

Parking Lot Exercises
to develop
Bicycle Handling
Proficiency



NYS 4-H Bicycle Safety Education Program

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Basic bicycle handling skills should be practiced in a parking lot where there is no risk of coming in contact with vehicular traffic. The following exercises are adaptations of instructions given to police officers during their training to become police cyclists. These techniques are basic for all riders to learn and are fun to practice.

1) Serpentine and Offset Serpentine

Equipment: Approximately 11 cones for serpentine, 21 for the offset, and 4 for start and finish gates

Performance objective: Student will successfully negotiate the offset course with cones set at the 6' dimensions

Purpose: This drill increases one's handling ability in turning and balance.

Instruction:

- u Begin with the simple serpentine configuration.
- u Direct rider to enter the course and follow the path that involves going around the cones as outlined in the diagram.
- u Tell rider to look ahead and not at the cones they're trying to go around.
- u When they have accomplished the task at 6' intervals, reduce the interval to 5 feet or less.

As confidence develops, rearrange the cones to the offset formation. Be sure riders are using low gears and using their rear brakes to gain some resistance as they pedal in order to keep their balance at slow speeds.

5) "M" Drill

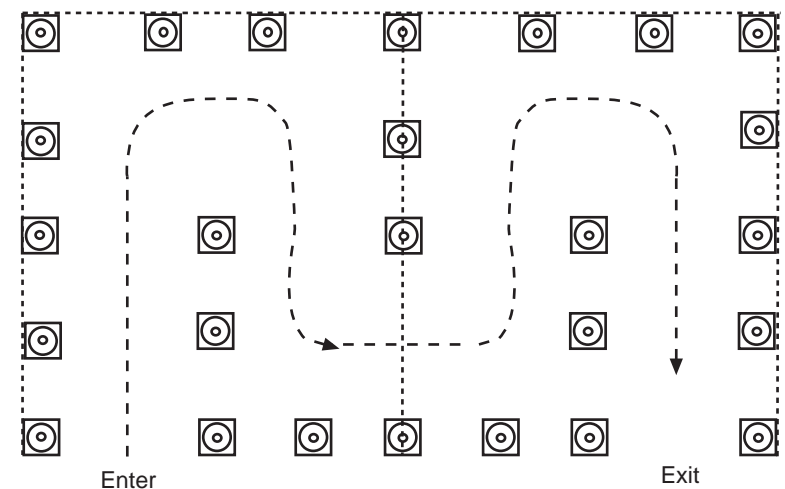
Equipment: 28 cones, level parking lot

Performance objective: Student will demonstrate the ability to balance and maneuver the bike at slow speeds in an area with limited space without displacing any cones.

Purpose: To build confidence in cyclist's ability to maneuver and control bike in confined areas.

Instruction:

- u Use two parking places as a guide in placement of cones.
- u Have cyclists look ahead to the area they want to go. If they look down at the cones, those are the cones they usually displace. A cyclist should not be able to complete this drill with a lot of speed.
- u As confidence develops, decrease the interval between the cones. Students may also try the drill by entering from the exit area.



**Distances set for 1 foot square base cones.*

2) Slow Speed Balance

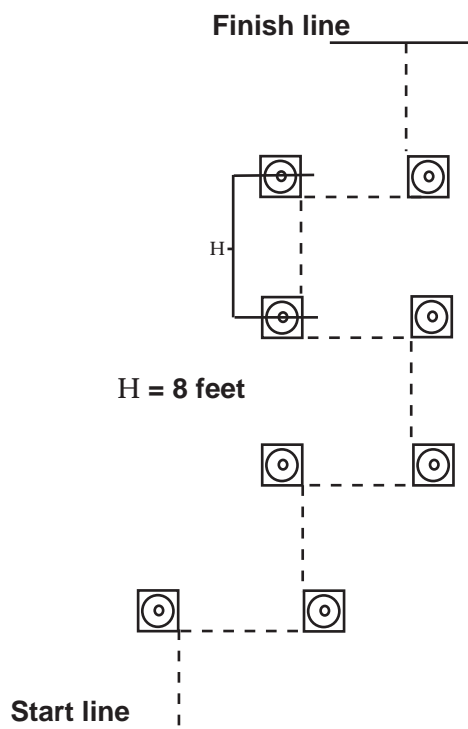
Equipment: 8 cones, level parking lot

Performance Objective: Student will slowly maneuver through the series of traffic cones.

Purpose: This drill increases confidence and balancing ability at slow speed.

Instruction:

- u Set cones in a pattern that requires 90 degree turns with 8 feet between cones.
- u Participant slowly pedals to the first cone, comes to a complete stop, then turns 90 degrees toward the next cone.
- u They should get as close as possible without touching the cones. Pedals should be at 3 and 9.



3) Slow Speed Box

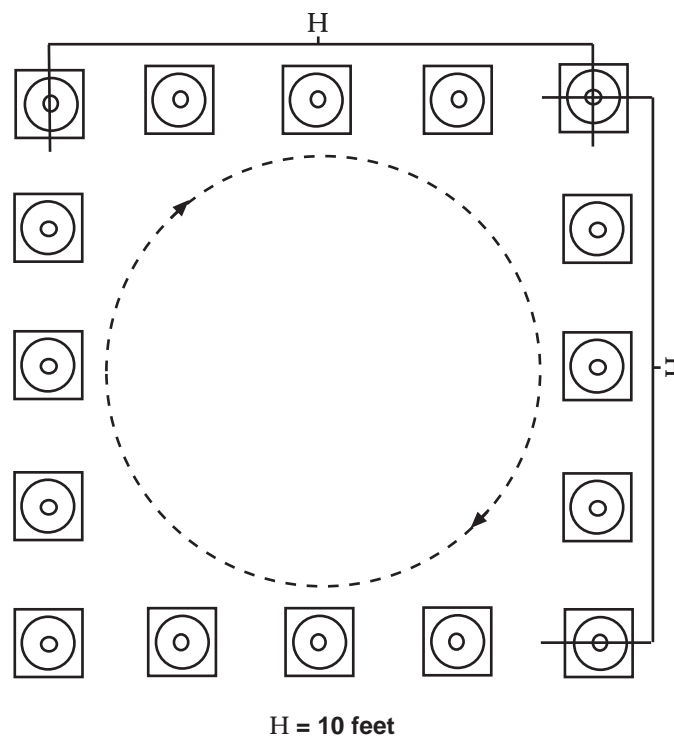
Equipment: 4 cones for corners, 4 cones for mid-markers and 8 cones for fillers

Performance: Student will complete 3 circles of the 10' box without touching a foot down or the cones.

Purpose: This drill develops proficiency in bicycle handling in tight quarters.

Instruction:

- u Student should enter the box and attempt to make a complete circle.
- u Look ahead, use low gearing, brake with rear brake.
- u Put two or three riders in box at same time when confidence is developed.



**Distances set for 1 foot square base cones.*

4) Rock Dodge

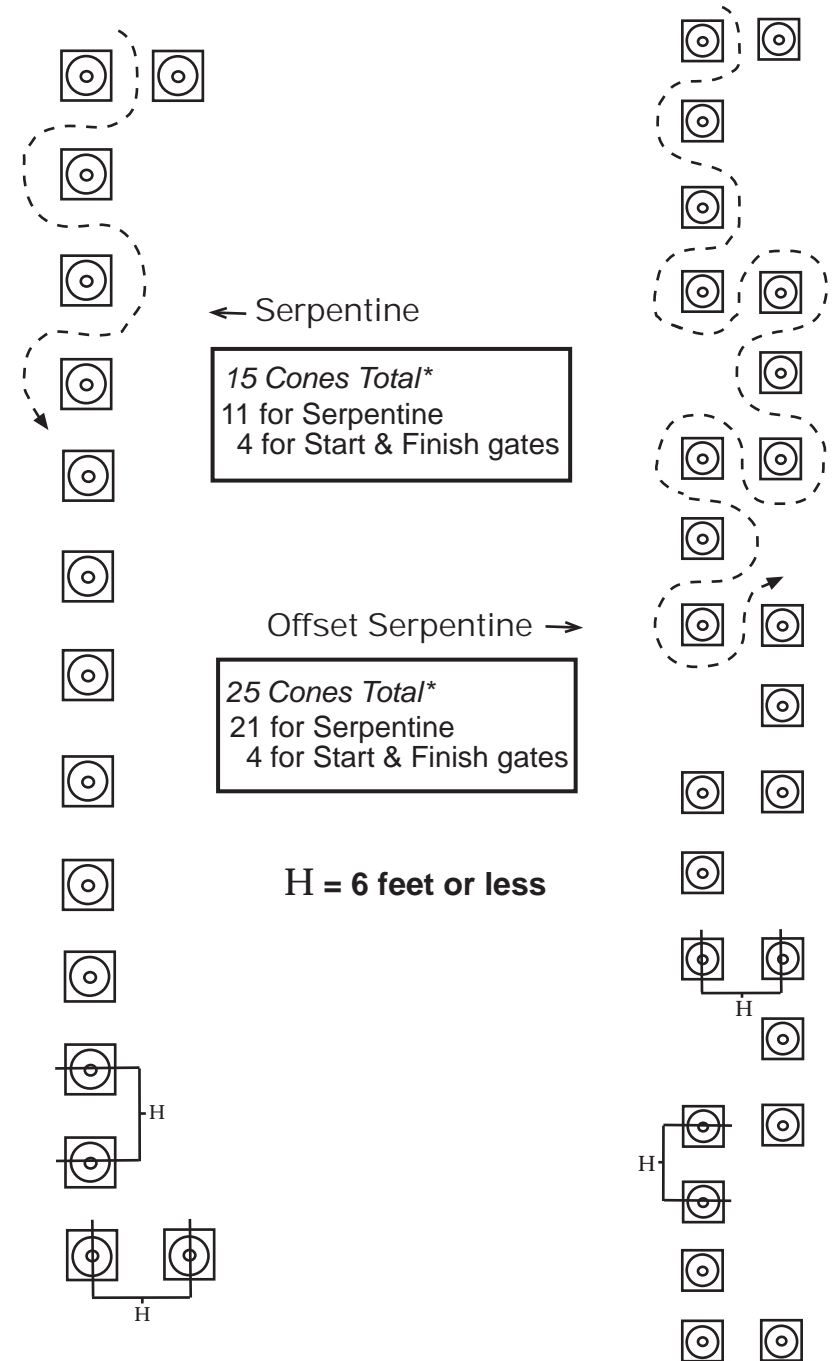
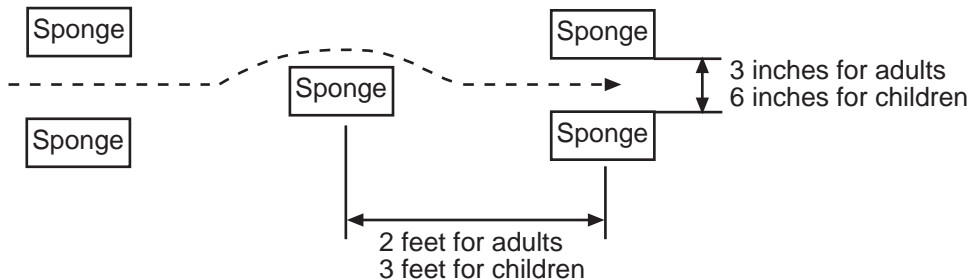
Equipment: wet sponges or tennis balls that have been cut in half.

Performance objective: Student will avoid the sponge obstacle with minimal sideways swerving.

Purpose: To teach cyclists how to avoid hazards in the roadway while riding without swerving into traffic.

Instruction:

- u Have the cyclist ride straight toward the object at a comfortable speed (not too slow). Ride straight to the object until you are very close.
- u Just before you get to it, turn the handlebars quickly so the front wheel goes around it, then quickly move the handlebars straight again.
- u This quick movement will take you around the obstacle and keep you out of the flow of traffic.



*Distances set for 1 foot square base cones.