

Rider Skill Test – Motorcycle Rider Skill Test

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In August of 2009 the Motorcycle Safety Foundation introduced its newest version of a motorcycle rider skill test for state licensing agencies. The newest version is called Rider Skill Test (RST) and it was designed in collaboration with motor vehicle administrators and motorcycle safety experts throughout the U.S. to develop a new testing program to address the growing variety of motorcycle designs.

Like the previous Alt-MOST (alternative to the motorcycle operator skill test), the RST is an off-street test designed to assess rider skill as a prerequisite for motorcycle license or endorsement issuance. The RST adds testing for motorcycles with longer wheelbases and different turning radii and for three-wheel motorcycles, including those with sidecars. This is done with two separate range configurations – the RST-2W for motorcycles and the RST-3W for three-wheel motorcycles – both on the same 30-foot by 75-foot course, but with different layouts and test exercises.

The Alt. MOST and the RST are both products of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. Most states which previously used the Alt. MOST have or are converting to use the RST. Some states do not use either of these MSF developed tests but use a licensing test developed by the state. However, the tests are all similar in that they are (1) conducted off-street (2) at low speeds (3) emphasis clutch/throttle control and balance and (4) evaluate braking and swerving.

The RST is made up of four (4) evaluations plus engine stalling is scored during the entire test.

1. Cone weave and normal stop in a designated area
2. Right turn from a stop and left U-turn within a marked area
3. Quick stop – stop as fast as you safely can from a speed between 12 and 18 MPH
4. Obstacle swerve – swerve to avoid an obstacle from a speed between 12 and 18 MPH

Readers can access a pdf with complete RST instructions and evaluation diagrams including dimensions in the Rider Skills section of the SMARTER web site

Washington State has published a five-part series of 4-6 minute videos describing and showing each of the four RST evaluations plus a curve evaluation. The four RST evaluations plus the curve evaluation shown in this series makes up the five part evaluation used at the end of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation Basic RiderCourse. In this series of videos the evaluations shown and described and the reasons why the skill is important, tips for successful completion, common mistakes, exercise dimensions and examiner instructions are also included. Links to each of the five (5) videos can be found at:

<http://www.dol.wa.gov/driverslicense/mototesting.html#riding>

A pocket-sized practice guide booklet is available from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation which contains exercises that can be practiced in a parking lot. The exercises are designed to help develop skills needed to pass the motorcycle riding skills test at DMV to receive a motorcycle-operator license. The exercises are not designed to match a specific licensing test.

<https://store.msf-usa.org/Store/MoreDetails.aspx?pid=125>

There are also numerous YouTube videos describing the RTS and other versions of similar motorcycle licensing skill testing.

Here are two unofficial YouTube videos of the RST

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2y8TLCB91vA>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6X_Q4qn2Ec

Some states use the Alt. Most. A good example and a brief description of necessary preparation and requirements are included in a pdf from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. This includes diagrams of the Alt. MOST exercises.

<http://www.dmv.state.va.us/webdoc/pdf/dmv34.pdf>

The best way to learn the skills necessary to be safe on the road (and to pass your state's skill test) is to take a rider training course. To find a Motorcycle Safety Foundation course near you, go to:

<http://www.msf-usa.org/>

enter your zip code in the box under "Find a course Near You," hit "enter," scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on "Next Step."

“Wear all the Gear, Every time you Ride.”

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Skilled Motorcyclist Association – Responsible, Trained and Educated Riders, Inc.