



Skills Worksheet

Eyes Forward & Looking Through Turn

- They take in much more than you realize
- Hands/Body/Bike follow eyes
- Don't fixate - eyes roam, back and forth
- Look where you want to go - not at the rock you want to miss!!
- Read terrain
- Pre-Anticipate!!

Balance/Body Position - Your bike is a tool for interacting with the terrain

- Every situation has a best position.
 - Down hilling - Attack position!
 - Head up - your equilibrium is affected with your head down
 - Weight centered over wheels
 - Pedals at 9 and 3
 - Knees and elbows bent - ready to absorb terrain
 - Stand on pedals - don't sit on seat
 - Flat back - lower center of gravity
 - Move fore and aft depending on steepness
- Climbing
 - Move forward on saddle as steepness increases
 - Weight centered over wheels
 - Elbows in
 - Pressure on seat to enhance traction
 - Keep pressure on bars to keep front wheel from lifting
 - Stand up when traction allows - move rear end back for more traction
- Flat/Fast Sections
 - Lower upper body to be more aerodynamic
 - Move rear back on seat for more power
 - Keep back flat

Pedaling

- Try to pedal circles instead of mashing with quads only
- Think of it as trying to scrape mud off shoes - engage hamstring and calves
- 75-100 revolutions per minute is optimal

Braking

- Use brakes in right places - "Safe Braking Zones"
- Front brake is most powerful, use it wisely = 70% of braking power
- Brake before turn or obstacle
- Body position in relation to braking, same position as dropping off curb
- Down steep hills - feather front and try not to skid back
- Adjust center of gravity off back

Shifting

- There is always a right gear for the speed you are going
- Momentum is your friend, use it to climb hills, shift as you slow down
- Don't be late with front derailleur, chain suck, failed shift
- Pre-anticipate shift, you must be looking ahead to prepare for shifting
- When approaching a hill, judge what gear you can ride it in, shift as speed decreases
- When transitioning to a down hill, shift front gears first to tension chain (keeps it from falling off)
- Don't worry about shift indicators, keep a mental note of gear position or look at gear

Obstacles/Bunnyhopping

- Evaluate speed
- Look ahead for safe landing/exit
- Timing is everything
- Bunnyhop -
 - Preload arms/legs/suspension prior to object to hop
 - Preload - push body and bike into ground
 - Unload the preload by pulling up with the arms and legs
- Waterbar
 - Square off when cambered or wet (make a T) try not to hit it at an angle
 - Unweight front wheel by pulling back just before
 - Move body slightly forward and pull up with legs when rear wheel approaches
 - Can just roll over without lifting wheels off ground
- Prejumping (Advanced skill)
 - Use body to shift weight back by pulling up on front
 - Split second later pull body forward to lift rear

Sand

- High pedaling cadence - shift into easier gear when entering
- Let front wheel float - don't try to steer
- Keep pedaling
- Don't fight the bike

Climbing

- Momentum is your friend! Use it to climb rollers
- Relax upper body
- Elbows in to pull on bars
- Move forward on saddle for more power and balanced weight
- Anticipate how long/hard you can go to top
- Consistent pressure on the pedals
- Shift mainly with rear gears - micro adjustments
- Balance important at slow speeds
- Don't ease up when grade decreases, shift and carry momentum to next incline
- Let breath flow naturally - don't force it
- Get out of the saddle on lesser/shorter inclines for more power, if traction allows
- Pedaling circles - kick your booty, throw knees toward bars

Descending

- Attack position
- Elbows out, chin up, pedals at 9 and 3
- Eyes roaming up the trail and back - look further as speed increases
- Move back on saddle according to speed/incline
- Choose a smooth line - Pre-anticipate
- Body position - change center of gravity to suit situation

- Descending is a constant shift of the center of gravity
- Cornering
 - Outside-inside-outside as a rule of thumb - look for exit
 - Think of wheels as a set of skis or snowboard carving turns
 - Brake before turns, using front and rear together
 - Can use rear in turn to bring rear end around
 - Don't use front brake in the middle of a turn!**
 - Looking for exit will square off shoulders in direction you want to go (just like skiing)

Switch back turn down hill

- Outside of trail to set-up
- Apex of turn, look over shoulder to exit as you slightly lean into turn and let go of most brakes
- Switch back execution usually fails because 1, you did not set up outside to inside and 2, did not look to exit

Switch back turn up hill

- Set up outside to inside
- At apex, get on the gas, as you go, slightly lean shoulder in and look to exit

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