



road rules for motorcycle riders

Motorcycle riders must adhere to the same road rules as other road users. Make sure you keep up to date with the different road rules, signs and markings by reading the latest edition of the Road Users' Handbook available on the MVR website at www.mvr.nt.gov.au.

There are also some specific road rules that apply to motorcycle riders in the Northern Territory. Motorcycle specific road rules are covered in this section.

Riding on a motorcycle

The motorcycle rider must:

- sit astride the rider's seat facing forwards
- wear a correctly fitted and securely fastened approved motorcycle helmet
- keep at least one hand on the handlebars
- keep both feet on the foot pegs (designed for use by the rider), when the motorcycle is moving.

Helmets

Northern Territory law states that riders and passengers must wear an approved motorcycle helmet when riding.

Keeping left

Generally, when a vehicle travels on a single-lane road, the vehicle must drive as near as practicable to the far left side of the road. However, due to the importance of lane positioning for rider safety, this rule does not apply to motorcycles, which can legally use any part of the lane.

Hand signals

Motorcycle riders can use hand signals for stopping, slowing or turning. Hand signals can improve rider safety in situations where very bright light conditions make it difficult for the motorcycle's brake and indicator lights to be seen.

To give a hand signal for stopping or slowing, the rider must extend either arm at a right angle with a flat palm. Turning is signalled by a straight arm with flat palm pointing in the direction of the turn.



Hand signal to turn left.



Hand signal to stop or slow down.

Lending or borrowing a motorcycle

A large number of fatal motorcycle crashes occur on motorcycles that have been borrowed. It is an offence to allow another person to ride a motorcycle if they are not properly licensed to ride that particular class of motorcycle.

Even if they have the right licence and you know them very well, every motorcycle handles differently and it is easy to make mistakes on an unfamiliar motorcycle. The best solution is not to lend or borrow motorcycles.

If you must ride a borrowed motorcycle, take your time to get to know how the motorcycle handles, ride cautiously, allow extra space between yourself and any vehicles in front, and maintain a larger crash avoidance space/buffer around the motorcycle.

Motorcycle warning signs

This warning sign indicates to motorcycle riders that additional caution is required on the road ahead.



Riding at night

Riding at night, particularly on rural and outback roads and highways, is considerably more dangerous for motorcyclists. The risks of hitting an animal, misjudging a curve or not seeing a problem on the road surface are greatly increased at night. If you must ride at night, slow down to a speed that takes into account these risks and the effective range of the motorcycle's headlight.

You must not ride any motorcycle at night if the lights are not working.

Restrictions on where to ride

To ride a motorcycle on a road or road-related area, a rider must hold a current rider licence and the motorcycle must have current registration. Road and road-related areas mean any area that is publicly accessible to vehicles. This includes:

- roads
- the shoulder of the road
- car parks
- fire trails / fire breaks
- state forests, national parks and reserves
- recreation areas.

Riding on footpath

A motorcycle must not be ridden on a footpath. Exemptions apply for postal delivery officers.

Bicycle lanes

Motorcycle riders are not allowed to use a bicycle lane, except for 50 metres when entering or leaving a driveway or intersection.

Carrying passengers

Motorcycle passengers

Any passenger carried on a motorcycle (not in a sidecar) must:

- sit astride the motorcycle passenger seat facing forward
- sit behind and as close as possible to the rider
- keep both feet on the footrests designed for use by the passenger
- wear a correctly fitted and securely fastened approved motorcycle helmet
- be eight years of age or older
- not interfere with the rider's control of the motorcycle.

Before you can carry passengers you must have an open unrestricted and unconditional rider licence.

Sidecar passengers

Passengers carried in a sidecar must:

- wear a correctly fitted and securely fastened approved motorcycle helmet
- remain safely seated.

The motorcycle rider must not ride with more passengers than the sidecar is designed to carry.

A motorcycle rider must not ride with more than one passenger (excluding sidecar passengers) on the motorcycle.

Loading

Any load carried on a motorcycle must:

- not project more than 150mm beyond the outer extremity of the front wheel
- not project more than 300mm beyond the outer extremity of the rear wheel
- not project beyond the extreme outer portion of the motorcycle on either side.

Any load carried on a motorcycle and sidecar combination must:

- not project more than 600mm beyond the outer extremity of the front wheel
- not project more than 900mm beyond the outer extremity of the rear wheel
- not project beyond the extreme outer portion of the combination on either side.

All loads must:

- be properly secured
- not cause the motorcycle or combination to become unstable
- not project from the motorcycle or combination in a way that is likely to injure or obstruct other vehicles or pedestrians, or cause damage to a vehicle or anything else (including the road surface).

Animals and vehicles

A motorcycle rider or passenger must not tether or lead an animal while the motorcycle is moving. Animals should be seated or housed in appropriate areas.

A rider must not ride with an animal on the fuel tank.

Duty of care

Riding a motorcycle can be great fun and is enjoyed by people of all ages. Riding on the road, however, means accepting responsibility for your own wellbeing and showing due care and consideration for all other road users.

No matter what the circumstances, the responsibility of each rider is to ride in such a manner as to avoid crashing or causing a crash.

A rider can be held accountable for a crash despite the fact that a road rule was not broken.

Traffic laws and regulations are designed to ensure that the traffic moves in an orderly and safe manner.

People (road users) must not walk, drive or ride (a motor vehicle, bicycle or animal):

- without due care
- without consideration for other people.

If you are involved in a court proceeding, it is your responsibility to show that you took reasonable care to avoid a crash or that you were riding in a reasonable manner.

All road users have a duty of care.

We share the roads; we share the safety.

If you are involved in a road crash

If you are involved in a crash that causes injury to a person or animal or that results in damage to property, you should take the following action:

Stop immediately

It is against the law to fail to stop after a crash. Penalties may include a fine, licence disqualification or imprisonment.

See if anyone is injured

A person involved in a crash must stop and render all possible assistance, and, if necessary and possible, get a message to Police, Fire and Emergency Services (call 000).

Prevent further crashes

Unless it is essential to avoid further injury (danger of fire, explosion, traffic, burns from hot pavement), do not move seriously injured or unconscious people until trained help arrives.

- Note or mark the position of the motorcycle on the roadway, then move it clear of traffic.
- Ask bystanders to warn approaching vehicles
- Personal safety, do not stand on the roadway. Always move to the footpath or to a place of safety.

Give the required particulars to other people

Give your name and address, the registration number and any other information necessary to identify the motorcycle you were riding, and the name and address of the owner of the motorcycle if it is not yours, to:

- any attending police officer
- any other driver/rider
- any injured person
- the owner of any damaged property
- any representative of these people.

Gather all details of the crash

Including:

- estimated speeds of all vehicles
- road and weather conditions
- description of the damage and injuries
- diagrams of positions and directions of vehicles
- the names and addresses of witnesses.

Motorcycle parking

Parking rules and restrictions apply to all vehicles, including motorcycles. However, a motorcycle may park at an angle.

Some areas are designated motorcycle parking only.



Summary

This section has explained the special rules that apply to motorcyclists. After reading this section you should know:

- the rules about how to ride on a motorcycle
- the rules relating to passengers and loads
- where you can ride
- special signs for motorcyclists
- where you can park a motorcycle.

