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MAGAZINE™



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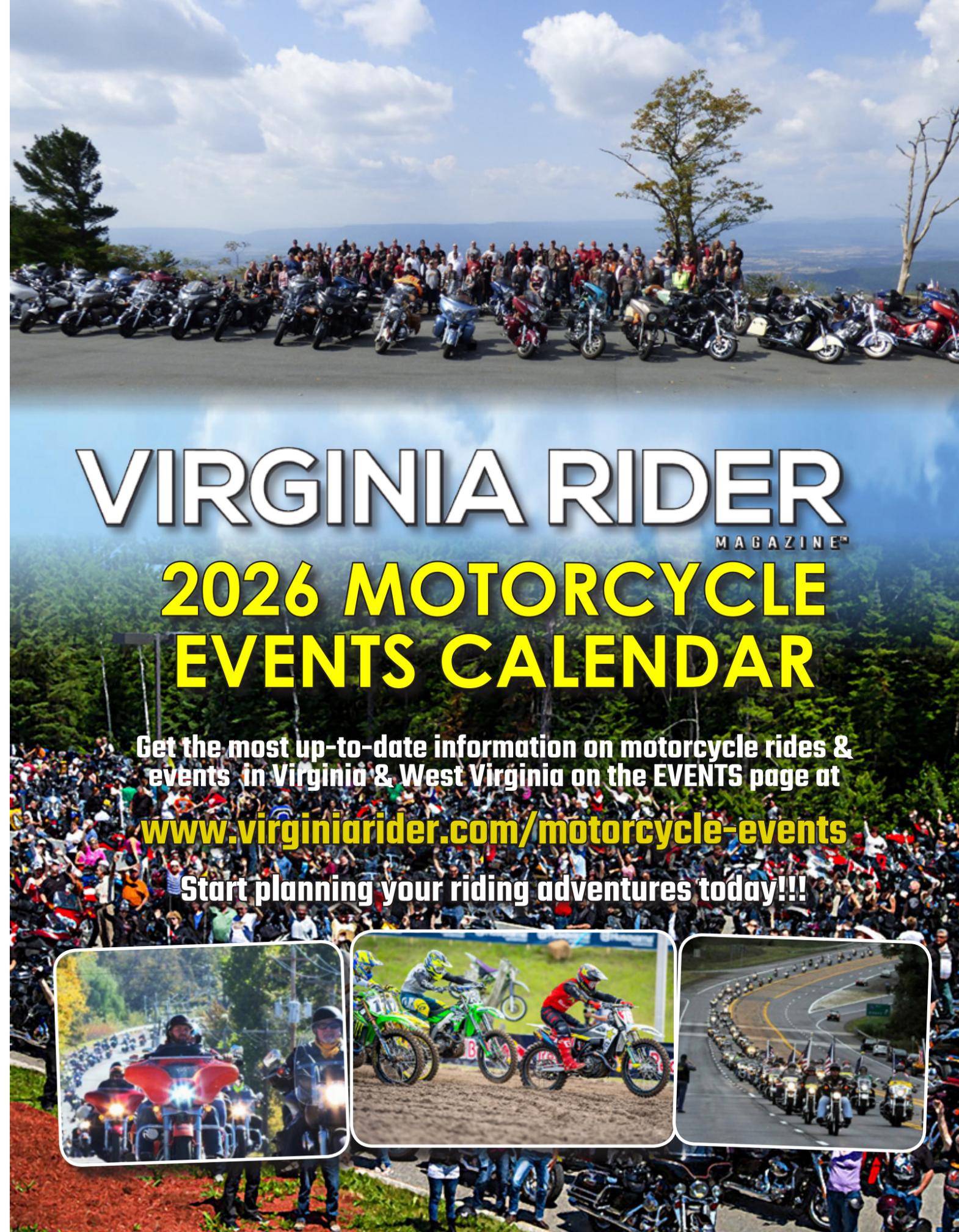




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VIRGINIA RIDER

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2026 MOTORCYCLE EVENTS CALENDAR

Get the most up-to-date information on motorcycle rides & events in Virginia & West Virginia on the EVENTS page at www.virginiarider.com/motorcycle-events

Start planning your riding adventures today!!!





from the editor's desk

Hey, Hey, Virginia riders! We hope that you all are having a fantastic start to your new year and are in good health during this icy cold winter break. Helmets off to those who are still out riding in the bone-chilling temperatures that keep many of us homebound to stay warm and toasty inside. With the groundhogs' annual spring-arrival prediction calling for six more weeks of winter for us, we are hoping that Punxsutawney Phil and Staten Island Chuck were just playing a bad joke on us, so we can see and feel spring in the air in a matter of weeks.

As we pass through the "Love Season" (Valentine's Day & the weeks after), even if you don't have a spouse, partner, or a "plus 1", we encourage you to spend more time focusing on self-love and taking good care of yourself. Taking care of YOU is not being selfish...it's reminding yourself that YOU are important. Make your happiness a priority. You deserve it! Take care of yourself so that you can fully enjoy life and all of the exciting and memorable times that lie ahead for you in this wonderful new year.

The start of the riding season is right around the corner! We are so excited to be kicking things off in our next edition with great places to ride and amazing motorcycle roads, along with the best rider-friendly businesses in Virginia and West Virginia. There will be plenty to look forward to as we start thawing out and coming out of winter to welcome spring, with daylight saving time beginning on March 8th, followed by the official beginning of spring on March 21st. Whoop Whoop!!!

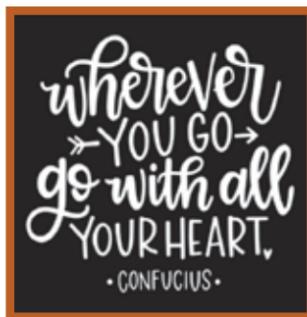
We invite you to visit us often on our website, virginiarider.com. It's your best resource for everything you need to enjoy life on 2, 3, or 4 wheels in VA & WV. We update our events page often throughout the season, so be sure to stop back each week to see what's happening in the riding communities around the Virginias. If you have an event that you'd like us to add to our page, email us at virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com or message us on Facebook. We'd love for you to give us a LIKE so that we can stay connected to you there as well. 😊

Send us your pictures and stories! You might just see your photos in our SHOTZ pages, and your stories may get published in an upcoming edition of the magazine!

Ok friends, I have to run for now...so get ready for another awesome year of Virginia Rider Magazine coming your way as we bring you more great places to ride, amazing things to do & see, plus introducing you to some new motorcycle roads (routes) that have been planned just for you! For our adventure riders, ATVers & dirt riders, we'll have some fun for you to do, with trail info, and places to make some fun memories off-road.

Until next time - Stay warm & be safe out there....We're here for YOU! 😊

Kelly



IN THIS ISSUE



GREAT PLACES TO RIDE We hope that among your New Year's resolutions is to plan a trip to ride the routes you'll find throughout our Appalachian Backroads! With routes like Back of the Dragon, Black Snake, Bootlegger, the Corkscrew, Daniel Boone, Eagle's Nest, Gargoyle, Heartbreaker, and many more, there is something for everyone.



RIDING TWO UP Whether you're taking your first passenger for a ride or you've been at it a while, there are a few things you need to know to ride safely. If you haven't taken a passenger yet, it's probably only a matter of time before you do, or at least try to.



THE BIKE SAVER John laments the fact that he doesn't get more time to ride because he spends so much of his time repairing bikes. As he says, "...the stable of classic motorcycles I have acquired seem to run on a circular period of 'Acquire/Fix/Ride/Repair' that keeps me busy in the garage." So it is onward repairing a 1972 Honda JDM CB500 Four in his shed.



MUSIC AND MOTORCYCLES "Ride to Live, Live to Ride" is featured on the 1983 studio album You Can't Stop Rock 'n' Roll by Twisted Sister, which is their second studio album. It was released on Atlantic Records/WEA in the UK (April 1983) and the US (June 27, 1983).



KEEPING WARM ON A MOTORCYCLE There isn't much you can do to control the weather, but you can make your ride more comfortable if you know how to keep warm on a motorcycle. When you are able to keep warm, you can focus on enjoying the ride and the scenery instead of just how cold you are. Here are 10 tips to help keep you warm on your next winter ride.



THE LIGHTHOUSE Mathew 7:1-2 says, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." The author of this month's article learned first hand how that scripture affected his life profoundly.



PREPARING PHYSICALLY FOR RIDING SEASON Any veteran rider knows how much physical endurance and health matter when riding a motorcycle. After a 500-1000-mile multi-day motorcycle road trip, the out-of-shape folks are gassed out. After that much traveling on a motorcycle, you can also get dangerously fatigued. Here are some tips to get you ready for the ride ahead.

Rolling Into Spring 2026

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Motorcycle Gifts for Valentine's or "Just because", with LOVE

♥ Matching Bluetooth Headsets



Nothing could be more romantic than taking off on a scenic motorcycle ride as a couple. You can snuggle up to one another as you explore new environments. They say love is all about the journey, not the destination. But you'll need to use helmet communication if you want to talk to each other during the trip. You won't be able to hear each other over the noise when riding. Hand signals can be risky when you're trying to control the bike or hang onto your partner for dear life. Use equipment that's designed specifically for couple riders. Each person gets a Bluetooth headset that fits onto their existing helmet. The two devices sync up automatically, so you can hear everything the other person is saying, just like in a normal conversation. You can comment on the passing scenery, listen to the same podcast or coordinate en route to your destination. It's a great way to bond while enjoying one of their favorite activities.

♥ High-Quality Riding Speakers



Lots of motorcycle riders love listening to music, audiobooks or podcasts to help pass the time. They can use a wireless headset to pump in some audio, make calls and listen to directions. But so many headsets and speakers feature poor-quality audio that can take the fun out of their trip. The audio should be loud and

clear enough that they can enjoy their respective media without distracting them from the road. Give them a headset with quality JBL speakers to enhance their listening experience. The device comes with 45mm audio speakers that rival anything they would use when they're not on their bike. It will even automatically adjust the volume setting based on the surrounding noise level to create the perfect balance.

that fits onto their bike. You can log on to the tracking app to see where they are in real-time in case they aren't answering their phone. They can also use this handy device to locate their motorcycle if it gets stolen. If they have a Bluetooth headset, they can also call for help in an emergency without having to physically reach for the phone.

♥ Custom Patch



♥ Tent for Two



Consider taking your trip to the next level with a snug tent with enough room for two people. You can pitch it after the sun goes down instead of turning around and heading home. The weather will soon turn to spring, so start planning your first road trip together as a couple. You can get closer to nature and each other as you find a cozy spot hidden from the rest of the world. If you need extra room for storage, add a hard-shell carrying case to bring along everything you need for the trip.

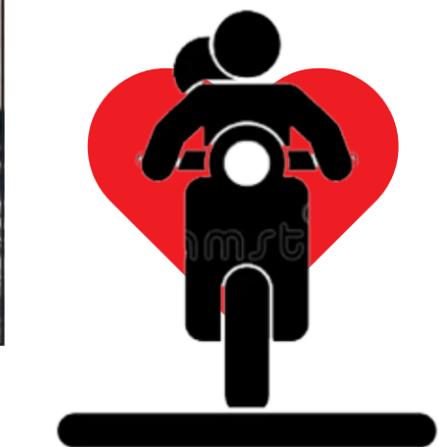
Riding a motorcycle is all about having the right look. Create a signature patch that commemorates your love that they can wear on their jacket, saddlebag or hat. It can be a heart with your initials in the middle or a sweet message to remind them of your love. You can always give them a custom sticker or vinyl decal if they can't sew on a patch.

♥ GPS Tracker



If you're in love with a motorcycle rider, you're probably used to fretting over their safety every time they head out on the road. Give yourself peace of mind by treating them to a portable GPS tracker

Help your special someone enjoy their motorcycle this Valentine's Day with one of these thoughtful accessories. It's the perfect way to say, "I love you."



<https://cardosystems.com/blogs/cardo-blog/motorcycle-valentines-gifts>

THE LIGHTHOUSE

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." - Matthew 7:1-2

The Shoe Man

My alarm went off. It was Sunday again. I was sleepy and tired. My one day to sleep in. But the guilt I would feel the rest of the day would have been too much, so I'd go, and I'd pray. I showered and shaved. I adjusted my tie. I got there and sat in a pew just in time. Bowing my head in prayer as I closed my eyes, I saw the shoe of the man next to me touching my own. I sighed.



With plenty of room on either side, I thought, "Why must our soles touch?" It bothered me, his shoe touching mine, but it didn't bother him much. A prayer began: "Our Father"... I thought, "This man with the shoes has no pride. They're dusty, worn, and scratched even worse, there are holes on the side!"

"Thank You for blessings," the prayer went on. The shoe man said a quiet "Amen." I tried to focus on the prayer, but my thoughts were on his shoes again. Aren't we supposed to look our best when walking through that door? "Well, this certainly isn't it," I thought, glancing toward the floor.



Then the prayer was ended, and the songs of praise began. The shoe man was certainly loud, sounding proud as he sang. His voice lifted the rafters. His hands were raised high. The Lord could surely hear the shoe man's voice from the sky.

It was time for the offering, and what I threw in was steep. I watched as the shoe man reached into his pockets so deep. I saw what was pulled out, what the shoe man put in. Then I heard a soft "clink" as when silver hits tin.

The sermon really bored me to tears, and that's no lie. It was the same for the shoe man for tears fell from his eyes. At the end of the service, as is the custom here, we must greet new visitors and show them all good cheer.

But I felt moved somehow and wanted to meet the shoe man. So after the closing prayer, I reached over and shook his hand. He was old, and his skin was dark, and his hair was truly a mess. But I thanked him for coming. For being our guest.

He said, "My name's Charlie. I'm glad to meet you, my friend." There were tears in his eyes but he had a large, wide grin. "Let me explain," he said. Wiping tears from his eyes, "I've been coming here for months, and you're the first to say 'Hi.'" "I know that my appearance is not like all the rest. But I really do try to always look my best. I always clean and polish my shoes before my very long walk. But by the time I get here, they're dirty and dusty, like chalk."



My heart filled with pain, and I swallowed to hide my tears. As he continued to apologize for daring to sit so near. He said, "When I get here, I know I must look a sight. But I thought if I could touch you, then maybe our souls might unite." I was silent for a moment, knowing whatever was said would pale in comparison. I spoke from my heart, not my head.

"Oh, you've touched me," I said, and taught me, in part, that the best of any man is what is found in his heart." The rest, I thought, this shoe man will never know. Like, just how thankful I really am that his dirty old shoe touched my soul.

-Author Unknown

IF YOU'RE COLD, THEY'RE COLD

Bring them inside. Besides keeping them safe indoors, they make a nice addition to your home décor. ☐





LET'S DO SOME SHOTZ!!!
Email your pics to virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com



APPALACHIAN BACKROADS

GREAT PLACES TO RIDE IN THE HEART OF APPALACHIA

Has the snow and cold got you down? Are you dreaming of that first warm ride of the year —sun on your face, wind at your back? Spring will be here before you know it! If you're planning a group ride, let us know how we can help! In addition to free maps, we can point you in the right direction for lodging, entertainment, outdoor adventures, and more! We're here to make your trip to Virginia's Heart of Appalachia the best possible experience.

We hope that among your New Year's resolutions is to plan a trip to ride the routes you'll find throughout our Appalachian Backroads! With routes like Back of the Dragon, Black Snake, Bootlegger, the Corkscrew, Daniel Boone, Eagle's Nest, Gargoyle, Heartbreaker, Panther's Breath, Scorpion, Skull Cracker, Roadrunner, Stripper's Run, and Woodbooger -- there are plenty of roads to choose! Explore the routes, download or order your free maps, and get inspired at appalachianbackroads.com

Start planning your 2026 riding season adventures on our Appalachian Backroads & ENJOY THE OPEN ROAD!



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Many Thanks to our friend, Virginia rider, Drew Cheney, for sharing some special moments from the annual Wreaths Across America ride from Midlothian, VA to the Veterans' Cemetery in Amelia Court House, VA, that was held on December 13, 2025.

It was a chilly ride (30 degrees when we left home, just like last year), but it was well organized with over a hundred bikes and lots of support from law enforcement officers along the way.

We took a different/longer route this year, because Powhatan County asked if the ride could go through Powhatan, and that their law enforcement and firefighters could help provide a safe ride to the cemetery.

Thank you, Amelia, Chesterfield, and Powhatan counties, for allowing these brave men and women in uniform to help in today's ride.

The motorcycle/trailer combo was ridden by Bobby Lipes, another member of the Terrapin Neck Grange (www.nationalgrange.org/about), and led the procession.

We went to the headstone of Lawrence Clark, a Coast Guard member, and placed our first wreath with him (just as we did last year). Lawrence D Clark served in Vietnam and left this world on January 25th, 2013.

We found a couple of other Coast Guard members that we hadn't seen before. Being retired Coast Guard myself, we make it a point to search out Coasties.



Please remember him, and all of the veterans who served our country and defended our freedom.

Save the date! Saturday, December 19th, 2026, is this year's Wreaths Across America event.

We'd love to see you in Amelia County, but Wreaths Across America will be at over 5200 locations across all 50 states. Find one close to home and close to heart.

Have a safe and healthy New Year! Ride Safe!



RIDING “TWO-UP” – RIDING WITH A PASSENGER

Whether you're taking your first passenger for a ride or you've been at it a while, there are a few things you need to know to ride safely. If you haven't taken a passenger yet, it's probably only a matter of time before you do, or at least try to. So, what does “riding two up” mean, and how do you do it safely?

Every rider knows motorcycles are great. They're a special way to experience the freedom of the road, and many riders have already or will want to share this experience with a friend or someone special.

There are a few things you need to remember and a few things you need to tell your first-time passenger before you have them jump on the back of your motorcycle and ride. If you follow this simple guide, you'll be able to make a first-time rider a regular passenger and create awesome road trip memories. That is, of course, what it's all about.

What Does Riding Two Up Mean?

Riding two-up is riding on a motorcycle while carrying a passenger, or riding pillion (a passenger seated directly behind the driver). The second seat for motorcycle passengers is known as the pillion seat.

How should a passenger mount a motorcycle?

Before you can take to the road, it's important that you and your passenger know some important basic rules, especially if they've never ridden as a passenger on a motorcycle before. Chances are, they have zero experience, so it's really up to you to bring 'em up to speed – so to speak.

First, you and your passenger need to figure out the most comfortable way to mount the bike in order to ride two-up.

There are a few different ways for your passenger to mount the motorcycle. The strategy you end up deciding on is going to be what you and your passenger find the most comfortable. It also could depend on the make, model, and seat configuration of your bike.

Mounting the Motorcycle with a Passenger

It comes down to using one of two common-sense methods;

Let the passenger on first You get on first

Option 1- Let Your Passenger On First

You may find it more comfortable if your passenger mounts the bike while it leans on its kickstand. In this case, you can help them up. Newer passengers might be more comfortable mounting this way because they feel like the bike isn't going anywhere.

Option 2- You Get On First

Another strategy would be for the rider to mount first. The passenger can mount either while the kickstand is still down, or while the kickstand is up, and the rider is holding the front brake with both feet on the ground.



If the rider has mounted first, then I recommend you keep the kickstand down and firmly plant both feet on the ground while the passenger mounts and hold the handlebars firmly. The bike should be very stable in this position.

If your passenger is mounting after you, let them know where they can grab you or the bike to pull themselves up if they need to.

Remember that mounting from the kickstand side is usually a better technique as well. Make sure the foot pegs or the passenger floorboards are folded out before they get onto the bike, so that they can fully and comfortably rest their weight on the bike once they're on.

Basics of the Motorcycle

Keep in mind... You know a lot about your motorcycle, but your potential passenger likely will not. It's really your responsibility to provide your riding buddy with a basic safety briefing.

Here are a few things you should tell your passenger before your ride:

- NEVER put your feet on the ground at stops! Your passenger shouldn't be putting his or her feet down at stops, and they need to know that that should all be left to you. This is a potentially serious safety issue. The last thing you want is to injure someone's ankle when you take off from a stopped position.
- NEVER hold onto the arms or shoulders of the rider during the ride! It's very dangerous for the passenger to hold onto the rider's arms or shoulders, as it definitely will affect your steering and your ability to come to a sudden stop safely... Imagine this: Your passenger becomes scared and starts to bear hug you. Big adrenaline pump = Big Strength. Now you can't control the bike, and the likelihood of a crash increases.
- Tell your passenger where to hold on. Some bikes come with grab rails or handles for the passenger, and some don't. If your bike doesn't have something built in for the passenger to hold on to, then they should be grabbing you around the waist. (More on this in an article in our next edition entitled, “HOLD ON”)
- Tell your passenger what gets hot and where, on the bike. Tell them about which parts are hot and could burn them or melt the material on their boots/shoes. Do them, and yourself, a favor when you park the motorcycle in hot weather - be sure to park in the shade.

Remember: new passengers aren't going to know what you know, so it's YOUR responsibility to educate them.

Riding with a second person is going to change your ride in one simple way; Added weight. It's important to know that riding with someone else will change the experience of your motorcycle ride, and hopefully for the better!

There are a few things you should look out for if you aren't experienced with two-up riding, as a driver.

- You may need to adjust your bike's rear suspension for the passenger's extra weight. Consult your owner's manual or ask a certified mechanic at your local bike shop.
- It can't be stressed enough that the bike will handle differently with two people. So, if you're new to two-up riding, take it slower than you usually would to familiarize yourself and the passenger with how it feels.
- It's also nice to take it slow for your passenger's comfort, and after a few trips, you'll both be more comfortable driving at regular speeds with the extra weight.

Another person means more weight; it's that simple. And if you're taking longer rides, then that means less space to put more stuff.

Going into turns. A new passenger who has never been on a motorcycle will likely be pretty nervous about turns and cornering. Bikes lean a lot, so you need to educate your passenger on how to properly move during turns. Tell your passenger about staying neutral and relaxing on turns. If he or she shifts their weight away from the turn, it'll make handling the bike harder for you, and it's a potentially very dangerous situation. Instruct them to corner the turn with you and follow your movements.

Make sure to motion to your passenger and let them know a turn is coming up, so they expect it. They don't have to try to steer with you, but if he or she puts their head towards your inside shoulder (that's the shoulder facing the turn, so if it's a left turn, then towards the left shoulder), then it'll be easier to steer the bike.

If your passenger has trouble staying neutral and keeps moving around on turns (despite being told not to—hey, they're only human), then tell your passenger to lean forward into you on a turn. This puts the center of gravity into the middle of the bike and makes handling easier.

Pro Tip: Just have them lean forward.

If your passenger isn't comfortable and they're jumpy, it can affect the handling of your bike when you're deep into a turn. Motorcycles are designed for a center of gravity in the middle, and having an extra person's weight on the back can throw that off, so this is a great and reliable trick for dealing with that difference.

Being a smooth operator will go a long way in operating your motorcycle. When people are new to riding two-up, there are a few helpful things they can do to make the ride better for their passenger.

Communicate With Your Motorcycle Passenger

Agree on how to communicate. Some helmets have communication systems which are really handy if you've got a frequent riding buddy. Chances are, though, that if you're a beginner at riding two-up, you won't have that. So, hand signals are going to go a long way.

It's important to decide on signals for simple requests like speed up, slow down, pull over, or turn ahead. A new passenger may want you to drive slower until he or she is more comfortable riding with you.

Respect what your passenger wants, so you both can be comfortable and enjoy the ride together.

Longer rides mean you can both plan places to stop, so you both have destinations you're looking forward to. Letting your passenger help you plan the trip is a great way to make sure you're both happier.

These are things that can make both short rides and long rides way better for both of you, which means more rides. And who doesn't want more rides?

Get'em geared up. Gear. Gear. Gear. Your passenger needs to be wearing the right kind of gear.

Make sure that your passenger has the appropriate gear to keep them as safe as possible. Wear a helmet. Your passenger needs one too, so make sure you have a DOT helmet that's a good fit for them and stays on even when yanked.

Riding boots, sturdy pants (heavy jeans, riding pants, chaps), and a proper-fitting jacket are important, too.

Prepare for bad weather. It's not *if* you hit bad weather, but *when*. Another thing newer passengers might not take into account is the weather. The wind on a motorcycle can be pretty chilling, so let them know about layering up to protect from the elements. Inclement weather doesn't have to be wind and rain; it can also be severe heat. For some, it's never too hot to ride a motorcycle – you just have to be prepared when the heat is on.

How to dismount a motorcycle as a passenger

Before you can park your bike and sit back after a nice ride, you need to have your passenger dismount. Try practicing both mounting and dismounting before you go on the actual ride.

When you're done riding, turn the bike off, disengage the clutch, turn the front wheel to full left lock, kick out the stand, and let your passenger get off first. It's good to try this out a few times.

There's always more to learn about riding and especially about riding two-up. These tips are a nice place to start. You'll likely find yourself coming up with your own the more you ride with a passenger.

We all have more to learn, and we can always make the ride better. Stay safe out there!

Source: <https://www.motorcyclertouringtips.com/what-does-riding-two-up-mean/>



MUSIC & MOTORCYCLES



RIDE TO LIVE, LIVE TO RIDE



"Ride to Live, Live to Ride" is featured on the 1983 studio album You Can't Stop Rock 'n' Roll by Twisted Sister, which is their second studio album. It was released on Atlantic Records/WEA in the UK (April 1983) and the US (June 27, 1983). It is a notable track from that record. "Live to ride, ride to live" is a popular motorcycle motto meaning riding isn't just a hobby but a fundamental part of one's existence, a source of freedom and identity.

RIDE TO LIVE, LIVE TO RIDE

Hard roads and endless lines flow through his veins
Cold steel and hot fuel injected 's the dream that fills his brain
But no, not slow, the speed fever grows
He rides, he sees, he knows

You've got to ride to live, live to ride
Feel the flames burn inside
And though you know, you ride to hide
You ride to live to ride

Life's short and goes too fast, most pages burn
Don't wait, the end's too near, some people never learn
You all won't fall, the road fever calls
So run or fly, don't crawl

You've got to ride to live, live to ride
Feel the flames burn inside
And though you know, you ride to hide
You ride to live to ride

Ride on and don't look back, you can't change what's done
Drive hard for grater glories, you all must be someone
So win, don't show, let the life fever go
The world is yours you know

You've got to ride to live, live to ride
Feel the flames burn inside
And though you know, you ride to hide
You ride to live to ride

You've got to ride to live, live to ride
Feel the flames burn inside
And though you know, you ride to hide
You ride to live to ride

Source: LyricFind
Songwriters: Dee Snider
Ride to Live, Live to Ride
Lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC



The boy on the right told his teacher that he got the same haircut as his best friend so she wouldn't be able to tell them apart

One of the biggest mysteries of the world ...
How to fold a fitted bed sheet

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GOOD FOR YOU

WINTER WONDERFOODS

Although there are fewer foods that are in season in winter than in the summer, winter boasts some surprising health superstars. Winter foods are nutrient-dense, packed with vitamins A, C, and D, and antioxidants, which boost the immune system against cold-weather illnesses. These foods (e.g., roasted root vegetables, hearty soups, citrus) are often seasonal, fresher, and provide essential warmth and comfort that support digestion, mood, and satiety during colder months.

Here are 5 of the healthiest winter foods that are super good for you!...

Pomegranates



Chances are you've tasted pomegranates in their newly popular juice form. And from a heart-health perspective, that's probably a good thing. Pomegranate juice is rich in antioxidants (more so than other fruit juices)—just a cup daily might help to keep free radicals from oxidizing "bad" LDL cholesterol, according to a preliminary study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Oxidized LDL contributes to plaque buildup in the arteries. Another study showed that drinking pomegranate juice might improve blood flow to the heart in people with myocardial ischemia, a serious condition in which the heart's oxygen supply is compromised because the arteries leading to it are blocked.

Dark Leafy Greens



Dark leafy greens, such as kale, chard, and collards, thrive in the chill of winter

when the rest of the produce section looks bleak. In fact, a frost can take away the bitterness of kale. These greens are particularly rich in vitamins A, C, and K. Collards, mustard greens, and escarole are also excellent sources of folate, which is important for women of childbearing age.

Citrus



Citrus fruits, including lemons, limes, oranges, and grapefruit, are at their juiciest in the wintertime and can add sunshine to the dreary winter. Citrus fruits are loaded with vitamin C—one medium orange delivers more than 100 percent of your daily dose. Citrus fruits are rich sources of flavonoids. The predominant flavonoid in these fruits—hesperidin—is credited with boosting "good" HDL cholesterol and lowering "bad" LDL cholesterol and triglycerides.

Potatoes



Potatoes sometimes get a bad rap for being a white starch, thrown into the same category as white rice or white bread. But unlike those other starches, which have indeed been stripped of helpful nutrients, potatoes are a whole food that contains several beneficial nutrients. They are an excellent source of two immunity boosters—vitamins C and B6, delivering 25% and 29% of your daily needs per

medium potato, respectively. They are also a good source of folate, which is especially important for women of childbearing age, and they deliver fiber (4 grams in a medium potato; women need 25 grams daily, and men need 38 grams). If you can find purple potatoes, you'll get an added health boost - they are rich in anthocyanins, antioxidants that are linked to a host of health benefits, from lowering cancer and heart disease risk to calming inflammation.

Winter Squash



There are wide varieties of winter squash—including butternut, acorn, delicata, and spaghetti squash—and they are all excellent choices in the winter. One cup of cooked winter squash has few calories (around 80) but is high in both vitamin A (214 percent of the recommended daily value) and vitamin C (33 percent), as well as being a good source of vitamins B6 and K, potassium, and folate.

These foods are great all year round as well, so be sure to include them on your grocery shopping lists. Stay warm and enjoy a healthy, delicious, and nutritious rest of your winter season!



BEARD STYLE GUIDE

Hey guys! If you're thinking about sporting a new facial hair look for the upcoming riding season, or you just want a change of pace, check out these beard style guides. They can help you choose a look that complements your face shape.

Styles by Face Shape:

- **Oval:** Most styles work well.
- **Round:** Aim for length and angles on the chin to add definition; avoid short stubble.
- **Square:** Soften strong angles with fuller styles or emphasize them with a clean, squared-off look; shorter/medium styles add width.
- **Rectangular/Long:** Shorter, wider styles add fullness; avoid excessive length.
- **Triangular (Wide forehead, narrow chin):** Add hair to cheeks and sideburns for balance.
- **Heart:** More hair on the chin, sides, and cheekbones to balance the jawline.

Popular Beard Styles

- **Full Beard:** Classic, versatile; options like Garibaldi (rounded), Lumberjack (square), or Ducktail (pointed).
- **Short Boxed Beard:** A clean, square look covering jawline and chin, ideal for professionals.
- **Stubble:** Low-maintenance; use a guard for consistent length and define the neckline.
- **Anchor Beard:** Resembles an anchor with a mustache and chin beard, cheeks are clean or lightly stubbled.
- **Van Dyke:** A goatee and mustache, with clean cheeks (similar to anchor).
- **Chin Strap:** Accentuates the jawline; good for patchy growth, needs precise trimming.



Grooming Essentials

- **Cleanliness:** Wash with beard wash; keep lines neat.
- **Trimming:** Use guards for length and precision trimmers for edges; shape the neckline below the jaw.
- **Moisture & Softness:** Use beard oil or balm.
- **Brush:** A natural bristle brush helps detangle and distribute oils.

Tips for Growing

- **Patience:** Don't judge patchy growth too early; it often fills in.
- **Assess Density:** Know if you have thick or thin growth to pick suitable styles.
- **Neckline:** Avoid a "neckbeard" by keeping the line tidy and natural-looking, not too low.

More Styles



6 MORE WEEKS OF WINTER?...SAY IT AIN'T SO!

The official Groundhog Day ceremony starring the famous groundhog, 'Punxsutawney Phil', was held in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, the morning of February 2nd. Phil did indeed see his shadow, which traditionally predicts six more weeks of winter. Phil's accuracy isn't the best, with his forecasts only being right about 35% to 39% of the time.

New York City's own, 'Staten Island Chuck', is another famous groundhog who is known for his weather predictions. He lives in the Staten Island Zoo in New York and has been right an astounding 85% of the time!

Chuck made his weather prediction in NYC about an hour after Phil saw his shadow in Pennsylvania. Chuck also saw his shadow and forecasted six more weeks of winter.

We always enjoy promoting vibes of positivity to our readers. So please join us as we focus our thoughts on the coming weeks to be full of sunny days, warmer temperatures, green grass, and smooth roads for a thunderous start to the 2026 riding season.

Get your bikes ready & let's get ready to ride!



EASY DOES IT

Super Easy "Come back" Tuna Casserole

This yummy classic, easy tuna casserole combines pantry staples—egg noodles, canned tuna, and cream of mushroom soup—into a creamy, cheesy, and comforting dish. It takes approximately 10–15 minutes to prepare and 25–30 minutes to bake. Let's get to cooking!

Here's all you need:

- 12 oz Egg Noodles (medium or wide)
- 2 cans (5 oz each) Tuna in water, drained and flaked
- 1–2 cans (10.5 oz each) Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup
- 1/2 to 1 cup Milk
- 1 to 1 1/2 cups Shredded Cheddar Cheese, divided
- 1 cup Frozen Peas, thawed
- Optional: 1/2 cup breadcrumbs or crushed potato chips/crackers, mixed with 2 tbsp melted butter for topping

Here's all you need to do:

- Preheat oven to 350-375°F and grease a 9x13-inch baking dish.
- Cook egg noodles until al dente, then drain.
- Whisk together soup and milk in a large bowl.
- Stir in tuna, peas, and half the cheese. Fold in cooked noodles.
- Transfer to the baking dish, top with remaining cheese and optional topping.
- Bake for 25–30 minutes until golden and bubbling.
- Let cool before serving.

Tips for Success

- Consider adding sautéed onions, celery, or mushrooms for extra flavor.
- Cream of celery or chicken soup can be used instead of mushroom.
- For a moister casserole, add more milk or some sour cream/mayonnaise to the sauce.
- Store your leftover tuna noodle casserole in a shallow, airtight container in the fridge for up to four days. Reheat thoroughly in the oven or in the microwave.

This dish is so delicious and super simple to make. And, as its name implies, you'll surely want to 'come back' for more... Bon Appetit!



THE BIKE SAVER

with John Peterson



Resolutions



Wow, we are into another year already – 2026! Where does the time go? I trust you’ve made some New Year’s resolutions – ‘yknow, stop smoking, get more exercise, save money, RIDE more...and I have, kinda...I really would like to ride more than wrench this year but that’s more complicated than it sounds, especially when you write a column called ‘The Bike Saver’; it’s not ‘The Bike RIDER’, although I guess it could be...after all, this is ‘Virginia RIDER Magazine, not “Virginia Wrencher” (I’ll have to run that one by my editor... “Boss, I got a GREAT idea...!”) You don’t see too much of me actually riding these bikes that I fix, mostly because the stable of classic motorcycles I have acquired seem to run on a circular period of ‘Acquire/Fix/Ride/Repair’ that keeps me busy in the garage, not that that’s a bad thing - plus the fact that the cost of properly insuring and tagging all these bikes would be a bit prohibitive, to say the least. But I’m working on it!

In the meantime, however, I’ve been a busy little distracted beaver taking apart this 1972 Honda JDM CB500 Four that was languishing in the shed.



If you’ve been following along with this column over the past few months, you might know that I just can’t work on one project at

a time; I have to have at least two going...I’m more of a nuts-and-bolts kind of guy, so when I get near to completing a build I tend to put off the finishing touches (“Pffft...timing...I’ll get to that in a minute.”) in lieu of something a little more dynamic – although I guess timing IS a ‘dynamic’ thing...?

Anyway, the above bike fell into my gaze, and in the middle of getting my 1974 CB550 started, I “just wanted to see” how stuck some of the bolts were – next thing I knew, I was up to my 10 millimeter nuts in the engine.

I got her top off, which took more than a few good whacks with a rubber mallet. A generous application of heat and some nerve-wracking, gentle upward pressure with a small pry bar got her to finally give it up, where I found this:



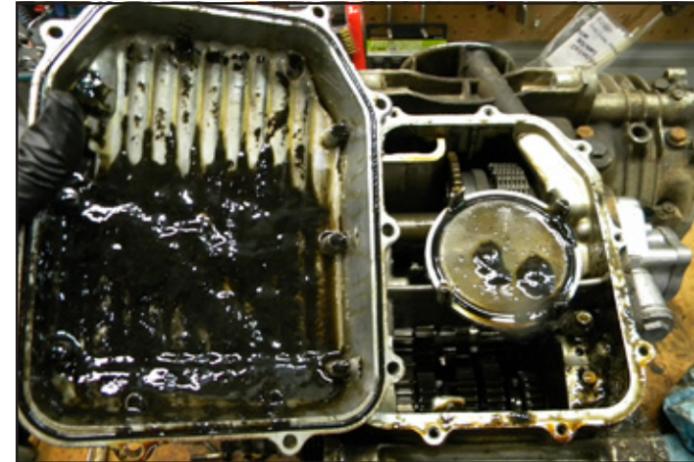
Yeah, pretty gross, but remember, this bike had been sitting outside for God knows how long, and the engine was locked up. It would not turn over with the kick starter, and the curious thing was, when I was disassembling the clutch basket and shifter mechanism, I got it rotating just fine with the kick starter, which I think was because the clutch basket was stuck, and when I removed it, that allowed the engine to turn freely; I don’t know.

In addition to the gasket, somebody in the past had put some sort of sealant on the cylinder head, which explained why it was so hard to get off the block. It came off easily enough with my scraper, but still...



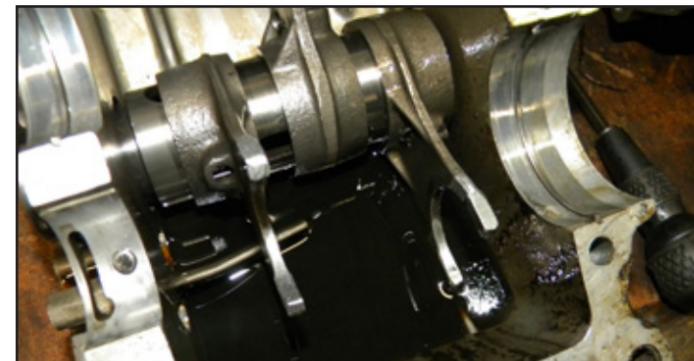
WTH...?

I flipped her over and took off the oil pan – which honestly is one of my favorite parts of doing a restoration because you never know how it’s going to look or what you’ll find, and I was not disappointed:



Ewww...!

I have no idea how old that oil is, but it’s been in there for a while, as I discovered when I got the cases opened. You really can’t see it here, but all that old oil in the case was a deep green color! I think it’s some kind of old Seventies brand of oil.



An oily mystery...

I came across a couple of other eccentricities, too. Remember, this is a ‘Japanese Domestic Market’ or JDM motorcycle, sold only in Japan for domestic sales. As near as I can figure, a U.S. serviceman probably bought this overseas and had it shipped home long ago, but it has some cool features on it, like this headlight with TWO bulbs in it!



You can see the main bulb connector, but that little silver (silver!) bulb there goes into that receptacle in the bottom of the main bulb – for what I have no idea.

Another cool feature is this ‘Speed Warning Light’ on the triple tree main nut – at least that’s what I’ve been told the writing says...apparently that big light comes on if you exceed a certain speed limit, but I have no idea what that speed is.



Taking apart the carbs, I found this in one of the carb holders – a block of wood! Yeah, I’m pretty sure that’s not supposed to be there...



‘Wood’ It Run...?

And last but not least, check out this Frankenstein wiring here; it connects the rear lights to the main wiring harness, but I’m pretty sure that’s not ‘stock’ either! One big five-wire neoprene cable that somebody put in, in place of the correct wiring...the picture is kind of blurry, but you get the idea...



Nice Splice There, Franky...

As we move into a new year, the plan is to get everything I have in the garage up and running so I can do a bit more riding on these bikes than wrenching.

So, yeah - I have some more wrenching to do, and I do enjoy it. But in keeping with any New Year’s resolutions I (might) make, I’m going to try to finish this JDM up by spring and hopefully be more of a Virginia RIDER rather than ‘Wrencher’ in 2026 – but as with all New Year’s resolutions, we’ll see how that goes.

HOW TO KEEP WARM ON A MOTORCYCLE IN COLD WEATHER

10 tips to keep you warm and toasty on your next winter ride

There isn't much you can do to control the weather, but you can make your ride more comfortable if you know how to keep warm on a motorcycle. When you are able to keep warm, you can focus on enjoying the ride and the scenery instead of just how cold you are. Here are 10 tips to help keep you warm on your next winter ride.

1. Winter Gloves



Your hands are exposed to the wind on a motorcycle, and are the first part of your body you notice getting cold. When the temperatures drop, those thin leather or mesh gloves aren't going to cut it. You need a winter glove that offers insulation from the cold. Winter gloves are more bulky, so they can feel a bit spongy if you use them off-road. But you will want to switch gloves to keep warm on the highway. Choose a gauntlet-style glove that covers the wrist so that no wind or rain can seep into your sleeves. Gore-Tex® waterproof gloves will also ensure your hands stay dry without getting clammy.

2. Thermal Underwear

Your body has a layer of warm air around it that maintains your core temperature. Anything that disturbs this layer of



warm air around you will cause your temperature to drop quickly. Thermal underwear insulates this layer of warmth around your body and protects it from being disturbed. Using a thermal top and

bottom is extremely effective at keeping your entire body warm on or off the bike. Thermal underwear can keep you warm without the extra bulk that can restrict movement like a heavy jacket and pants. Choose a product that uses synthetic materials. Cotton stays wet if you start to sweat during off-road riding, causing you big problems when you cool off again. Synthetic materials such as polyester, nylon, spandex and lycra, are specifically designed to be hydrophobic (water-repelling), allowing them to wick moisture away from the skin and promote quick evaporation, keeping you dry and comfortable

3. Heat Packs



Sometimes you just need an external heat source to help you get your core body temperature up. The least expensive way to do this is to use disposable heat packs. Heat packs can be placed strategically in your gloves, boots, down your pants, or around your neck and torso.

If you buy heat packs in bulk, you can get them for less than a dollar each. Each heat pack will provide up to 18 hours of warmth. These handy heat packs can also help you keep warm off the motorcycle during camping or while repairing a flat.

4. Heated Seats



If you want to keep warm on a motorcycle, a heated seat offers the ultimate cold-weather comfort. Nothing feels better than heat on your tush when you are logging a lot of hours on the highway. You will be riding with a smile through the worst conditions if you upgrade your bike to a heated seat. Aftermarket seat makers Corbin and Sargent, and others, offer heated seat

options. You can order a custom-built seat with the heated seat option, or you can create your own with a seat heating kit for your existing seat.

5. Heated Vests



There are many heated gear options out there, but our favorite is the heated vest. There are heated jackets, pants, gloves, and socks, but we think a vest is the best option for adventure riders because it provides plenty of heat without the extra weight and bulk. A heated vest easily fits under your riding jacket, and it is small enough to keep packed away for use just when you need it. A heated vest keeps your core warm, and that warmth emanates out to your extremities. Heated vests are also less expensive than a full heated gear setup and reduce the wiring you have to manage around you.

6. Balaclava



Ways to Wear Your Unisex Balaclava

Your helmet is not enough to keep your head warm when temperatures drop into the freezing range. This is especially true for some of us who are missing some hair on our heads. Your head is the area where you lose the most body heat, so keeping it insulated is important for maintaining your warmth. A ski mask or balaclava that

covers your head, face, and neck is the best choice. Keep one of these where it can be easily accessed when you first start to feel the chill. Make sure you choose a balaclava that uses breathable, moisture-wicking synthetic material.

7. Neck Warmer (Neck Gaiter)



Your neck is the next most important area on your body that needs protection from the cold. Your neck is an area where cold wind can get through the cracks, even if you have your jacket fully zipped. Using a neck warmer will help to insulate this area and keep cold air from going up toward your head or down into your torso. When you put on your neck warmer, you will instantly feel a difference in the warmth. Keep one of these where it can be easily accessed when you start to feel the chill. Make sure you choose a neck warmer that is breathable but still blocks the wind.

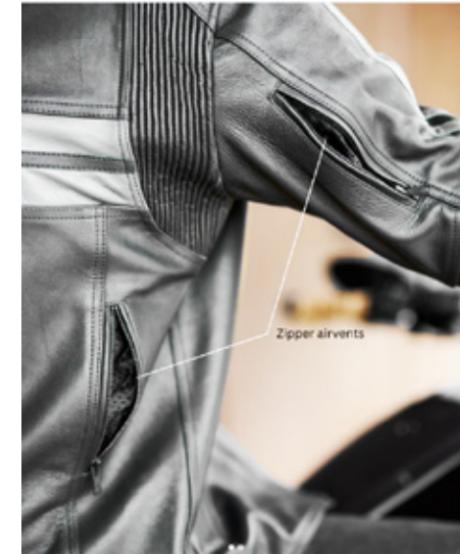
8. Windproof Jacket and Pants



If you want to keep warm on a motorcycle, you have to use the correct layering method. You need a soft, warm inner layer that insulates your body and an outer shell that protects you from the wind. Adventure riding jackets and pants need to be versatile so they can keep you warm in cold weather and not get too hot when the temperatures rise. Most adventure riders choose gear that

is made of textile material because it is breathable, waterproof, windproof and durable. Adventure riding gear that is made of Gore-Tex® material offers the most protection from the elements and has excellent durability.

9. Close Your Vents



It may seem obvious, but you would be surprised how often riders realize that they had a vent open hours into a ride. Adventure gear has so many vents that it becomes easy to lose track of them. The most common location of vents are on your jacket's arm pits and back or in the thigh area of your pants. You may also have vents in the front, top and back of your helmet. It is always a good idea to pull over and take inventory on all of your vent locations and make sure they are fully closed. Otherwise, you could be losing precious body heat unknowingly.

10. Heated Grips



If your adventure motorcycle did not already come with heated grips, you can still add them as an upgrade. Adding a set of heated grips is an easy install that you can perform yourself or have your local dealer put them on. Heated grips typically have different settings so you can get the temperature just right for the weather. On some of the basic kits that just provide heating elements and no grips, you may notice that your left side is cooler than the right. The best heated grip kits come with the heating elements inside the grips, providing even heating between left and right grips.

If All Else Fails Think Like a Hobo

Sometimes you can be caught off guard when the cold weather hits. You might be unprepared when a storm arrives that significantly drops the temperature. In these situations, you just have to think like a hobo and look for materials around you that can insulate your body and block the wind. Search for newspaper or cardboard that can be used inside your jacket to cover your chest. You can slide newspaper up your pants legs to protect yourself from the wind. Plastic bags can also be used to block the wind and keep you dry. Cut out holes in a plastic garbage bag for your head and arms so you can wear it as a vest. Get out of the cold and get some shelter as soon as possible, while you wait for the weather to improve.



Source: <https://www.advpulse.com/adv-prepping/how-to-keep-warm-on-a-motorcycle-in-cold-weather/>

FIT FOR THE ROAD

Tips for Getting Into “Motorcycle” Shape for the Riding Season

When most people think of motorcycle riding, the first thing that comes to mind may not be “physical fitness”. It definitely isn’t an exercise bike either. Riding a motorcycle is anything but lethargic. It takes physical exertion. Who cares about what you can throw on the squat rack when your bike is pumping out over 100 HP, right? With great power comes great responsibility. Fatigue plays a bigger part in road accidents than one might realize, not to mention that this is supposed to be fun.

Any veteran rider knows how much physical endurance and health matter when riding a motorcycle. After a 500-1000-mile multi-day motorcycle road trip, the out-of-shape folks are gassed out. After that much traveling on a motorcycle, you can also get dangerously fatigued. On top of that, the faster and more aggressive the bike is, the faster and more aggressive you have to be to ride that bike safely and precisely. If this is something that you think is a problem for you or just something you’ve never thought about looking into, no sweat, we’ve got you covered. Below, I will highlight 6 tips that are a combo of exercises and routines to keep you going strong and, most importantly keeping you safe on your motorcycle all year round.

Specific Focus:

Less Glamour Muscle Routines

Motorcycle riding, depending on the style, is a very specific and repetitive activity from a physical perspective. If you’re trying to be a fitness model, then you should ignore this first tip. If you are trying to ride a motorcycle for 5-6 hours at a time for multiple days while feeling good and staying safe, listen up.

The “glamour muscles” I am referring to are largely biceps, chest, delts, and lats. These are muscles that, when sized up and toned, make you look like a superhero. Think comic book characters or that Superman costume full of fake, fluffy muscles. This is for the folks either competing in fitness competitions or trying to impress people on the beach in the summertime. You don’t build these muscles for the purpose of function, but for looks. Sure, if you look like Superman, more power to you, but are you fatigued after 2-3 hours of hard motorcycle riding? Probably. More non-functioning muscle actually drains you of oxygen. This is why huge boxers or MMA fighters tend to gas out faster than the little guys.

Not to worry, though, strength is huge with motorcycle riding, since motorcycles do weigh a considerable amount and don’t throw themselves around. You’ll need strong legs, back, shoulders, and core to do this. If you are reading this and have the glamour muscles dialed in, well then, you probably already have a strong foundation to build from to get your motorcycle riding stamina up.

Cardio and its byproduct, endurance, are also important ingredients in your focus. A lot of professional motorcycle

riders ride bicycles to boost cardio while being gentle on the body. Plus, it keeps you on two wheels, which is a solid angle to take. You want to know how to handle a bike when you are pushing your stamina to the limit.

I’ll get more specific about these routines below, but tip no.1, and arguably the most important tip, is to train yourself for the specific task you are undertaking. In this case, it is motorcycle riding.

Be Light on the Bars -

The Magic of a Strong Core and Legs

A deeper dive into the focus of your workouts is focusing a big part of your motorcycle exercise routine on lower back core/ab exercises, and leg exercises. When you strengthen these areas of the body, they act as your support instead of relying on your arms and upper body to hang on to the bike. These lower muscle groups hold and shift your body weight on top of the bike, leaving the upper body free to move just the bike, free of body weight. No more arm pump, tired wrists, and hands. When you stay light on the bars, it’s a wild feeling being able to whip a bike around a corner with ease because your core and legs are keeping you stable on top of the motorcycle!

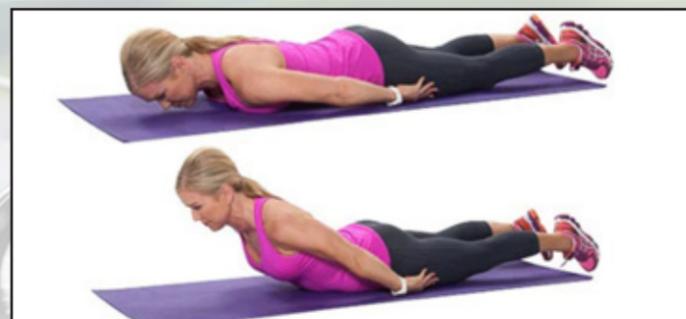
A couple of main areas of hard riding that will be enhanced by a strong core and ab exercise routine are accelerating and braking. Your core keeps you centered over the bike while your legs allow you to shift positions instead of your wrists and arms doing all the work.

Recommended Exercises:

Core: Planks | Crunches | Russian Twist



Lower Back: Glute Bridge | Superman | Back Extensions



Legs: Lunges | Squat | Calf Raises



Keep it simple at first, so start with these leg, core, and ab exercises above. Really focus on developing and improving all of the core muscles over time. It’s more about stamina than strength. This will help you better maneuver yourself on top of the motorcycle for longer periods of time. There are many more leg, core, and ab exercise routines online, so do some research and get that lower body solid so you can stay light on the bars.

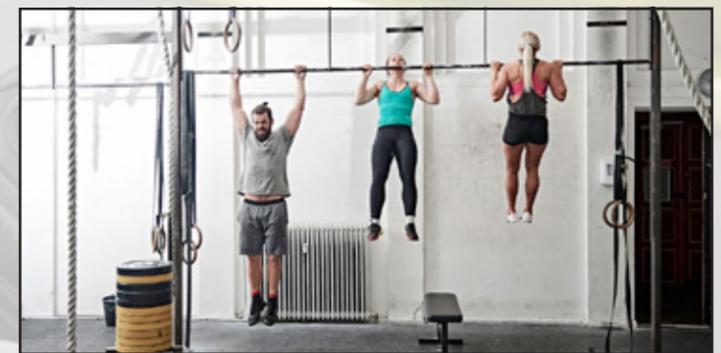
More Strength in Upper Back/Arms/Shoulders

Now that we’ve gotten you light on the bars, and you’ve got a sense for developing a strong core, it’s time to focus on what the upper body delivers to your motorcycle experience, so you can focus on those areas.

Whereas the core muscles control the body, these three muscle groups control the actual motorcycle. A dirt bike weighs 150-250 pounds, and a Harley Davidson motorcycle weighs anywhere from 500-1000 pounds. Getting these areas in check will help you do so, and in harmony with the core and abs, will keep you moving all day long.

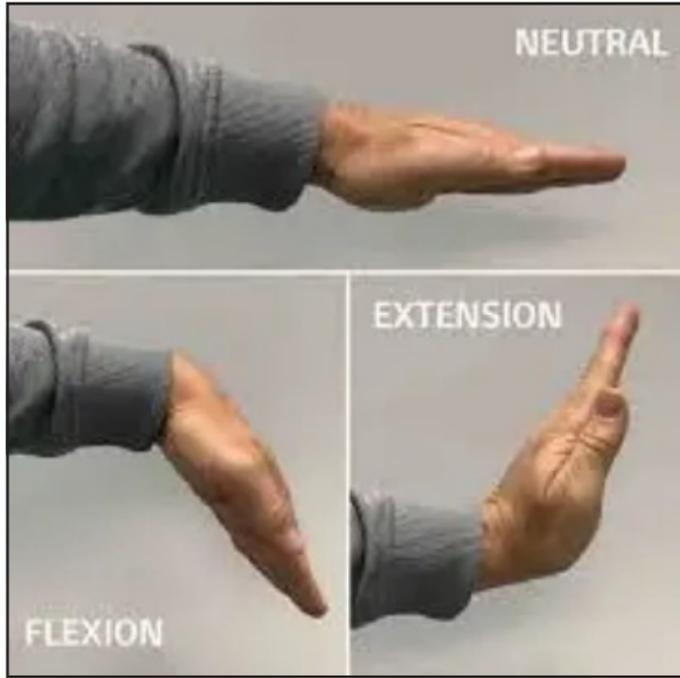
Recommended Exercises:

Upper Back: Pullups | Seated Row

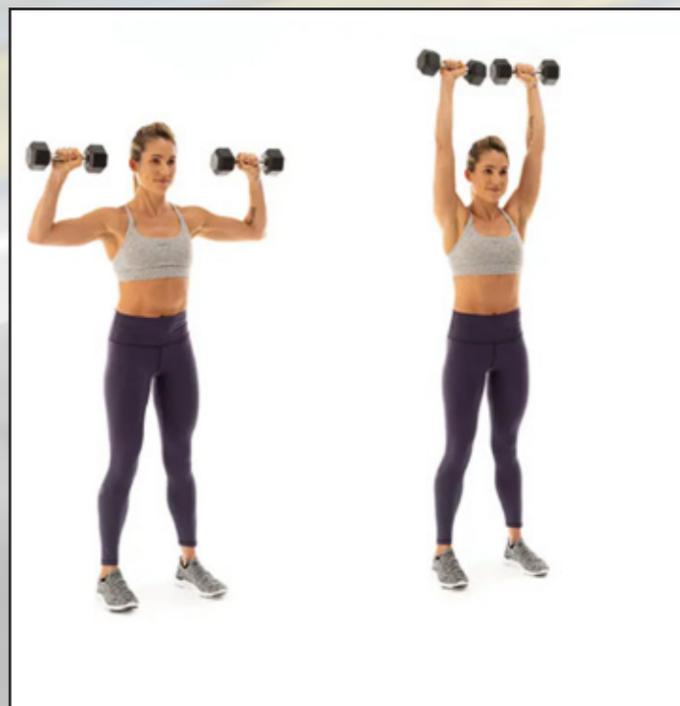


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Arms: Wrist Extensions | Pullups



Shoulders: Shoulder Presses | Lateral Raise



These workouts above will help to control you and the motorcycle under a load from heavy braking, accelerating, or cornering. The key is to align the strength of your upper body with the core for bike handling. Next, we will get into taking this alignment and making it even more maneuverable through added mobility.

Build Endurance

This topic has a lot to do with safety. Listen up. In a lot of competitive extreme sports, like snowboarding, skateboarding, motocross riding, road racing, etc, on a practice day, you should "never have a last run". You never call or deem a particular session as the last session. You are tired, and knowing it is the last run could result in pushing yourself. This is when the majority of accidents happen. You are fatigued, tired, and at the same time, pushing yourself.

Now, if you are taking a motorcycle road trip, maybe you aren't competitively racing your motorcycle, but the same principle applies. The last couple of hours of a long day are when the majority of accidents happen. Knowing when your stamina, therefore your strength, balance, and reflexes, are toast is a self-awareness that you want to learn. To combat fatigue and increase stamina, it's important to incorporate some endurance-focused routines into your workouts.

One of the top ways that motorcyclists train to build endurance, as stated in tip no. 1, is to ride bicycles. Mountain bikes or road bikes, doesn't particularly matter. There's a few reasons for this.



The muscles that are trained while riding bicycles hard are largely the same or very similar to the muscles utilized when riding a motorcycle. It's a lot of core, balance, legs, arms, and shoulders. It's also more gentle on the body than some other forms of endurance/strength training like CrossFit or running.



Another endurance exercise used by motorcyclists is the stair climber. Like cycling, it is gentler on the knees and ankles than running. Riding motorcycles hard is tough enough on the leg joints. No use wearing them out while training.

Stretch!



Looking through these exercises listed above, you might notice a few that you need to incorporate more into whatever routine you have. If you have no current routine, that's ok too. Just remember to start slow to avoid injury. Another great exercise discipline to incorporate with your motorcycle training to avoid injury is stretching.

One of the most overlooked parts of working out and exercise is a full range of motion through stretching. Stretching is the best way to keep mobility and agility in the areas of your body that are being worked when you ride a motorcycle. You maintain a relatively static posture on your motorcycle road trip.

This posture places stress on your back, shoulders, and hips, which can cause your body to get worn out without you really even noticing. Stretching is a way to counteract these static postures.

It's important to stretch the shoulders, back, and hips before and after a ride to make sure you maintain mobility and give your muscles a chance to go the other way. This also helps with muscle stability and allows you to apply the strength that you've developed from doing the preceding workout routines. The top guys in competitive motorcycle racing usually do some form of yoga or pilates.

Most importantly, listen to your body during your stretch routine. Be mindful of how it's feeling and where the pain spots are. Work on and breathe into those areas when doing stretches. Consistency is also key. We recommend daily stretching to keep the muscles and tendons loose and strong.

The spring riding season is right around the corner. Now is the perfect time to get busy and get yourself fit for the road so you'll be ready to ride when the temps start to rise!



VIRGINIA RIDER MAGAZINE

Source: <https://www.cajunhd.com/Dealer-Info/Blog/Get-Into-Motorcycle-Shape>



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**dropping
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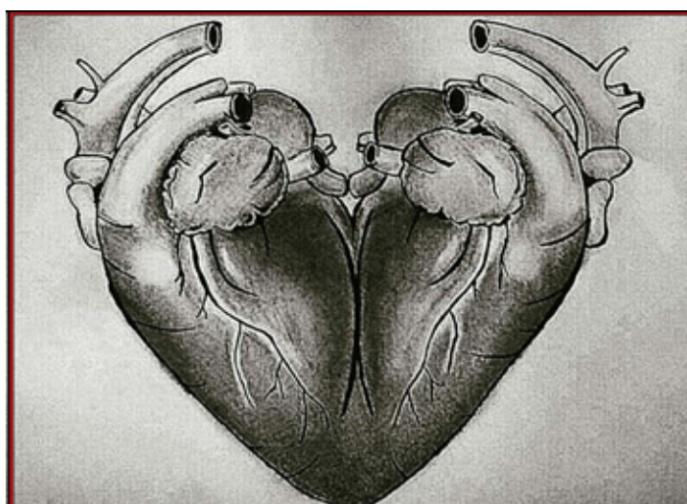
Cold temperatures
 can reduce the
 body's thirst
 sensation by up to

40%

VIRGINIA RIDER
 MAGAZINE

How much should you drink daily?
 According to the Institute of Medicine,
 13 cups for men, 9 cups for women.

**Remember, you can't
 reach for what's in front of
 you until you let go of what's
 behind you.**



Ever wonder why a drawing of a heart doesn't look like an actual human heart? The heart symbol we use today came from the idea of two human hearts being fused together as one, forming the iconic heart-shaped symbol we know as LOVE.

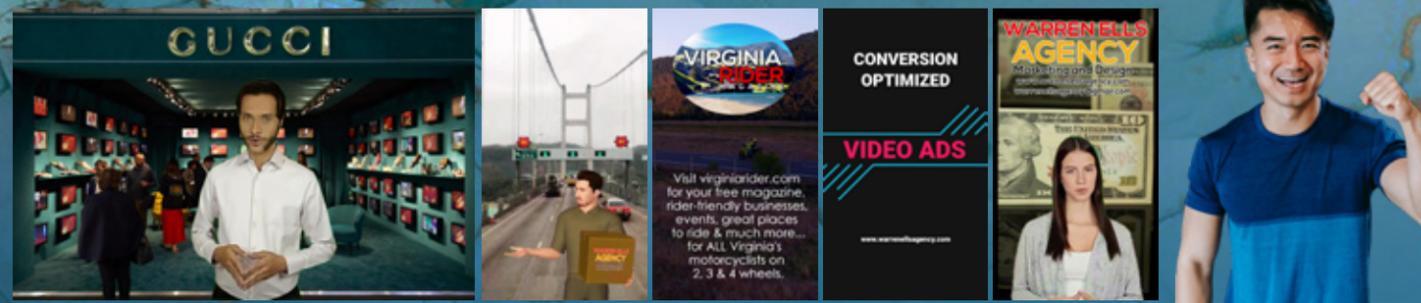
*Everything
 looks better
 from the
 inside of a
 motorcycle
 helmet.*

WEDESIGN

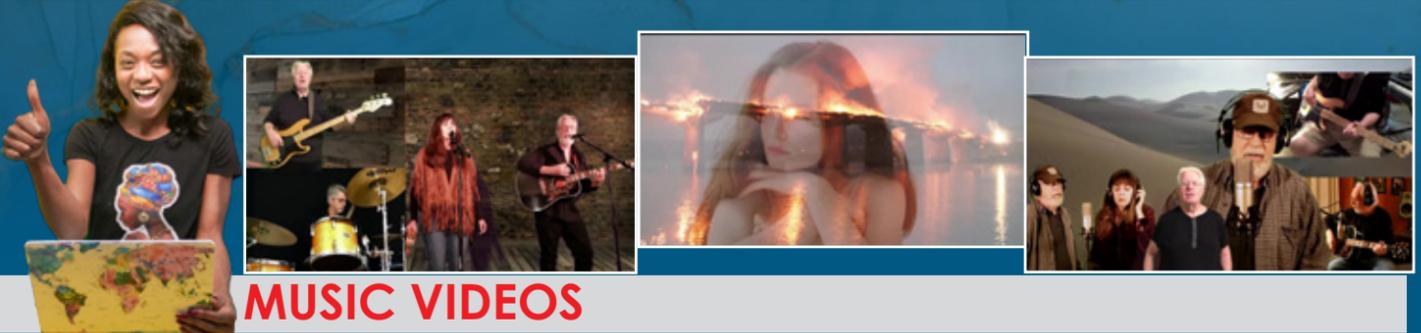
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