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Motorcycle Safety Tips

The Courtesy Quiz

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May is Motorcycle Awareness Month – a time when “sharing the road” becomes a real buzz phrase. We have all experienced sharing the road with drivers who are less than courteous. At one time or another, we have all probably also been that driver or rider who was less than courteous. We also all know that if road users were courteous and shared the road with each other, many crashes (and injuries and fatalities) would be avoided. If there is one thing I have learned in this world, it’s that the only person’s behavior you can really change is your own. So in the spirit of leading by example, let’s see how well we are doing at showing others how to be courteous. Challenge yourself with the “Courtesy Quiz.”

1. Letting others know my intentions:
 - a. I signal all my lane changes, merges, and turns - even in parking lots and pulling to and from the curb.
 - b. I usually give a blink or two before I move over.
 - c. Hey, it’s none of their business where I’m going!
2. Passing:
 - a. I keep well back before a pass and get well ahead of the vehicle before pulling back in front of them.
 - b. I’ll sometimes pass on a double yellow or with a turn coming up, but I do it really fast so I’m not in harm’s way.
 - c. If the car in front of me is going slow, I get close to their bumper to encourage them to speed up.
3. Traffic Signals:
 - a. When approaching a stop sign, I always come to a full stop.
 - b. I come to “rolling stops” at stop signs.
 - c. I slow down for stop signs, but if no one is coming, I ride on through.
4. Merging:

- a. I watch for other vehicles trying to merge and make space for them.
 - b. I'll let someone in, but only if they are signaling.
 - c. I adjust my speed to block other vehicles from merging in front of me.
5. "Communicating:"
- a. When I make a mistake, or accidentally cut someone off, I give the "oops – my bad" wave.
 - b. If someone else makes a mistake, I honk my horn to show my displeasure.
 - c. If a driver doesn't see me and cuts me off, I flip them the bird ('cuz that'll show 'em!)

Scoring: a = 2 pts, b = 1 pt, c = 0 pts

If you scored 0 – 4 points: Well, to put it bluntly – you are probably part of the problem. Riding in a discourteous manner not only increases your personal risk of a crash, but it encourages other road users to speak out against all bikers (and perhaps legislate against us).

If you scored 5 – 7 points: You are in solid middle ground. You put in efforts to share the road with others, but it sounds like sometimes you forget that there are other people out there.

If you scored 8 – 10 points: Great job! You provide a good example for other riders and other drivers to follow. Keep it up!

If you would like to become more a part of the solution, look through the quiz for clues about what you can do differently. Also, when you are out on the road, pay attention to what you and others are doing to share the road. You can learn both what TO do as well as what NOT to do. Let's get out there, enjoy the spring riding – and set a good example for ALL road users to be courteous and share the road.

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