

MOTORCYCLE GROUP RIDING



TIP: Always have a full tank of gas and arrive at least 15 minutes early for any group ride.

Arizona Motorcycle Operator Manual

AN MSF MANUAL

MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR MANUAL



ADOT
Motor Vehicle Division

99-0129 Rev. 06-23



With Supplementary Information
for Three-Wheel Motorcycles



MSF LICENSING
PROGRAMS

<https://apps.azdot.gov/files/mvd/mvd-forms-lib/99-0129.pdf>

Meet with the Group Before the Ride

Everyone should know the route, what the planned stops are and what to do if a rider gets separated from the group. Everyone should also know who the leader is and who the sweep is.

Leader

Sets the pace and knows the entire route—usually one of the most experienced riders in the group. The group leader is also responsible for keeping the pack from rubber banding. The leader should be in the left 1/3 of the lane.

TIP: When leading a group try to maintain a steady speed - use your cruise control when possible.

Sweep

Brings up the rear, watches out for riders in need of assistance and is responsible for protecting the group from behind. The sweep should also be one of the more seasoned riders in the group.

Hand Signals

Knowing and using the basic [motorcycling hand signals](#) is essential to creating a safe group riding environment.

**ESSENTIAL
MOTORCYCLE HAND
SIGNALS EVERY
RIDER SHOULD
KNOW**



TIP: Pass hand signals back to the riders behind you.

MOTORCYCLE HAND SIGNALS



Left Turn
Left arm straight out with palm facing down.



Right Turn
Bend elbow 90 degrees, then point clenched fist at the sky.



Stop
Bend elbow 90 degrees, keep palm open, point fingers down to road.



Speed Up
Extend arm swing palm in an upward direction.



Slow Down
Extend arm swing palm down toward the road.



Follow Me
Extend arm forward with palm facing outward.



**You Lead/
Come**
Pull up along side rider you want to lead, point to their bike, swing arm forward.



Road Hazard
If hazard is on left point with left finger. If on right point with right foot.



Single File
Extend left index finger, bend arm up to sky.



Double File
Extend left index and middle finger, bend arm up to sky.



Comfort Stop
Left arm out, make a fist and shake fist with short up and down movements.



Refreshment Stop
Left arm out, make a "thumbs up" gesture towards your mouth.



Turn Signal On
Alternate extending fingers and making fist.



Pull Off
Left arm up, index finger pointed, swing arm towards right. Usually emergency.



Cops Ahead
Patting top of helmet with left hand. Respect all laws when riding.



Fuel
Point to fuel tank using left index finger.

HAND SIGNALS

Getting passed or Passing Another Rider

TIP: No passing within the same lane.

Passing for a group of motorcycles requires an individual approach. On a two-lane highway, as each rider comes upon the vehicle the group is passing individually, each rider should evaluate the traffic from the opposite direction and pass only when safe. Do not blindly follow the rider ahead of you.

On a four-lane highway, once the lead rider starts to pass a vehicle the sweep rider may move out into the passing lane if clear to provide cover for the other motorcycles in the group to enter the lane. Each rider is still responsible for evaluating when it is safe to merge.

In either situation, once you have passed the vehicle, make sure you've left enough room behind you for the next motorcycle in your group.

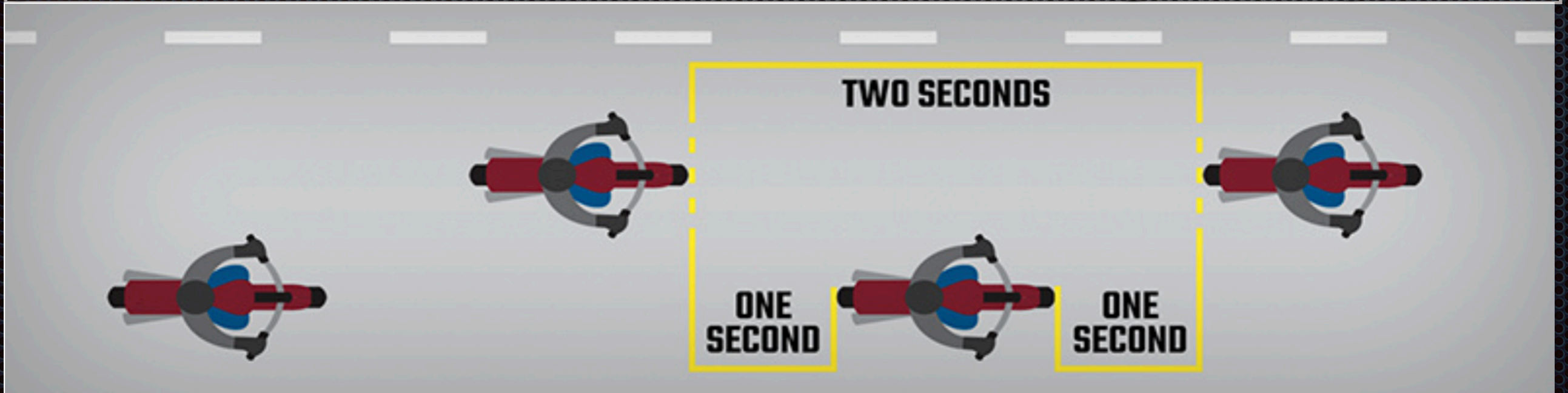
If a vehicle passes your group and ends up trying to slip in between riders, do not try to close them out. Give the vehicle enough space for everyone's safety.

TIP: On a two lane road, the leader should hold the passing (on coming lane) as long as it is safe to do so.

This allows the other riders in your group to know there is no on coming traffic.

Group Riding Etiquette

Proper staggered formation provides everyone with a clear space in front of them and to their side. With this approach, you have enough time to react to the rider directly ahead of you and enough space to the side if you must swerve around road debris, without affecting riders to your side.



TIP: Ride in a standard staggered formation unless signaled to do otherwise. Keep the formation as tight as you are comfortable with.

Lost or Missing Rider

The pre-ride meeting should establish what happens if someone goes missing or gets separated. The sweep rider is responsible for supporting any rider who drops from the pack.

TIP: Keep groups to a manageable size; ideally 5-7 riders.

Motorcycle Safety Foundation



QUICK TIPS: MSF's Guide to Group Riding

Motorcycling is primarily a solo activity, but for many, riding as a group – whether with friends on a Sunday morning ride or with an organized motorcycle rally – is the epitome of the motorcycling experience. Here are some tips to help ensure a fun and safe group ride:

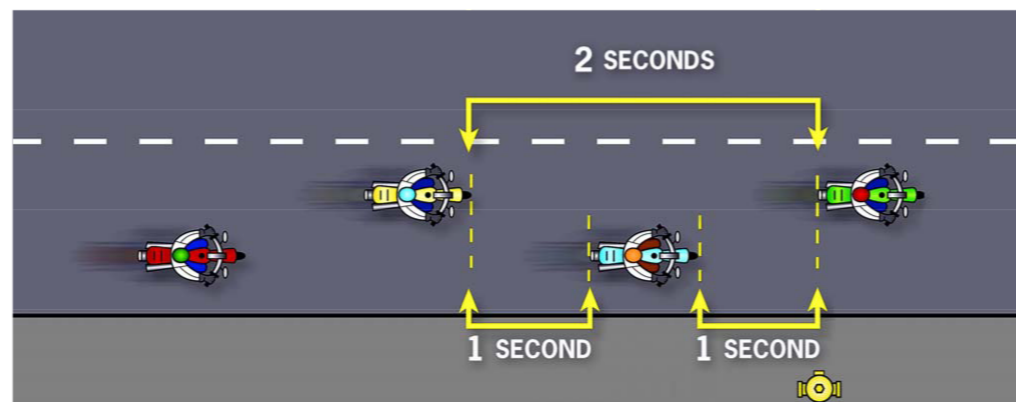
Arrive prepared. Arrive on time with a full gas tank.

Hold a riders' meeting. Discuss things like the route, rest and fuel stops, and hand signals (see diagrams on page 3). Assign a lead and sweep (tail) rider. Both should be experienced riders who are well-versed in group riding procedures. The leader should be aware of each rider's skill level before the ride and monitor the riders during the ride.

Keep the group to a manageable size, ideally five to seven riders. If necessary, break the group into smaller sub-groups, separated by a few seconds, each with a lead and sweep rider.

Ride prepared. At least one rider in each group should have a first-aid kit and full tool kit, and all riders should carry a cell phone, so the group is prepared for any problem that they might encounter.

Ride in formation. The staggered riding formation (see diagram below) allows a proper space cushion between motorcycles so that each rider has enough time and space to maneuver and to react to hazards. The leader rides in the left third of the lane, while the next rider stays at least one second behind in the right third of the lane; the rest of the group follows the same pattern. A single-file formation with a minimum 2-second following distance is preferred on a curvy road, under conditions of poor visibility or poor road surfaces, entering/leaving highways, or other situations where an increased space cushion or maneuvering room is needed.



<https://msf-usa.org/>

Motorcycle Safety Foundation

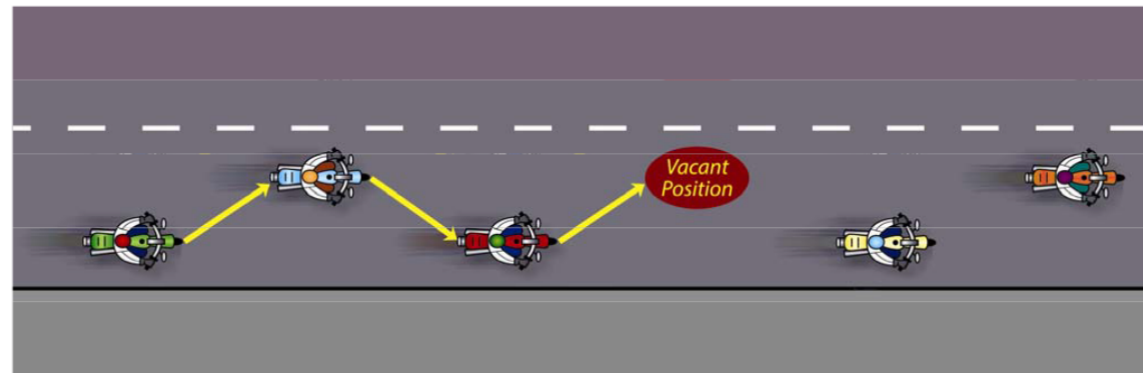
Avoid side-by-side formations, as they reduce the space cushion. If you suddenly needed to swerve to avoid a hazard, you would not have room to do so. You don't want handlebars to get entangled.

Periodically check the riders following using your rear view mirrors. If you see a rider falling behind, slow down so they may catch up. If all the riders in the group use this procedure, the group should be able to maintain a fairly steady speed without pressure to ride too fast to catch up.

If you're separated from the group, don't panic. Your group should have a pre-planned procedure in place to regroup. Don't break the law or ride beyond your skills to catch up.

For mechanical or medical problems, use a cell phone to call for assistance as the situation warrants.

If a rider leaves during the ride, the rest of the group should re-form the staggered formation by criss-crossing into the next vacant position. Although it would seem more efficient for the column directly behind the missing rider to move up, we do not recommend it because passing another rider within a lane can be risky.



TIP: Ride your own ride - trust your own judgement - only you are responsible for your own safety - do not take unnecessary risks to stay with the group.

Know Local Laws

Each state is unique when it comes to motorcycle laws—from helmet use to lane filtering (splitting). You're probably already aware of most of your own state's requirements. But if your group ride rolls into another state, you'll want to familiarize yourself with their [local rules](#).

AZ Lane Filtering

Lane Filtering in AZ is legal: SB1273 went into effect Sept 24, 2022. Motorcycles can only filter when the posted speed is 45 mph or less, the road must have two or more adjacent lanes in the same direction. Lane filtering can only be done between stopped vehicles and motorcycle speed must not exceed 15 mph. Arizona Revised Statutes 28-903 F

<https://www.abateofaz.org/chapters/southern-arizona>

ABATE of ARIZONA

American Brotherhood Aimed Toward Education



ALL BIKES, ALL RIDERS

Join the fight today at www.abateofaz.org

LANE FILTERING IS LEGAL

ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES 28-903 F

~~The operator of a two-wheeled motorcycle may overtake and pass another vehicle that is stopped in the same direction of travel and in the same lane as the operator and may operate the motorcycle between lanes of traffic if the movement may be made safely and if the operator operates the motorcycle on a street that both:~~

1. Is divided into at least two adjacent traffic lanes in the same direction of travel.
2. Has a speed limit that does not exceed forty-five (45) miles per hour and travels at a speed that does not exceed fifteen miles per hour.

IT'S LEGAL,

KAREN...



MOTORCYCLE LANE FILTERING IS LEGAL IN ARIZONA UNDER THESE CONDITIONS:

Riding on a roadway with two or more travel lanes going in the same direction.

The posted speed limit on the road is 45 mph or less.

The motorcycle is traveling no faster than 15 mph while riding between stopped vehicles.

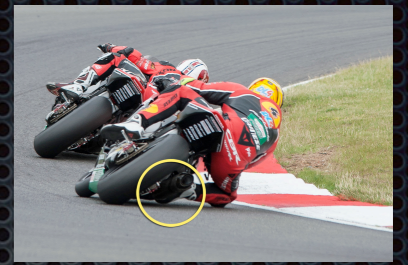
LANE FILTERING ON INTERSTATES AND FREEWAYS REMAINS ILLEGAL.

Make safe and smart decisions when operating a motorcycle or car.





Counter-steering



Deliberate counter-steering is essential for safe motorcycle riding

It works by applying pressure on the handlebars in the opposite direction, you wish to turn! This is NOT intuitive.

Consciously applying this counter steering force is the key to leaning further and more confidently in corners. Call it power steering for motorcycles. It builds confidence, knowing that a mere push on the inside handlebar is all it takes if you find yourself going wide in a turn.

Practice the technique very gently at first, until you get a feel for the effect your inputs have on the bike. You also have to become comfortable leaning the bike over further, which is key to your confidence level.

Try it on a curvy road at a relatively slow speed. Enter the curve wide and then push gently on the inside grip and you will be amazed at how the bike will lean over and carve a tighter radius toward the apex of the curve.

On marked roads there are posted speed limits and yellow signs with arrows that indicate the general shape of the turn and a suggested speed.

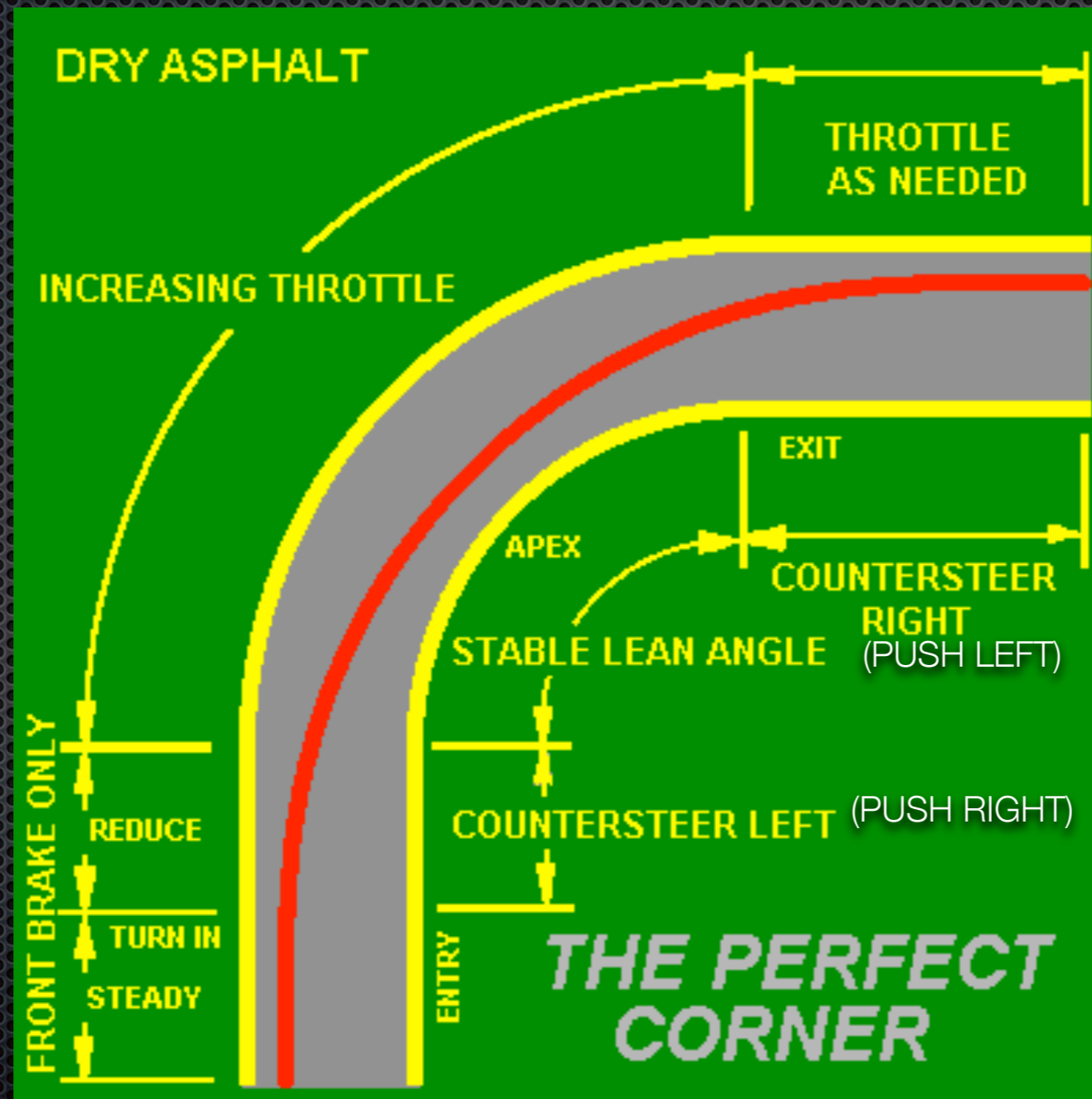
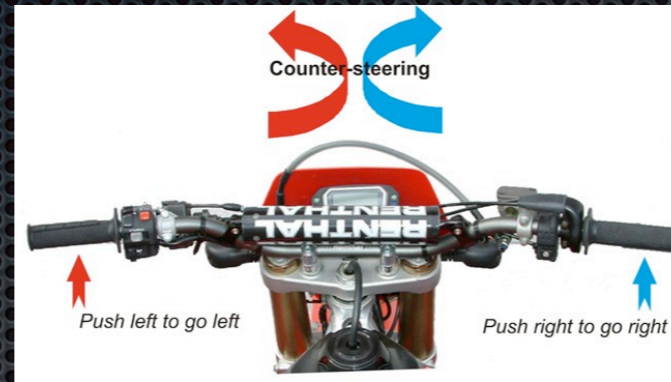
If there isn't a sign or suggested speed, it means no reduction from the posted speed limit is suggested.

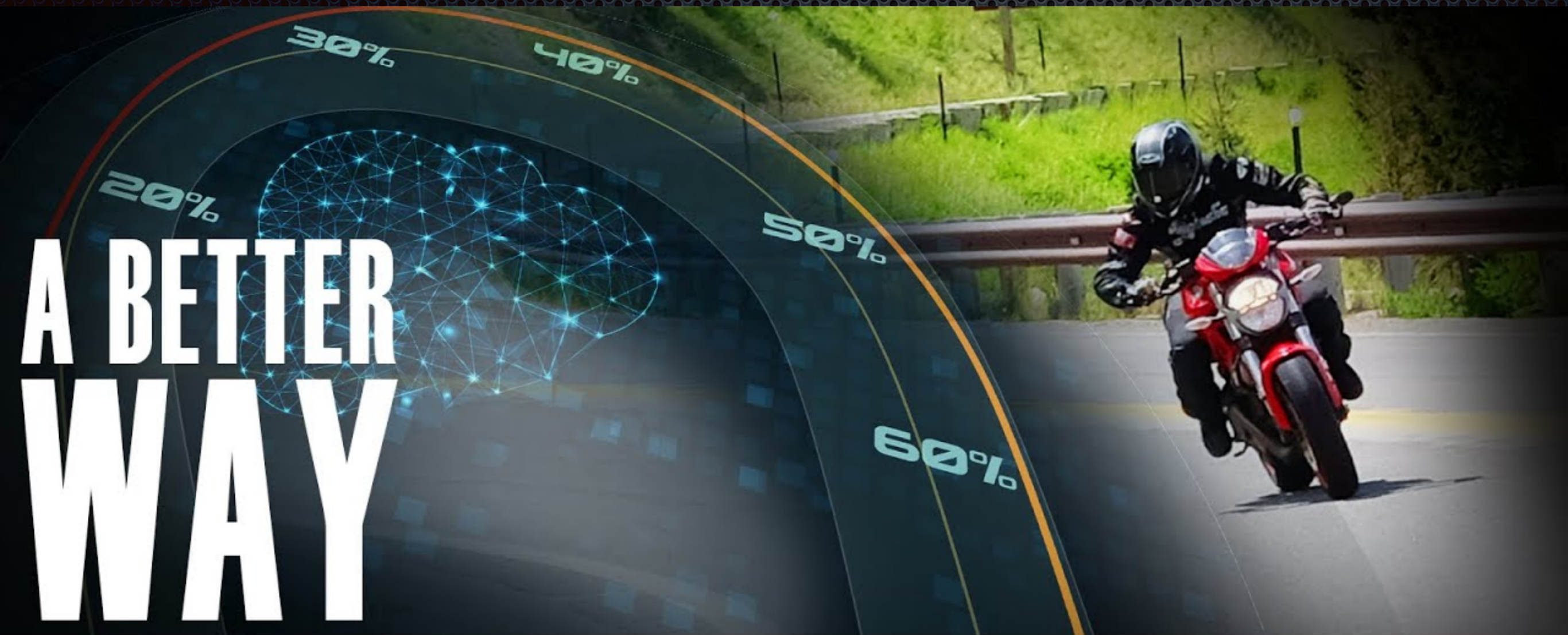
Curve speeds are calculated by civil engineers, based on road camber, curve radius and road conditions.

Some roads are marked more conservatively than others, but a given road is usually marked consistently, from curve to curve.

Just being able to take a curve at a posted speed should be your first step.

Counter Steering - Push left, go left. Push right, go right.





**A BETTER
WAY**



CORNERING

**DON'T GET THIS
WRONG**



SUMMARY

- ✦ Group riding is more difficult than riding alone. You do have responsibilities to the other riders.
- ✦ Everyone needs to take responsibility to be prepared for a group ride. The road captain and sweep are your guides not your guardian angels.
- ✦ Lane filtering is new to AZ - be informed even if you don't plan on utilizing this safety measure.
- ✦ Slow movement particularly in corners, parking lots etc. is one of the most difficult things to do well. (PRACTICE)