

Snowbike Tips for Beginners

We like taking people new to snow biking out for a day of adventure. We've made this cheat sheet and figure it's worth sharing.

Please Note: *This list presumes some experience operating a motorcycle. If you are not accustomed to using a hand clutch and hand throttle, please find a buddy and a nice open field free of hazards!*

1. When you stop, don't try to put down your feet – at least not in the powder!
2. If you are slowing down due to deep snow, immediately try to get yourself pointing downhill.
3. If you are coming to a planned stop in snow, try to get facing somewhat downhill so it is easy to get going again.
4. When your bike falls over, get in a good position so you can lift with your legs. Avoid jerky movements. If you are tired, wait for somebody to help you.
5. If you are about to get stuck you need to either get going, or stop your track from digging in super deep. The difference between slightly stuck and REALLY stuck happens in about 2 seconds.
6. When you do get stuck, work to get yourself unstuck with minimal energy expenditure. Slow and steady is better than fast and sweaty.
 - If you have a radio, let others know that you are stuck.
 - Already tired? Eat a snack and have some water. Size things up and make a plan.
 - Take off your helmet and your backpack.
 - Get your shovel out sooner than later.
 - Bikes can be spun rather easily when they are on their sides.
 - Stomp down the snow under your bike, under your ski, and in the direction that you plan to ride out.
 - Jump on the front ski to get it as low as possible. This also helps to pop the track up a bit and make it more level.
 - If you are not that great with the clutch yet, consider letting a more experienced person work the throttle while you pull on the ski.
 - The Bottom Line - Don't get too tired from getting unstuck as it will make for a short day for everybody. Being fatigued also puts you at greater risk of injury.
7. Watch for buried obstacles and don't trust them. They could easily be barely covered stumps or rocks and it can really hurt when you hit them.
8. If you need to cross a creek draw, lean back and hammer the gas.
9. Manage the chickens in your head. Frustrated? Try smiling a big grin while you ride – it really helps.
10. Do not go off on your own little adventure. It may be quite difficult to find you again, and you may get into some terrain that is beyond your skill level.
11. If you get separated from the group, stop where you are and use your radio. Others can circle back to find you.

Have fun, and be sure to ask questions from more experienced riders.

There is a lot of snow biking Kung Fu that can be learned, and experienced riders are typically excited to share their techniques and insights.