

How Well Do You “S.E.E.”?

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Safe and responsible riding is a goal most riders have so that they can live to ride another day. It is more than just good riding skills and a good attitude. Safe and responsible riding includes applying a strategy – thinking before acting, having a plan, and considering the consequences. It involves recognizing and managing risk as well. What strategy do you use manage risk?

The first step to manage risk includes becoming aware of potential risks. Then have a specific plan to reduce those risks and to increase your margin of safety. In other words, give yourself extra time and space around you to apply that strategy given your circumstances and level of skill.

A simple and powerful strategy for this is “S.E.E.” – Search, Evaluate, and Execute. This is a strategy to help you become aware of, and understand, your environment and surroundings constantly. Consider playing the “what if” game, devising different plans of action or evasive maneuvers before you might need them, and being ready to implement any one when necessary. It can be fun when traffic is unpredictable and helps to reduce wear and tear on your nerves. Let’s look at each part.

Search – Aggressively scan for potential factors and hazards to prevent them from building up to a crash. Check in front, behind, and on both sides of you. Don’t rely solely on your mirrors. Do a head check to see what might be in your “No Zone” or blind spot to minimize unpleasant surprises. Things to look for include, at a minimum, road and surface conditions, traffic control markings and devices, and other highway users.

Evaluate – Anticipate problems or possible hazards before they happen. Separate hazards before they grow into dangerous situations that might lead to a potential crash. Play the “what if” game. Consider your circumstances and skill level; figure out the time and space requirements you need to maintain an adequate margin of safety. Factors that affect your margin of safety include your capabilities and limitations, the capabilities and limitation of your motorcycle, and road/traffic conditions. In other words, be prepared to act.

Execute – Once you are prepared with a plan, put your plan into action when required through well developed maneuvering skills using three steps: 1) Adjust your speed, 2) Adjust your position, and 3) Communicate your intentions.

Have a strategy for safe and responsible riding. Practice it often. Practice S.E.E. no matter where you are or what you do. Be constantly aware of your situation and surroundings. S.E.E. is a strategy to recognize and manage risks, to help reduce those risks before they become too dangerous. It will help to make riding a motorcycle safer and more enjoyable. Practice as if your life depends on it, because it does. The more you practice, the better you will become. Ask yourself, “How well do you “S.E.E.”?
Ride safe!