult your instructor who may want you to study certain sections of the book in a different order.

The importance of practice

Just reading *Motorcycle Roadcraft* will not make you a better rider. Practice is an essential part of learning any skill. What matters is not how well you can recall the content of this book but how well you can apply what you have learnt to your riding. Many of the techniques explained in *Motorcycle Roadcraft* are fairly simple in themselves. Finesse in riding skill comes from applying them consistently. All the techniques depend on judgement and this only comes with practice. Many of the activities designed to help you practise techniques can be carried out during your everyday riding. Your goal should be to apply the techniques in *Motorcycle Roadcraft* systematically so that they become an everyday part of your riding.

You cannot absorb all the information in *Motorcycle Roadcraft* in one reading, so we suggest that you read a section, select a technique, practise it, assess your progress, and then refer back to *Motorcycle Roadcraft* to refine the technique further. The text has been designed to help you do this.

Using *Motorcycle Roadcraft* for reference

Each chapter contains cross-references to relevant information in other chapters and there is an index to make it easier to find the information that you want. There is also a glossary which explains unfamiliar terms.

Learning is a continuous process

Being a good rider means that you never stop learning. To improve your skills you must be prepared to take responsibility for your own learning. This means that you need to constantly review and, where necessary, adapt your riding to maintain standards and improve techniques. Motorcycles and riding conditions are

constantly changing, and your skills need to keep pace with these changes, otherwise they will become outdated, inappropriate and dangerous. Whenever you ride, regard it as an opportunity to reassess and improve your skills. Only by constantly developing your insight and knowledge can you fulfil your responsibility to ride safely and effectively.