

# HOW TO PICK UP A MOTORCYCLE

By Rodd Johnson

**CAUTION:** Picking up a motorcycle can be dangerous and can cause serious injury if done incorrectly. Whenever possible, get help! You need to be thinking clearly, use common sense and be in good physical condition. Keep your body and back straight, lift with your legs. Maintain control of the motorcycle and never twist your body while lifting. Check the motorcycle for damage prior to riding.

## THE IDEAL SITUATION WOULD BE:

- Have the lifting technique demonstrated by a qualified professional.
- Practice with a qualified professional.
- Have the qualified professional evaluate and coach your lifting technique.

80% of picking up a motorcycle is mental: Work smarter, not harder. Think first—If this was a 300-pound refrigerator, would you think about it first? If it was an 800 pound refrigerator?

Assess Yourself: Spend a few minutes asking yourself questions: Are you able to pick up your motorcycle in a normal situation? Are you hurt? Do you want to pick up your motorcycle? Is it safe to pick up your motorcycle? You have the rest of your life to pick up your motorcycle, so take a few minutes to assess the situation.

Assess the Motorcycle: Turn it off using the engine cut-off or ignition switch. Turn off the fuel using the fuel supply valve. Spilled fuel is common, use caution (usually you need sparks or an ignition source to have a fire explosion).

If the motorcycle is on its right side, put the side stand down and put the motorcycle in gear. If the motorcycle is on its left side, you can not put the side stand down and can not put the motorcycle in gear. Make a mental note of these facts.

## TECHNIQUE I—FACING THE MOTORCYCLE—For medium and smaller motorcycles.

- Find the balance point of the two tires and the engine or engine guard.
- Turn handlebars to full-lock position with the front of the tire pointed skyward.
- Straddle the handlebar. With both hands on the handgrip and your back straight, lift carefully--keeping the handgrip close to your body. Use your leg muscles.
- Lower or set the motorcycle on its side stand and park the motorcycle safely.

## TECHNIQUE II—BACK TO THE MOTORCYCLE—Preferred method for any size.

- Turn handlebars to full-lock position with front of the tire pointed downward.
- Find the balance point of the two tires and the engine or engine guard.
- Squat down with your lower back/butt against motorcycle seat. Keep you back straight.
- With one hand, grasp the handgrip, (overhand or underhand) keeping your wrist straight.
- With second hand, grasp the motorcycle framework avoiding the hot exhaust system.
- Lift using your legs while pressing against the seat and use small steps to straighten the motorcycle.
- Lower or set the motorcycle on its side stand and park the motorcycle safely.