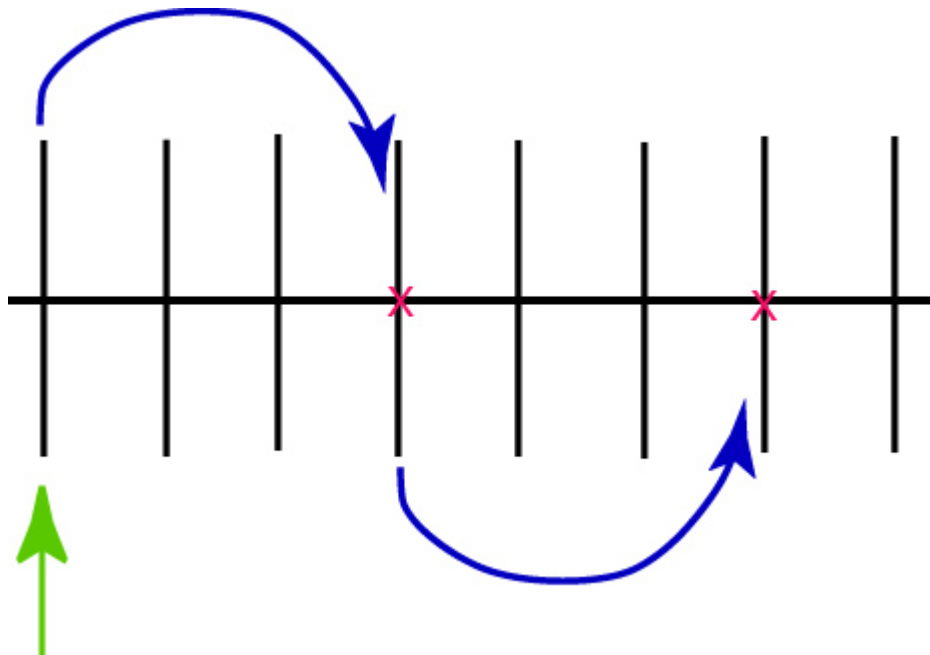




Following is a diagram of an exercise I have found to be extremely helpful in learning to get control of my bike during slow speed turns. In an empty parking lot find a row of parking lines and approach them (as shown in the lower left corner). At the end of a line make a HARD right turn and continue it until you are lined up with another line. Ride that line and at the end of it make a HARD left turn and continue this weaving back and forth (left/right) as often as you can until you can ride each SECOND line. The diagram shows riding each THIRD line which is what most people can do with a little practice.

It is not so much that you learn how far your bike can lean as it is that you learn to aggressively STEER (not counter-steer) at the beginning of each change of direction and what the bike feels like as you establish control of it during the resulting lean.

And, for those of you that like little 'aids' like small orange cones or half tennis balls to mark your desired course - I recommend that you NOT use them at all. They encourage too much attention to themselves as 'targets' - you try entirely too hard NOT to hit them if you get close to them, or too hard to get close to them if you are not very close, and in the process your attention is distracted from the real purpose of the practice. However, if you must use something like the cones to keep track of your objective course then I recommend that you NOT place them on the ends of the lines but rather in the middle of them (at the spots marked 'X') so that you are encouraged to target 'thru' the turn to where you actually want to end up - else you will find yourself always too wide (crossing the line.) [This is a secondary lesson. That is, using the cones at the start of the lines demonstrates target fixation problems. Using them in the middle of the lines demonstrates that you can USE target fixation to \*your\* advantage.]



When you first start doing this exercise don't be surprised that you can make the FOURTH line in one direction and not even that in the other direction. That is why you are practicing, right? To find out what your abilities are and improve them.



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Also, if you find yourself even modestly disoriented while doing this - STOP and recover your sense of equilibrium before continuing.

Finally, if you NEVER manage to be able to make the second line - so what? The objective is not to teach yourself how to make the tightest turns, it is to teach yourself how to get (establish) and maintain control of your bike in slow turns. As you learn your limits you can be satisfied with progress made (because you can see it) and either come back for more practice at another time or not. The bigger your bike is, the harder it will be to wrestle it into a second line alignment - of course. Again, that is input for you to consider, not a mandate that you make your bike behave like it's 300 pounds lighter than it actually is.