

# Snippets

THIS MONTH I WILL BE TOUCHING ON SOME SNIPPETS of information that are either not enough for a complete article or are additions to past articles. They're mostly from comments or suggestions

from our readers that were something that could have also been included or considered. Some of this information may seem like common sense, but we don't consider it on a regular basis.

## Slippery Wet Stuff

THOUGH WE'VE DISCUSSED DEALING with wet conditions before, here are a few slippery areas noted by our readers that definitely should be in the back of your mind when riding. We may not often look at a car wash as a threat (unless you tried to ride through one), but it can develop into a hazard. Most car washes exit by the roadway and, though today's vehicle salons have drying stations or people wiping them down, there is still a lot of water that is carried with the car as it exits onto the road, likely including slippery cleaning solutions mixed in it. When you notice these wet areas by the local wash and go, be aware of possible traction loss and adjust your path of travel to avoid it.

Parking garages can also include opportunities to slip and slide. Keep in mind that except for the roof parking location, all the other levels are typically not exposed to rain. Plus, many garages don't sweep/wash the levels, so fluids such as oil, antifreeze, and grease that can drip from a vehicle have no means of being cleansed and can cause slippery locations that could wreak havoc with your traction. Use extreme caution, slower speeds, and be observant for possible areas of concern.

## Engine Start/Stop/Parking

HERE'S A COUPLE OF TIPS FOR THE BEST TIMES TO START and stop your engine combined with a little parking strategy. It's good practice to start your bike with the transmission in neutral, as well as disengaging the clutch (squeezing in the lever). This will eliminate any possibility of your bike

launching forward due to a misadjusted clutch, being in gear, or accidentally releasing the clutch when you're not ready while the bike is in gear. As for shutting down the engine, get in the habit of turning off the motor with the engine cutoff switch. This is a simple process since it is located by your right handgrip. By using the engine cutoff switch, both of your hands will remain on the handlebars. If you just use your ignition, you could be setting yourself up for an oops. If you ever slip with the engine running and in gear, now you're dealing with movement. And, with just one hand on the handlebar, it could result in damage — either to you or your bike, both poor options. By just turning the engine off with the switch, you remove a lot of possibilities that could cost you money. For the extra second it takes to turn the bike off via the engine cutoff switch before backing up, it could pay off with no potential embarrassing moments, which you know only happen when there are tons of people to witness them. If you have to readjust in the space, just restart the bike.

Turning the engine off before backing into a parking space is also a good thing to do. I've seen tons of folks just squeeze that clutch and walk their bikes backward into the spot for parking. Again, keep in mind the possible bad scenarios. What if, while backing up, you slip or lose your footing? With your loss of balance, you could release the clutch lever, sending you flying out into the roadway. Bad thing to do.

Also, when it comes to parking, always use gravity as your aide. I can't tell you how many times I've seen people pull in forward to a spot that is slightly downhill and then need their passenger or someone to help push them backward to leave. This can lend to other awkward risks or unsolicited comments from your pals standing around.

Sure, these snippets certainly seem like common sense, but they're easily overlooked. With complacency comes possible hazards, something no one wants to deal with. So always keep the simple things in mind along with the bigger risks. Continue educating yourself, never lose sight of those what-ifs, and keep sending in your comments and thoughts so they can be shared with others. **AIM**



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