



The Wheelie School

Cost: £165 (£150 for groups of four or more)

Duration: One day

Location: Long Marston Airfield, Warks;
Finmere Airfield, Bucks

Contact: 01280 815157, iwanttowheelie.co.uk

Tester: Simon Weir

Bike's head of publishing has been riding for 19 years. He's a RoSPA qualified advanced riding instructor, so he should be sensible.

What is it?

A day on an airstrip, learning to wheelie a specially adapted Yamaha Fazer 600. The bikes have soft suspension and high bars to help you learn, plus clever anti-flip devices.

What's the process?

This is a weight-transfer wheelie, so it's all about the throttle. All the action happens in first gear. You're talked through each stage: first accelerating through cones; then rolling the throttle shut and opening it hard to lift the front; then finally feathering the throttle to keep the wheel in the air for 60m.

Sounds a bit scary...

That's the challenge: overcoming the fear that you'll flip the bike. You won't.



Is it difficult?

Not on the school's bikes, but learning to launch consistently is tricky and getting sufficiently sensitive throttle control to do the distance is genuinely challenging.

At the end of the day, I tried it on my long-term test Bandit 1250. I thought I'd pretty much got the hang of things, but it was like going back to square one. The technique works but you have to learn how to apply it to each bike.

It's just a laugh, isn't it?

Absolutely. The most fun day on two wheels imaginable, especially if you go with a bunch of mates. But it really does put your throttle control under the microscope, which is a good thing. Also, you do that many U-turns that your turning technique comes out much improved.

Top tip

Don't cover the front brake. That's the first thing you'll grab if you panic and if the wheel's in the air, you'll lock it. When it comes down again, bad things will happen.

Value: ★★★★★

Rating: ★★★★★