

Only a CBT stands between
Ginge and the open road.
Look out Bristol!



Pass Master

The new test may have caused carnage in test centres up and down the land, but even our Ginge managed to get through it...



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PART 1 - THE CBT

It's 8am on a cold, dark and very drizzly February morning in Bristol and I haven't felt this nervous in years. No, it's too early for dogging, but I am about to change my life forever. I'm here to do my CBT and transform myself from tin box driver to skilled biker. Well, that's the plan.

I've come to ACE Motorcycle Training, next to Fowlers Motorcycles, right in the heart of Bristol, and I'm not alone. There are five other concerned looking faces staring back at me for a glimmer of confidence I can't display.

The day kicks off with a briefing on motorcycle clothing; essentially it's a guide of 'what not to wear' and the reasons why. Thankfully, I'd just raided Fowlers for a stack of Weise gear and an HJC helmet, so at least I started on the right foot.

We head to the training ground for the first part of our CBT course. It's a bleak and barren patch of Tarmac, and the weather isn't helping the gloom. But the drizzle can't distract me from the line of bikes and the excitement is knotting my guts like I'd had a bad ruby the night before. The instruction kicks off with control familiarisation and getting the bike off the centre stand. I was in danger of giving myself 'roids until Damien (my instructor) showed me that it's more technique than effort. After a few minutes pushing the bike around to get a feel for it we're ready to start up. This is it, there's no going back now.

The Honda CG125 starts and settles into a nice calm beat. I wish I could say the same for my heart, and now my tongue has managed to stick itself to the roof of my mouth. I get myself together then it's feet up and off we go. The sensation is brilliant, liberating even, and I soon work out that it's better to be brave and give the bike a little more gas. It makes the bike more stable, and I'm soon rattling through the gears.

The instructors are great, and help me get my head back into gear after I catch a bad dose of stage fright when ▶

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