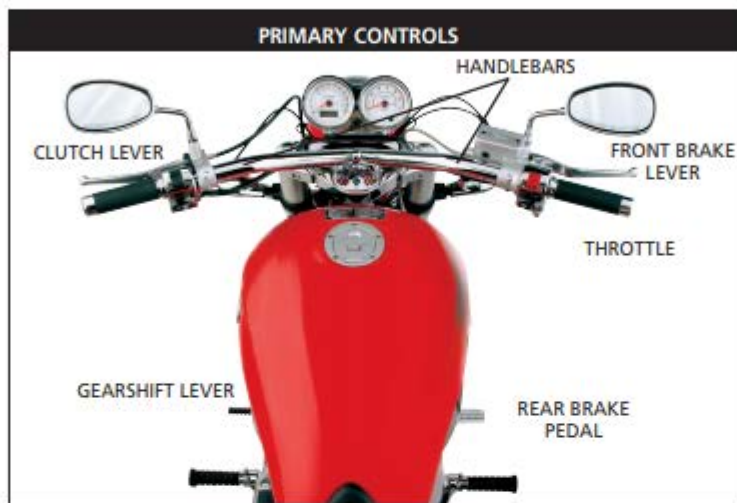


SECTION 3. CONTROLS, INDICATORS AND EQUIPMENT

Introduction: Hands and feet are used to operate and control a motorcycle. You must know the location and operation of the primary controls and be smooth and precise when using them. The controls and equipment described here are for motorcycles with a gasoline-powered engine and a manual transmission. (Some motorcycles have an electric motor and/or automatic transmission.)

PRIMARY CONTROLS

There are six primary controls. You should know the location and function of each control. You will practice using these on the range.



Handlebars: Used to control direction of the motorcycle. There is a handgrip on each end.

Throttle: The right handgrip, which rotates to control engine speed. To increase engine speed, twist it toward you (*roll on*). To decrease engine speed, twist it away from you (*roll off*). The throttle springs back to the idle position when released.

Clutch Lever: In front of the left handgrip. It is operated with the fingers of the left hand. The clutch mechanism connects power from the engine to the rear wheel. The lever is squeezed in to disconnect and eased out to connect. When the clutch lever is squeezed in, there is no engine power going to the rear wheel. Scooters and some motorcycles do not have a clutch lever because they have an automatic transmission.

Gearshift Lever: On the left side of the motorcycle in front of the left footrest. It is operated with the left foot. Lift up firmly and release to go to a higher gear; press down firmly and release to go to a lower gear. It shifts one gear with each lift or press, and only needs to move up or down an inch or so. When released, it returns to its center position for the next shift. Most motorcycles have five or six gears with 1st gear at the bottom. Neutral is between 1st and 2nd gear and is selected by either a half lift from 1st gear or a half press from 2nd gear. Most scooters and some motorcycles do not have a gearshift lever because they have an automatic transmission.

Front Brake Lever: In front of the right handgrip and operated with the fingers of the right hand. Squeeze it in to operate. It is used a bit differently than the clutch lever as it doesn't reach the handgrip, and the amount of squeeze must be adjusted for effective braking. While learning to ride, keep your fingers wrapped around the handgrip for throttle control and so you can learn to reach-and-squeeze the front brake lever when needed.

