

Riding Tip of the Month



and

MAGAZINE

Braking News

Since the advent of front and rear wheel brakes, a debate has raged which brake should be applied first in a quick-stop situation. From a physical perspective, as brakes are applied, weight is transferred to the front wheel, reducing weight on the rear. With enough front brake, a "sticky" tire, a coarse roadway surface, and a short wheelbase, it is possible to lift the rear wheel off the ground, rendering the rear brake useless.

If the object is to stop as quickly as possible, both brakes should be applied at the same time. Reach and squeeze the front brake lever as you would for a normal stop, then continue to quickly squeeze the lever to the point just short of lockup. You can be a little more aggressive initially with the rear brake, but as weight is transferred to the front, smoothly reduce brake pedal pressure to prevent locking the rear wheel. By the way, a big, heavy cruiser with sticky tires can be stopped in a shorter distance than the latest, greatest sportbike, but only if you use the proper technique!

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