



# rider safety

Motorcycle riders are at a greater risk on the road than drivers of other vehicles. If you are involved in a crash, the chance that you will be injured is very high.

As a motorcyclist, there are steps that you can take to protect yourself better when you are on the road.

## Concentration

Riding on the road requires your full concentration. Your survival depends on this ability.

Many factors will affect your ability to concentrate, such as:

- fatigue
- alcohol
- drugs
- your mental / emotional state.

**Do not put yourself and others at risk by riding if you know you cannot concentrate fully.**

## Fatigue

Fatigue can affect a rider's ability to concentrate.

Signs that you are fatigued when riding include:

- running a bit wide on a corner
- a couple of rough gear changes
- not seeing a sign
- day dreaming
- dry mouth
- stiff joints (neck, knees and wrists).

**Stop and rest if you have any signs of fatigue.**

## Managing fatigue

Riding a motorcycle is much more tiring than driving a car. Even if you do not feel tired, stop every one and a half hours or 150 kilometres.

Here are some tips to help manage fatigue:

- Be aware of your posture when riding and maintain a good riding position at all times.
- Drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.
- Avoid too much caffeine, soft drinks and energy drinks.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Eat small amounts frequently—simple foods like fruit, nuts, a muesli bar or a little chocolate.
- Avoid fatty foods and large meals before or during a ride.
- In cooler months, do not make yourself too snug and warm. It's good to be a little cool.

## Alcohol and other drugs

It is illegal to ride while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including some over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

Alcohol, drugs and medications can significantly affect your riding skills and increase your risk of having a crash.

There have been many tests on the way alcohol and other drugs affect reflexes, coordination, depth perception and risk-taking behaviour. The results are always the same—increased risk due to reduced capability.

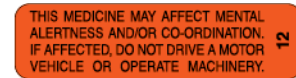
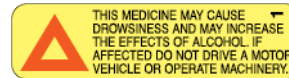
**It is not just your own mistakes that become dangerous. When you've been drinking, you may also not be able to react properly to other peoples mistakes.**

Many drugs affect your ability to ride a motorcycle, including:

- prescription drugs (drugs that you cannot buy unless your doctor gives you a script)
- illegal drugs
- some over-the-counter drugs, such as cold or allergy tablets.

Make sure you know the effects of any drug you've taken before you attempt to ride.

Check with your doctor or pharmacist and read the label to make sure the medication will not affect your riding. As a general guide, if the label on the drug or medication has a warning about either driving or operating machinery, you should not ride while affected by the drug.



**If any drug has an effect on your riding, you must not ride.**

## Protective clothing and equipment

As a motorcycle rider you are fully exposed to the elements. In a crash you are also particularly vulnerable to injury.

Wearing the right protective clothing can:

- significantly reduce injury in the event of a crash
- protect you from the weather
- improve your comfort when riding
- increase your visibility on the road.

### Helmets

The most important piece of personal equipment for a motorcycle rider is a motorcycle helmet.

The law requires all motorcyclists and their pillion (passengers) or sidecar passengers to wear an approved motorcycle helmet.

There are many types and styles of motorcycle helmets available. There are two key types: full face and open face helmets.

Full face helmets, which feature a chin panel and an integrated face shield (visor), offer better eye, wind, sun, and injury protection.



Light coloured helmets (white, yellow) are generally cooler than dark helmets and may also help to increase your chance of being seen.

### Helmets must:

- fit comfortably but not too tightly (avoid helmets that fit loosely)
- have the chin strap fastened and properly tightened
- have a clear and shatterproof visor without scratches
- be replaced after a crash or a significant impact
- never be second-hand.

### Helmets should be:

- replaced if they become loose fitting, the straps become worn or you notice cracks or loose padding in your helmet
- only cleaned with mild soapy water. Some chemicals and cleaners may weaken the shell.

Helmets are designed to absorb only ONE impact or drop, so make sure you replace your helmet if it has been dropped or sustained any damage that will impact on your safety.

Penalties apply to riders and passengers for:

- not wearing a helmet
- wearing a helmet that is not approved or is deteriorated
- not securing the helmet correctly
- carrying a pillion or sidecar passenger that is not wearing a helmet.

### Visors and goggles

Your eyes need protection from the wind, dust, rain, insects and stones thrown up by other vehicles.

Only a visor attached to the helmet or goggles provide the eye protection necessary for riding.

Some motorcycles have screens or fairings to provide weather protection. These do not provide adequate protection for the eyes, and you should still use a visor or goggles to protect your eyes.

Visors and goggles should:

- be clean and not scratched
- be shatterproof
- have a clear lens.



**Sunglasses or prescription spectacles can be worn under a visor but do not replace a proper visor or goggles.**

### Gloves

Gloves that are specifically designed for motorcycle riding will improve rider comfort and protection.

Gloves should have:

- a strengthened palm area shaped for riding
- knuckle protection
- a fastener around the wrist to prevent sliding off (zipper and Velcro)
- an overlap with the jacket (gauntlet style).

### Jackets and pants

Purpose-made motorcycle clothing provides better weather and crash protection than ordinary clothing. In proper motorcycle gear you will almost certainly feel more comfortable.

Jackets and pants should:

- be highly abrasion and tear resistant
- be tailored for a riding position
- completely cover your arms, legs and body
- secure around your wrist, waist and ankles to prevent sliding up and exposing skin
- have impact and abrasion protection for your back, shoulders, elbows, hips and knees.



### Footwear

Like gloves, footwear designed for motorcycle riding will provide great comfort and protection.

Motorcycle footwear should have:

- strengthening in the instep between the ball of the foot and the heel
- ankle protection
- shin protection
- a fastener around the leg to prevent sliding off (zipper and Velcro)
- an overlap with the pants (boot style)
- gear change cover to prevent wear.

### Other protective items

Other rider-specific protective clothing includes:

- back protectors to protect your spine in a crash
- kidney belts to support your lower back and reduce fatigue.