

COVER STORY

ABCs of bike stunts

For some, a bike is the source of an adrenaline rush that cars can just not be. So it's not difficult to find people who like roaming around on a bike, and it is equally easy difficult to find someone who has watched Mission Impossible and pictured themselves doing those amazing tricks. And thanks to constant media exposure, more and more people are getting drawn to the idea of bike stunts.

What exactly is a bike stunt?

Bike stunts refer to activities involving acrobatic manoeuvring of the motorcycle and sometimes the rider. This requires balance, skills, techniques, and most of all, the determination to do so given that it is quite difficult and often dangerous.

What do you need?

Obviously, your first course of action is getting a bike.

"Theoretically you can perform a stunt with any bike; doesn't matter what model or how powerful it is. Stunts are about skills and balance, and once you understand the

balancing act, you can do it with any bike. But, it's easier and better to do it with bikes that have more power, since certain moves require certain pressure and engine power," said Alex Peresa Joy, a representative of Haunt Ryderz, the oldest bike stunt group in Bangladesh, starting way back in 2007.

The most important equipment that you will need is safety gear. Always wear a helmet and shoes. Gloves and knee pads are also recommended. Safety jacket and glasses are also suggested, to be thorough. Falling off is very common when you are starting out,

and even when you are experienced, so compromising on your safety is an absolute no.

Do you need to modify your bike?

As a matter of fact, you should make at least some minor modifications if you plan on doing stunts. Regular performers usually remove the default handle and bumper and upgrade to new ones that are designed to assist and protect them during stunts. Headlights, meters, and tail lamps are often removed to protect them from damages as there are at constant risk of impact with the ground. Additional bumpers are added to protect the engine as well

as the rider.

What are the basic moves?

There are countless moves to carry out once you start doing stunts. However, in Bangladesh, riders have been able to perform about 25 different moves. The more complicated moves require more powerful and modified bikes, which are not yet available in Bangladesh. But you can always try out the easier, yet popular moves like burnouts, donuts, rolling wheelies, stoppies, circle, Christ, switch back Christ, etc.

What is the point?

If you enjoy pure adrenaline rush, then this is the sport for you. Besides, you can always learn the moves because they require skills, and it will develop you as a rider.

"Everyone who rides a bike is a biker, but not everyone is a rider. Stunt performers are certainly better drivers," professed Alex, who's actively taken part in several bike stunt events. "When I first started, I thought everyone can ride on two wheels. What if I do it on one?" he added with a smile, as he pointed out that it's more than just a sport, but rather, a lifestyle.

Find your community

There have been more and more groups emerging and growing, who host and perform bike stunts. If you are a beginner, it's a good idea to reach out to them since they can teach you a lot. Besides, there's always the question of safety, and if you are part of a community, it's less risky. The biggest group on Facebook (in Bangladesh) is Haunt Ryderz. Members of this community meet up once a week to perform, and there are annual events promoting road safety, where thousands of people come to see them. More importantly, they are welcoming and willing to help out newcomers.

Disclaimer: The Daily Star and Star Lifestyle does not promote unsafe motorcycle riding practises on public roads. Trying these tricks could lead to serious injury, or even death. All stunts are performed by experts, and should not be tried at home without consulting a trained professional.

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro
Photo: Haunt Ryderz

