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304.414.5691 or via
info@troylawwv.com

SAFETY WHITEPAPER

Mark Troy's "Tips for the Road"

Chapter 2: Rider Readiness

- **Dressing for Safety:**
 - Always wear a DOT-approved helmet (a helmet with a "DOT" sticker on the back, which indicates that it meets the minimum safety requirements of the U.S. Department of Transportation). Also keep in mind that full-face helmets offer far more protection to the rider than three-quarter helmets and half-helmets. It is also critical to ensure that if your helmet has a face shield, then the shield must be free of abrasions which can cause glare and obscured vision in direct sunlight and other light conditions.
 - If your helmet does not have an installed face shield, be sure to wear shatterproof eyewear. Tinted lenses may be used during daytime riding, but be sure to always have clear lenses available in case your ride extends longer than expected and you have need to travel at dusk or at night.
 - Cover your entire body in brightly colored, motorcycle rated leather or motorcycle specific materials with armor in contact areas. It is not uncommon for those wearing appropriate, protective clothing to walk away from seemingly-serious accidents with minor bruising and soreness, while crashes of the same magnitude cause lifelong injuries or death to those who ride unprotected.
 - Wear boots that are sturdy and supportive, with non-slip soles to keep you firmly planted when stopped on slick or uneven surfaces. Boots should also fully cover and protect your ankles and lower legs.





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- Always wear comfortable but protective gloves, as your hands are likely to be one of the first, if not the first, part of your body to impact the ground if you should be thrown from the bike. Be sure to wear gloves that are secure but not overly tight as overly tight gloves may cause muscle fatigue or cramping in the hands and adversely affect your ability to operate the bike's hand controls.
- As previously noted, always wear bright, protective clothing, preferably with reflective strips or decals. This could save your life given that the leading cause of motorcycle collisions with other vehicles is the other driver not seeing the motorcyclist.
- **Knowing/Employing Safe Riding Techniques:**
 - Never operate a bike when under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or when suffering from sleep deprivation.
 - Never head out on a bike with which you are not comfortable or which exceeds your skill level. Rider courses, which are offered through the Motorcycle Safety Foundation for all skill levels, are an excellent way to both refresh and build upon your riding skills.
 - Practice your riding skills before going onto Interstate highways or into heavy traffic. It is important that you feel comfortable operating your bike in rain, high winds and uneven surfaces before you encounter these conditions at high speed and/or on a heavily congested highway.
 - Know and obey the rules of the road.
 - Never attempt to pass in a curve or in a "no passing" zone.
 - Keep a proper distance between your bike and other vehicles with which you share the road. A two-second gap between your bike and the nearest vehicle is recommended for speeds of 40 mph or below, while a 3-4 second gap is suggested for higher speeds. All of these gaps should be increased by 1-2 seconds when riding at night or in the rain.





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- Maintain a position within your lane where you are most visible to other motorists. If you can't see the drivers of the vehicles around you, they can't see you. Be aware of blind spots that cars and trucks have, attempt to stay out of them, and don't be afraid to use your horn if another motorist does not see you.

If you are involved in an accident, it is likely you will need legal representation. Troy Law Firm focuses its practice on motorcycle accidents and the legal needs of riders. You can call me directly at (304) 546-2451 or contact our firm (304) 414-5691 and we will make sure that justice is served and that you are compensated fairly. We hope you don't need us, but if you do—we will be there for you.

