



BMX SKILLS CURRICULUM

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BMX RIDING





BMX SKILLS CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION

CLINIC OVERVIEW

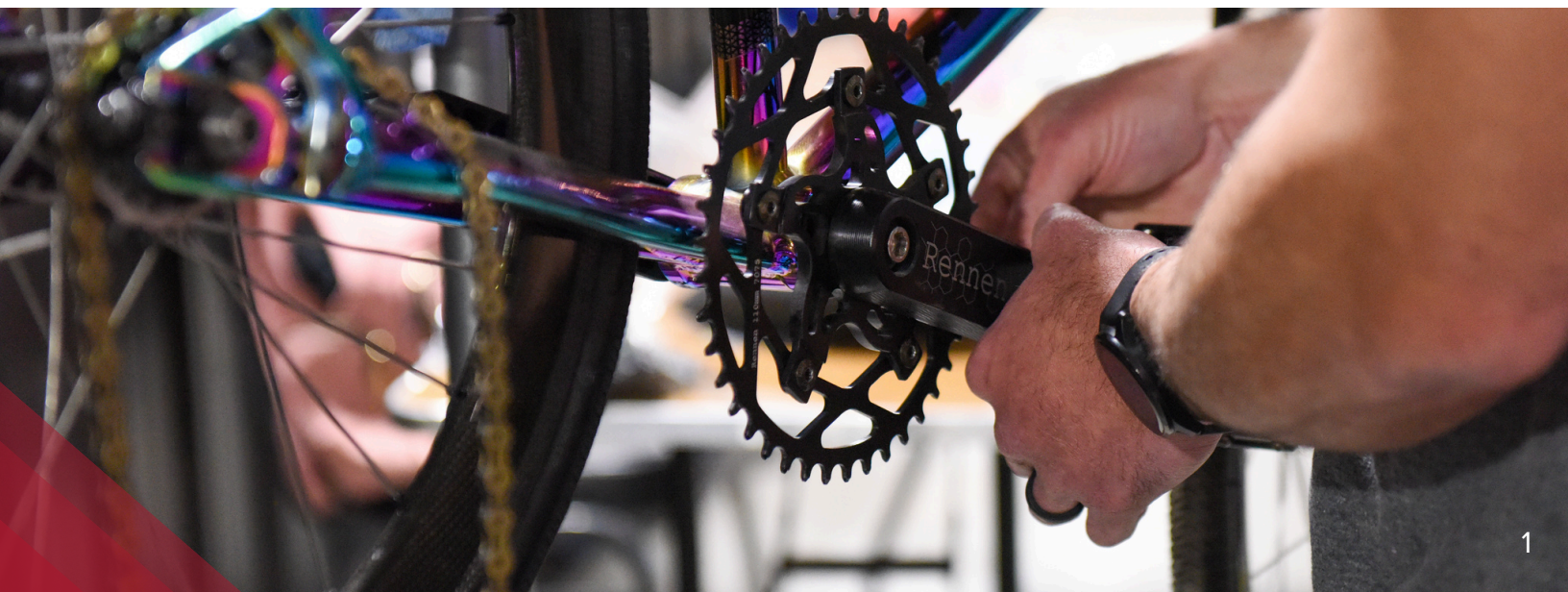
Thank you for hosting this 2-hour BMX skills clinic. This clinic is designed to introduce new and intermediate riders to essential BMX techniques and race knowledge, all within a fun, safe, and supportive environment.

As a coach/instructor, you will guide riders through key focus areas such as body position, vision, braking, race tactics, and skill application on a mini course. Your role is to foster an encouraging atmosphere where participants can confidently develop their skills and gain practical insights to apply on the track. The clinic structure is designed to keep the group engaged while building their knowledge progressively, ensuring that every rider leaves feeling more confident and prepared for their next track session.

Throughout the clinic, please keep in mind that each rider progresses at their own pace. Offering individualized support, maintaining clear communication, and creating an inclusive environment will ensure that everyone has a positive learning experience.

INTRODUCTIONS, SETTING EXPECTATIONS, AND A QUICK BIKE CHECK (15 MIN)

1. Start by welcoming everyone to the clinic! Introduce yourself and the other coaches, and then ask each rider to share their name, how long they've been riding or racing, and what they're hoping to learn today. This helps everyone feel comfortable and gets the group talking.
2. Set the stage for what's ahead. Let the riders know what skills they'll be working on today and what to expect throughout the clinic. Keep it light and exciting - this is about having fun and improving!
3. Complete a bike check. Go over the basics: tire pressure, brakes, chain, and headset. Make sure everyone's bike is in good shape so that everyone focus on riding safely and confidently.





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SCHEDULE & PREPARATION

TIME	FOCUS AREA	DESCRIPTION
15 min	Introductions, Expectations & Bike Check	Group intros, gear check (helmet, gloves, bike safety), and setting goals.
25 min	Body Position	Teaching neutral vs. attack position, manualing basics, pump track posture.
15 min	Vision	Spotting landings, corner entry/exit, and gate vision.
15 min	Braking	Rear brake modulation, controlled stopping, foot-down stops.
15 min	Race Tactics	Building confidence in the starting gate, lane choice, energy management.
20 min	Skills Course	Apply skills on a small lap with berms, rollers, and a jump zone.
15 min	Recap & Q&A	Discuss learnings, questions, and thank participants.

CLINIC PREPARATION

Location: BMX track or a hard-packed dirt lot with rollers, berms, and jumps.

Coaches: 1 coach per 6-8 riders.

Stations:

- Station 1: Body Position
- Station 2: Vision
- Station 3: Braking

Materials: Cones, mini-hurdles, pump track rollers, gate simulator (if available), and an Emergency Action Plan (EAP).



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BODY POSITION

BODY POSITION (25 MIN)

Instructor: Introduce the foundational body positions crucial for BMX riding. Emphasize how a centered weight, active arms, and bent knees provide stability and control.

- Activity Description: Begin by having riders stand next to their bikes. Demonstrate the tall stance (relaxed, upright) and the attack stance (lower, ready). Explain how the attack stance provides a lower center of gravity for better balance and control. Have riders practice shifting between these stances while stationary, focusing on keeping their weight centered, elbows and arms naturally out, and knees slightly bent.

Instructor: Explain the core principles of performing a manual. Highlight the balance point and how to control the bike using body weight and subtle adjustments.

- Activity Description: Start with riders on a flat, safe surface. Have them practice lifting the front wheel slightly by shifting their weight back and pulling gently on the handlebars. Emphasize finding the balance point where the front wheel is off the ground but the rider still feels in control using their body weight and subtle handlebar adjustments.

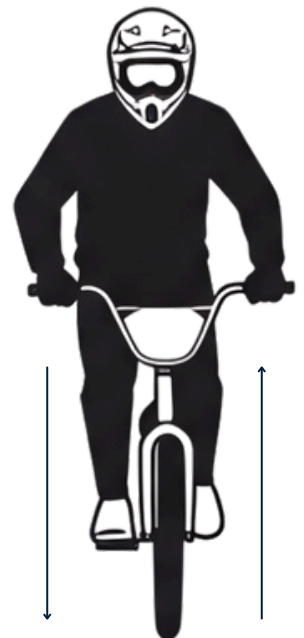
Instructor: Describe the pumping technique used on rollers. Stress the importance of pushing down on the transitions to generate speed and maintain momentum.

- Activity Description: Find a small roller or gentle undulation. Explain how to use their body weight to pump (pushing down on the upward slope or crest of the roller and allowing the bike to rise on the downward slope). Emphasize timing this push and pull with the slope to generate forward momentum without excessive pedaling. Have riders practice riding over the rollers, focusing on maintaining a consistent pump posture with bent knees and active arms acting as suspension.

DRILLS

Drill #1: Set up a cone slalom course and instruct riders to weave through the cones. Encourage them to practice manuals between the cones to integrate balance and bike control.

Drill #2: Utilize a roller section to focus on the pumping technique and maintaining good riding posture. Guide riders to actively push and pull with their body to navigate the rollers smoothly.





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VISION

VISION (15 MIN)

Instructor: Talk about the importance of visual focus for safe and efficient riding. Explain how looking where you want to go directly influences where the bike will go.

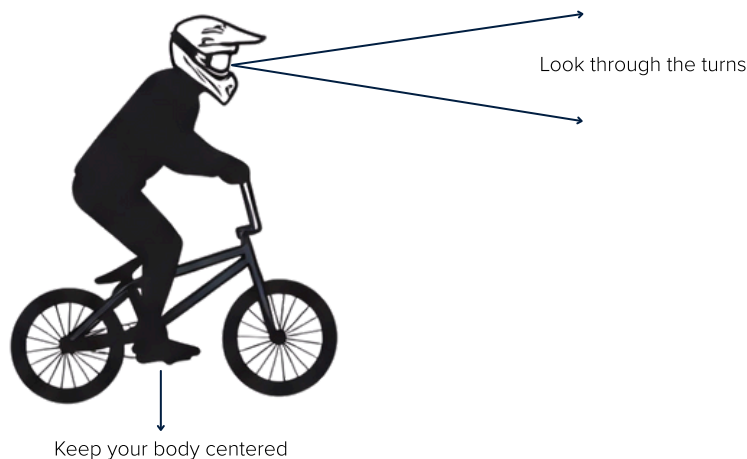
- Activity Description: Gather the riders and explain that where they look is where the bike tends to go. Use analogies like driving a car or throwing a ball. Have them practice looking ahead while walking their bikes, focusing on a specific point in the distance rather than right in front of their wheel. Emphasize scanning the entire path, including potential obstacles.

Instructor: Teach riders to anticipate jumps and landings. Explain that early spotting allows for better preparation and smoother transitions.

- Activity Description: When approaching small rollers or obstacles, instruct riders to look beyond the feature to where they expect to land. Explain that this early visual cue allows them to adjust their body position and maintain balance. Have the group ride a lap of the track at speed while anticipating each section.

Instructor: Highlight the importance of peripheral vision in BMX. Explain how it helps riders maintain situational awareness and avoid collisions.

- Activity Description: Explain that while their primary focus is ahead, they also need to be aware of what's happening around them. Use the analogy of having "side vision." Have riders practice riding in a controlled area while trying to be aware of cones or other riders to their sides without turning their heads directly. This helps develop a wider field of awareness for safety.



DRILLS

Drill #1: Have the riders practice gate starts. Make sure they are focusing on the first corner instead of the gate itself. This helps them initiate the turn more smoothly and confidently. Have 2-3 riders line up at a time so the group can practice riding with other people.

Drill #2: Set up a cone course to simulate a corner. Instruct riders to practice looking through the corner and toward their exit line. This helps them steer more accurately and maintain momentum.



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BRAKING

BRAKING (15 MIN)

Instructor: Emphasize that controlled braking is key to safe riding. Explain how modulating the rear brake allows for gradual speed adjustments.

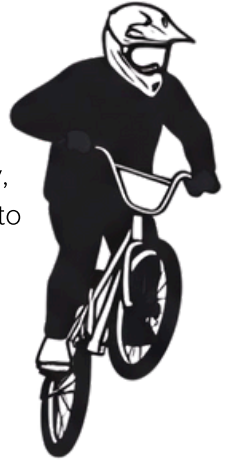
- Activity Description: On a flat, safe surface, have riders practice gently squeezing and releasing the rear brake lever. Emphasize using smooth, controlled pressure rather than grabbing the brake suddenly. Explain that the goal is to slow down gradually and predictably, maintaining balance while doing so. Have them practice rolling at a slow speed and coming to a controlled stop using only the rear brake.

Instructor: Teach riders to anticipate braking needs. Explain that braking before a feature allows for smoother control and a better approach.

- Activity Description: Set up a small cone or marker to represent a feature. Have riders approach the cone at a moderate speed and practice braking smoothly before they reach it. Explain that this allows them to control their speed and set up properly for the feature, rather than trying to brake while navigating it, which can lead to instability.

Instructor: Introduce the concept of foot-down stops for non-race situations. This skill helps riders develop control and bike handling in tight spaces.

- Activity Description: In a safe, open area, have riders practice riding slowly in tight circles. Instruct them on how to use their feet as temporary stabilizers if they begin to lose balance at very low speeds or when stopping in a tight turn. Emphasize gently putting a foot down for support while maintaining some control of the bike with the other foot and handlebars. This is for practice and not recommended during a race.



DRILLS

Drill #1: Set up a cone lane and have riders practice controlled skids and stops before reaching the cones. This drill helps riders develop braking precision and control.

Drill #2 Encourage riders to complete a few laps on the pump track without using the brakes. This drill focuses on flow, momentum, and body weight control.



Practice controlled stopping, focus on using the rear brake





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RACE TACTICS

RACE TACTICS (15 MIN)

Instructor: Emphasize the importance of quick reflexes and a strong start. Explain the concept of being "ready" and anticipating the gate drop.

- *Activity Description: If a gate starter is available, practice several gate starts. Focus on the "ready" position (balanced, cranks level, looking ahead). Work on reacting quickly to the gate drop with a powerful first few pedal strokes while maintaining a centered position on the bike. If a gate isn't available, practice reacting to a verbal "Go!" signal.*

Instructor: Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of inside and outside lines. Help riders understand how to choose the most advantageous line based on track conditions and competition.

- *Activity Description: Use a whiteboard or visual aid to illustrate a track with inside and outside lines in the first turn. Discuss scenarios where each line might be advantageous (ex: shorter distance on the inside, more momentum on the outside). Have riders walk the lines and discuss potential passing opportunities and challenges associated with each.*

Instructor: Teach safe and effective passing techniques. Emphasize the importance of clean passing and respecting other riders' space.

- *Activity Description: Set up a safe passing zone on a straightaway or in a wide corner. Have riders practice overtaking each other, emphasizing smooth, controlled moves. Demonstrate and explain the inside pass and the cutback maneuver. Stress the importance of giving the rider being passed enough space and avoiding aggressive or unsafe moves.*

Instructor: Discuss the importance of energy management during a race. Explain the difference between sprinting zones and recovery zones.

- *Activity Description: Using a diagram of a track, identify potential sprinting zones (straights, out of corners) and recovery zones (cruising sections, before turns). Explain how to maximize effort in sprint zones and conserve energy in recovery zones. Discuss the concept of pacing and avoiding going "all out" for the entire lap. Simulate race scenarios and ask riders when they would sprint and when they would recover.*

Instructor: Discuss the importance of proper nutrition and hydration before and during a race, especially in hot conditions. Explain how staying fueled and hydrated can improve performance and prevent fatigue.





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SKILLS COURES

SKILLS COURSE (20 MIN)

Instructor: Set up a small lap course that incorporates various elements like a starting gate, rhythm section, bermed corners, and an optional jump. Emphasize the application of all previously taught skills (body position, vision, braking, and race tactics). Focus on smooth and controlled riding technique over speed. Reinforce the importance of good posture and clean execution.

- Focus: Encourage riders to apply the techniques learned so far (body position, vision, braking, and race tactics). Emphasize smooth flow, good posture, and clean execution. Speed is not the priority - TECHNIQUE IS!

1 CORNERING

Look ahead through the corner and lean into the turn while maintaining balance and momentum.



2 STARTING HILL

Maintain a low center of gravity, pedal smoothly, and accelerate explosively as you reach the bottom of the hill.

3 RHYTHM SECTION

Pump through the transitions, timing your body movements to gain speed and maintain flow.





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WRAP-UP & ADDITIONAL NOTES

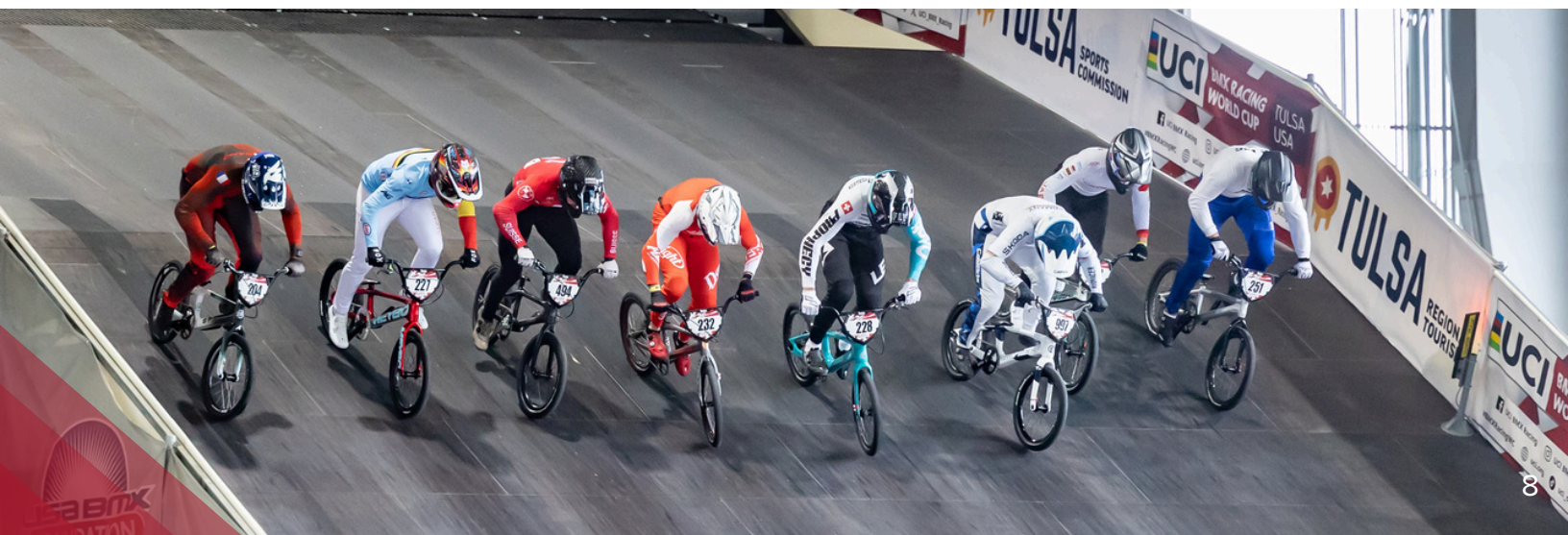
WRAP-UP (15 MIN)

To wrap up the clinic, gather the riders together for a group discussion, encouraging them to share their favorite part of the day or the most important skill they feel they learned. Offer positive reinforcement for their efforts and encourage them to continue practicing these skills on their own or in future clinics. Finally, be sure to thank all the participants, their parents, and any staff involved for their time and effort in making the clinic a success.

ENCOURAGE THE GROUP TO TRY RACING WITH USA BMX

USA BMX offers racing for all ages. They can find out how to get started by visiting <https://www.usabmx.com>.

USA BMX proudly supports the USA BMX Racing National Team (based in Tulsa, OK) and grew from the American Bicycle Association (founded late 1970s) which merged with the National Bicycle League in 2011. Together as USA BMX and BMX Canada, they continue to grow the sport across North America. Visit the website for more info.





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