

Motorcycle Rider Handbook

Transport for NSW



nsw.gov.au



This Motorcycle Rider Handbook covers the main road rules and requirements for riding on NSW roads.

It is written using plain, easy to understand language and should not be taken as a precise interpretation of the law. See the current and complete set of Road Rules at **legislation.nsw.gov.au**

This handbook is reviewed and updated periodically. Check our website for the latest information.

In this handbook, the words 'must' or 'must not' are used for rules that you have to follow. The words 'should' or 'should not' are used when explaining safe and low-risk riding.

We have other useful resources for motorcycle riders including:

- Road User Handbook – the main road rules and requirements for using NSW roads, available on our website, from a service centre or by calling **13 22 13**
- Ride to Live website – motorcycle tips, trips and an interactive hazard test at **ridetolive.nsw.gov.au**

Introduction

The Motorcycle Rider Handbook covers the main rules you need to know to ride legally and safely on NSW roads. It's essential reading for anyone wanting to ride. It will prepare you for the challenges of riding and reduce your risk on the road.

Motorcycling can be fun, cost-effective and help to reduce your carbon footprint. But riders are at a greater risk of being killed or injured in a crash. Riders do not have the same protection as car drivers, so motorcycle riding can also be hazardous.

Read this handbook and the Road User Handbook as they will help you gain the knowledge you need to get a learner rider licence.

This handbook can also be used by other riders and road users to check the rules, understand their legal responsibilities and learn safe, low risk riding behaviour.

We have a responsibility to share our roads, use them safely. Enjoy your riding, but above all, ride to survive.

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How to use this handbook

This handbook is divided into sections, so it is easier to find what you need to know about licensing and safe riding skills. At the end of each section is a summary of the information to help remember important key points.

You will need to refer to this handbook, along with the Road User Handbook, if you want to do the tests required for a rider licence.

Section 2: Licences

Is about getting a licence and covers:

- the motorcycle licensing system
- steps to get a full licence
- Rider Knowledge Test
- the eyesight test and proof of identity
- obligations of licence holders.

Section 3: Rider Management

Increase your safety when riding by:

- recognising and managing fatigue
- avoiding alcohol and other drugs
- wearing protective clothing.

Section 4: Safe Riding

Provides safe riding behaviours for riders including:

- observation, speed management and road positioning
- crash avoidance space.

Section 5: Road rules for motorcycle riders

The rules every rider must know about:

- motorcycle specific road rules and signs
- carrying passengers and loads
- parking
- restrictions on where to ride.

Section 6: Motorcycle safety and compliance

All motorcycles using NSW roads must be roadworthy and registered. This section covers:

- motorcycle registration
- number plates
- tyres (pressure, tread and wear)
- how to ensure a motorcycle is safe for road use.

Section 7: Penalties

An overview of traffic offences and penalties including:

- exceeding the speed limit, demerit points, fines and licence suspension
- serious, negligent and dangerous riding offences
- burnouts, street and drag racing
- drink and unlicensed riding
- non-payment of traffic fines.

Licensing

In NSW getting your rider licence is a journey. You starting off as a learner and then gradually progressing to a full licence over 2 or 4 years. This builds your experience so you become a safe and skilled rider.

The purpose of this book, our rider training and licence tests is to give you the skills you need to ride safely.

Obligations of licence holders

Holding a rider licence gives you freedom but also brings responsibility. It's a commitment between you and the NSW community to keep the roads safe for everyone.

When you get your licence, do not abuse or misuse it. If you do, you risk heavy penalties and may lose your licence.

Bribery is against the law

It is illegal to offer, request or accept gifts, rewards, money or other favours to get a licence without passing the required tests.

Penalties are severe and include fines and imprisonment. All cases of corruption will be reported and investigated, and strong action will be taken against all those involved.

If you know or believe that someone has got or is about to get a NSW licence by offering or responding to a request for a bribe – or if you suspect or know of any other corruption involving a NSW Government employee call:

- Transport for NSW on **1800 302 750** (free call)
- The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) on **(02) 8281 5999**.

This includes Transport for NSW accredited Registered Training Organisations (RTO) and their assessors.

Having the correct licence

It is very important to have the correct licence when you ride. You must have:

- a current rider licence. It must not be expired, cancelled or suspended
- the correct licence class for the type of motorcycle you are riding
- a NSW licence if you are a resident of NSW for more than three months
- an interstate rider licence if you are a visitor from interstate
- a current rider licence from another country if you are a visitor from overseas. If your licence is not in English you must also carry an International Driving Permit or an English translation of your overseas licence.

You must not ride if your licence is disqualified by a court in NSW, another State or Territory or overseas. If rider privileges for an overseas or interstate rider are suspended in NSW, they must not ride.

Riding without a licence

You must always carry your licence when riding. Penalties apply for riding without a licence. See the Penalties section in this book for more information.

Police can ask to see a licence at any time.

There is a penalty for allowing an unlicensed or inappropriately licensed rider to ride your motorcycle. Before you allow someone to ride your motorcycle check they have the correct licence and the licence is valid.

If you're using a digital licence, make sure your phone is charged and the screen is not cracked.

You can get a fine for riding without your licence or refusing to show it when asked.

Motorcycle graduated licensing scheme

To get a full (unrestricted) rider (R) licence, a new rider must complete the motorcycle Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS). This includes licensing, training and testing. The training covers the key skills needed for riding on the road. The training steps are the pre-learner and pre-provisional course and then the test.

How the scheme works

New riders need to pass three licensing steps to get a full rider licence:

1. Learner rider licence (Ls)
2. Provisional P1 rider licence (red Ps)
3. Provisional P2 rider licence (green Ps) unless exempt.

This gives new riders at least 36 months of experience before graduating to a full rider licence.

Riders aged 25 and over with a full car licence are exempt from the P2 step.

Zero tolerance of speeding

Any provisional P1 rider caught speeding will have their licence suspended for a minimum of three months.

When learning to ride a motorcycle it's a good idea to start on very quiet streets that you know well. Start off riding only in daylight. Only ride at night once you gain experience.

Steps to getting your rider licence

1. Pre-learner training

- 7 hours over 2 sessions



2. Rider Knowledge Test



3. Learner rider licence

- Minimum 3 months
- Valid for 12 months



4. Pre-provisional training

- 6-hour course in one day and
- Motorcycle Operator Skill Test (MOST)



5. Provisional P1 rider licence

- Minimum 12 months
- Valid for 18 months



6. Provisional P2 rider licence

- Minimum 24 months
- Valid for 30 months unless exempt*



7. Full Licence

- Issued for 12 months, 36 months, 5 or 10 years**



* Riders aged 25 and over with a full car licence are exempt from the P2 step.

** 10 years applies to full Class C and R licence holders aged 21 to 44 years.

Licence types

Learner rider licence

To get a Class R (rider) learner licence you need to:

- be at least 16 years and nine months
- successfully complete a pre-learner rider training course
- pass a Rider Knowledge Test (RKT).

The pre-learner rider training course can be completed at the age of 16 years and six months. A learner rider licence expires after 12 months and for the licence to be re-issued, the training course and RKT must be passed again. On completion of a rider training course a certificate of competence is issued. The certificate is valid for three months only and cannot be used as licence to ride. If the certificate expires before a learner licence is issued, the course must be completed again. Then a learner rider licence can be issued. The expiry of a learner licence cannot be extended.

You do not need a current car driver licence to get a learner rider licence.

Suspension or cancellation of learner rider licence

A P1 licence will be suspended for a minimum of 3 months for offences with 4 or more demerit points. Learner riders can have their licence disqualified by a court for committing an offence. Learners can also be suspended (or in extreme cases cancelled) for offences including:

- riding a motorcycle not approved for use by novice riders
- not wearing an approved motorcycle helmet
- carrying pillion passengers.



Licence restrictions for learners

Automatic transmission motorcycles	You must ride an automatic motorcycle if you if you completed the pre-learner training on one.
Blood alcohol concentration (BAC)	Your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) must be zero. This means you must not have any alcohol in your system when you ride.
Display of L plates	You must clearly display the plate on the back of the motorcycle. The whole letter L must be visible.
Demerit Points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur 4 or more points.
Helmet	You must wear a motorcycle helmet complying with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS 1698 • AS/NZS 1698 • UNECES 22.05
Mobile Phones	You must not use any function of mobile phone when riding, even when you're stationary, stopped at lights or stuck in traffic.
Motorcycles	You must only ride motorcycles on the Approved Motorcycle for Novice Riders list on our website. These have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an engine capacity not more than 660ml • a power to weight ratio not more than 150kw per tonne • a power up to 25kw for electric motorcycles.
Passengers	You must not carry any pillion passengers.
Speed limit	You must not ride faster than 90km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 90km/h.
Lane filtering	You must not lane filter.
Towing	You must not tow a trailer or any other vehicle.
Location restrictions	You must not ride in Parramatta Park, Centennial Park or Moore Park when in Sydney.

Provisional P1 rider licence

To get a provisional P1 rider licence you must;

- be at least 17 years of age
- have held your learner licence for at least 3 months
- pass pre-provisional rider training and skills test.

A certificate of competency is issued when you pass the pre-provisional training and skills test. The certificate expires after 3 months. You must get your P1 rider licence before your certificate expires. If you do not, you will have to complete the training and testing again. The training and testing must be completed before your learner licence expires.

If you pass the training but fail the skills test, you must redo the skills test and pass to get a certificate of competency. If you do not pass the test within 3 months, you need to do the pre-provisional training again.

Book your pre-provisional course with your preferred rider training provider. A list of training providers is on our website or call **13 22 13**.

A P1 rider must be held for at least 12 months before you can apply for a P2 licence.

Suspension or cancellation of P1 provisional licence

A P1 licence will be suspended for a minimum of 3 months for offences up to 4 or more demerit points. The period of suspension does not count towards the 12 months needed before you can apply for a P2 licence. P1 riders can have their licence disqualified by a court for committing an offence. In extreme cases a P1 licence can be cancelled.

The period a P1 rider is held before a disqualification or cancellation cannot be counted towards applying for a P2 licence.



Licence restrictions for P1 licences

Automatic transmission motorcycles	You must ride an automatic motorcycle if you completed the pre-learner training on one.
Blood alcohol concentration (BAC)	Your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) must be zero. This means you must not have any alcohol in your system when you ride.
Display of P plates	You must clearly display the plate on the back of the motorcycle. The whole letter P must be visible.
Demerit Points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur 4 or more points.
Helmet	You must wear a motorcycle helmet complying with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS 1698 • AS/NZS 1698 • UNECES 22.05
Mobile Phones	You must not use any function of mobile phone when riding, even when you're stationary, stopped at lights or stuck in traffic.
Motorcycles	You must only ride motorcycles on the Approved Motorcycle for Novice Riders list on our website. These have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an engine capacity not more than 660ml • a power to weight ratio not more than 150kw per tonne • a power up to 25kw for electric motorcycles.
Passengers	You must not carry any pillion passengers.
Speed limit	You must not ride faster than 90km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 90km/h.
Lane filtering	You must not lane filter.
Towing	You must not tow a trailer or any other vehicle.

Provisional P2 rider licence

To get a provisional P2 rider licence you must be at least 18 years of age. When you have held your P1 rider licence for at least 12 months, you can apply for a P2 rider at service.nsw.gov.au

The P2 rider licence is issued for 30 months, you may apply for a full (unrestricted) licence at service.nsw.gov.au after 24 months.

Suspension or cancellation of provisional P2 licence

A P2 licence will be suspended for a minimum of 3 months for offences up to 7 or more demerit points. The period of suspension does not count towards the minimum 24 months needed to apply for a full licence. P2 riders can have their licence disqualified by a court for committing an offence. In extreme cases a P2 licence can be cancelled.

The period a P2 rider is held before a disqualification or cancellation cannot be counted towards a full licence application.



Licence restrictions for P2 licences

Blood alcohol concentration (BAC)	Your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) must be zero. This means you must not have any alcohol in your system when you ride.
Demerit points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur 7 or more points.
Display of P plates	You must clearly display the plate on the back of the motorcycle. The whole letter P must be visible.
Helmet	You must wear a motorcycle helmet complying with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AS 1698• AS/NZS 1698• UNECES 22.05
Mobile Phones	You must not use any function of mobile phone when riding, even when you're stationary, stopped at lights or stuck in traffic.
Motorcycles	You must only ride motorcycles on the Approved Motorcycle for Novice Riders list on our website. These have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an engine capacity not more than 660ml• a power to weight ratio not more than 150kw per tonne• a power up to 25kw for electric motorcycles.
Speed limit	You must not ride faster than 100km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 100km/h.
Lane filtering	You must not lane filter.

How to get a rider licence

Learner rider licence

To apply for a learner rider licence (in a declared area) you must pass:

- pre-learner rider training
- Rider Knowledge Test.

Book rider training and testing with your preferred rider training provider. A list of training providers is on our website or call **13 22 13**.

If you live in an undeclared area you only need to pass a Rider Knowledge Test. But all rider licence applicants are encouraged to do rider training for the development of safe riding skills.

After completing the rider training you will be issued with a pre-learner certificate of competence (green in colour) valid for 3 months.

Book and pay for your knowledge test:

- online at **service.nsw.gov.au**
- by calling **13 22 13**
- at a service centre.

When you go to do the Rider Knowledge Test you will need:

- proof of identity documents
- certificate of competency (if from a declared area)
- a completed licence application form
- to pass an eyesight test
- to pay the licence fee (unless exempt).

You will be issued a learner rider licence for 12 months after passing the Rider Knowledge Test.

Provisional P1 rider licence

To apply for a P1 rider licence **in a declared area**, you must pass the pre-provisional rider training course. Make sure you book at least 6 weeks before your learner licence expires.

The pre-provisional training course is 7 hours (one day) and includes the Motorcycle Operator Skills Test (MOST). After passing the training and test you will be issued with a pre-learner certificate of competence (red in colour) valid for 3 months.

To apply for a P1 rider licence **in an undeclared area**, you must pass a riding test. Make sure you book and pay in advance at a service centre before your learner licence expires. Alternatively you are encouraged to book the pre-provisional rider course.

When you go to a service centre take your:

- certificate of competency (if from a declared area)
- learner rider licence
- completed licence application form
- licence fee (unless exempt).

If you don't get a P1 rider licence before your certificate of competence (valid for 3 months) expires, you need to book and pay to do the pre-provisional training and MOST again.

Your provisional P1 rider is valid for 18 months and you may progress to a P2 after a minimum of 12 months.

Provisional P2 rider licence

To apply for a P2 rider licence **in any area**, you must have held a P1 rider for a minimum of 12 months (not including any periods of licence suspension or cancellation).

You can apply for a P2 rider licence at service.nsw.gov.au

Your provisional P2 rider is valid for 30 months and you may progress to a full rider licence after a minimum of 24 months.

Full (unrestricted) rider licence

To apply for a full rider licence, you must have held a P2 rider for a minimum of 24 months (not including any periods of licence suspension or cancellation).

You can apply for a full rider licence at service.nsw.gov.au

Riders aged 25 and over

Riders aged 25 and over with a full car licence may be exempt from holding a P2 licence.

To be exempt from holding a P2 rider licence you must:

- be aged 25 or older at the time of applying for a full licence
- hold a current Australian unrestricted driver licence
- have completed a minimum of 12 months on a P1 licence
- meet all other licensing requirements.

Rider training courses

Pre-learner courses

The pre-learner course is held over two days (three and a half hours each day). Motorcycles, helmets, gloves and tuition are provided at the training centre.

No motorcycle riding experience is necessary for the pre-learner course. Learning to ride a motorcycle requires a high level of balance, coordination and concentration. Some people may need extra training to develop these skills.

The course has pass/fail criteria and you must achieve all the competencies to pass. For your safety and the safety of others, the instructor may stop you from riding during the course. If this happens, the instructor will advise you of the best way to proceed with your training.

Clothing for rider training

- sturdy long sleeve jacket
- sturdy long trousers
- sturdy enclosed footwear (preferably with ankle protection and a low heel)
- wet weather gear (training goes ahead regardless of weather).

You will be turned away if you do not come properly equipped with appropriate protective clothing.

Pre-provisional course

The pre-provisional course is about 7 hours of training including the Motorcycle Operator Skills Test. A motorcycle and protective clothing are not provided for this course. You must bring your own.

Summary

If you do not pass the pre-provisional course and skills test before your learner licence expires, you will need to re-do the pre-learner training again. Learner licence extensions are not available.

Anyone providing rider training to learner or provisional riders must hold a current Class R, NSW driving instructor licence. This licence should be shown before you start the training. Heavy penalties apply for providing unlicensed instruction.

Find a list of Transport for NSW approved Rider training centres:

- on our website
- by calling **13 22 13**
- from a service centre.

What you should know about licensing

This section has explained the importance of licensing in NSW. After reading this section you should know:

- the obligations of licence holders
- the conditions that must be met before you can obtain a rider licence
- the special rules that apply to learner riders
- the conditions under which provisional rider licences are issued
- the training courses you need to complete before being issued with a learner or provisional rider licence
- the rules for riding manual and automatic motorcycles.

Rider management

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.

Compared to driving other road vehicles, riding a motorcycle can place you at a higher risk from others. If you are involved in a crash the chances of being injured are very high.

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.

It's in your own interest not to ride if you know you can't concentrate fully.

Fatigue

Many people think 'fatigue' involves going to sleep, but for motorcyclists the real problem is a lapse in concentration.

Rider fatigue indicators 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).

If you have any signs of fatigue stop immediately and rest.

Managing fatigue

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

Here are some tips to help riders manage fatigue:

- drink plenty of water to keep hydrated
- avoid too much coffee or sweet soft drinks
- stay away from alcohol at all costs
- 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 winter, don't make yourself too snug and warm. It's good to be a little cool.

Alcohol and other drugs

There have been many tests on the way alcohol and various other drugs affect reflexes, coordination, depth perception and risk taking behaviour. The results are always the same, increased risk due to reduced capability. Keep in mind that it is not just your own mistakes that become dangerous. When you've been drinking, you may not be able to react properly to others' mistakes either.

Alcohol influences you at much lower levels than the legal blood alcohol limit. Two drinks can take you to 0.05. In the years of 2018, 19 and 20, 14 per cent of motorcyclists killed in a crash on NSW roads had an illegal level of alcohol in their blood.

All learner and provisional licence holders are restricted to a zero alcohol limit.

Other drugs

Many drugs affect your ability to ride a motorcycle safely and well. These include prescription drugs (drugs that you cannot buy unless your doctor gives you a script) as well as illegal drugs, and some drugs such as cold or allergy tablets. Such drugs can leave you weak, dizzy, drowsy or slow to react in an emergency.

If you have used illegal drugs you must not ride or attempt to ride. Make sure you know the effects of any other drug 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. If any drug has an effect on your riding, you must not ride.

Protective clothing

As a motorcycle rider you are particularly vulnerable to injury in a crash. Wearing the right protective clothing can:

- significantly reduce injury in a crash
- protect you from the weather
- improve your comfort when riding.

Helmet

A motorcycle riders most important piece of personal equipment is a motorcycle helmet. The law requires all motorcycle riders and their pillion or sidecar passengers to wear an approved motorcycle helmet.

The two key types of motorcycle helmets are a full face helmet and open face helmet.

Full face helmets offer more protection as they have a chin panel and face shield (visor) for better eye, wind, sun and injury protection.

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

Helmet check list

- by law helmets must comply with the Australian standard 1698, Australian/ New Zealand AS/NZ 1698 or the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe standard 22.05 and have a mark certifying compliance with the standard
- it must fit comfortably but not too tight (avoid loosely fitting helmets)
- it must have the chin strap fastened and properly tightened.

Helmets should be:

- replaced after a crash or a significant impact
- replaced if they become loose fitting, or the straps become worn
- cleaned only with mild soapy water. Some chemicals and cleaners may weaken the shell.

Never buy a second-hand helmet.

Protective clothing



Helmet: Must be an approved AS 1698, AS/NZS 1698 or UNECES 22.05.

Visor: Clear and shatterproof without scratches. Australian Standard AS 1609.

Back protector: To protect the spine in the case of a crash.

Gloves: Gauntlet style with a strengthened palm area and knuckle protection. Zip or Velcro fastening around wrist.

Jacket and pants: Made of highly abrasion and tear resistant material completely covering your arms, legs and body. When secured at the wrists, waist and ankles this prevents the garment riding up and exposing skin.

Footwear: Boots overlapping the pants provides extra shin, ankle and instep protection. Zipper or Velcro fasteners assist in preventing the foot from sliding and a protective foot cover for gear changing provides wear and tear protection.

Eye protection

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.

Visor and goggles should:

- be clean and not scratched
- be shatterproof (standard for helmet visors is Australian Standards AS 1609)
- have clear lenses for use at night.

Gloves

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

Motorcycle gloves generally have:

- a strengthened palm area shaped for riding
- knuckle protection
- a fastener around the wrist to prevent sliding off (eg 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.

Jacket and pants should:

- be highly abrasion and tear resistant
- be tailored for a riding position
- completely cover your arms, legs and body
- secure around 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 generally has:

- 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 (eg zipper and Velcro)
- an overlap with the pants (boot style)
- gear change cover to prevent wear.

Further protection

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.

Summary

What you should know about rider management

This section has explained the importance of rider management when riding on the road. After reading this section you should know:

- some factors which affect your ability to concentrate
- how to recognise and manage fatigue
- the effect that alcohol and drugs have on your ability to ride safely
- why protective clothing is important for a rider.

Notes

Safe riding

Riding is never risk free, but you should aim to ride 'low risk'. A low risk rider has good observation, speed management, road positioning, decision making and hazard perception skills.

Observation

The road environment is constantly changing and this requires high levels of observation and concentration. The key to good observation is scanning.

Scanning

Scanning, is keeping your eyes moving, checking in one area for a couple of seconds, then moving your eyes to another area.

When scanning look:

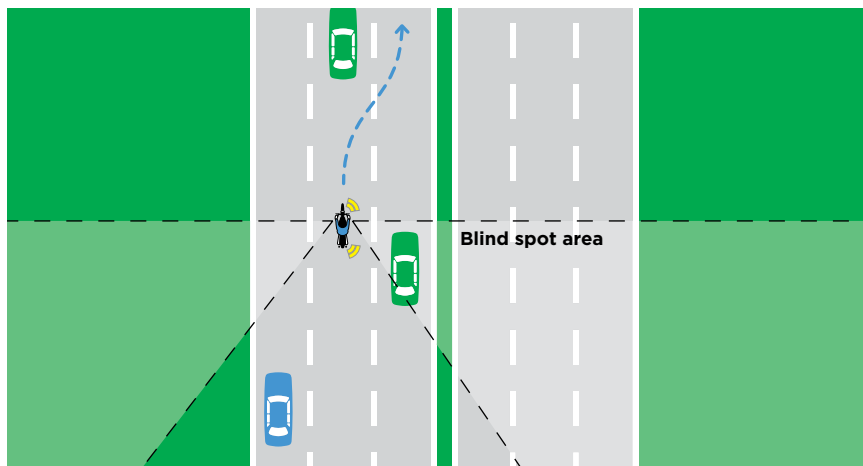
- in the distance
- at the road surface
- to your left and right
- regularly at your mirrors and instruments.

Before moving off from traffic lights check all directions to make sure the traffic has stopped.

Mirrors

You should check your mirrors every few seconds so you always know what is behind you. There are also particular times when it is very important for you to use your mirrors:

- Check your mirrors before making any change to your speed or road position.
- When preparing to turn or change lanes, watch carefully for any cars behind you, especially if you plan to turn where others may not expect it, such as at lane ways, driveways and side streets.
- When you are stopped behind another vehicle, leave plenty of space in front of you to move. Watch vehicles approaching from behind. Remain in first gear, with a brake applied and be able to move off to avoid being hit from behind.



Check blind spots before changing your road position.

Head checks

Motorcycles have 'blind spots' just as cars do. A blind spot is the area next to you that you are unable to see in your mirrors. When you are about to change your position on the road (eg make a turn, exit a roundabout, move off or change lanes), make sure you turn your head and look over your shoulder to see if it is clear. This is called a 'head check' and is the only sure way to see objects that are in your blind spot.

Always do a head check of the blind spot before turning right into a street or driveway. This is to make sure any vehicle following you didn't see your indicator and attempts to overtake you.



Head position for turns

Looking through a corner will help with your coordination and balance when cornering. Use your peripheral vision to scan the road surface while keeping your head pointed in the direction you want to go.

Speed management

Low risk riders manage their speed and road position to maintain a crash avoidance space completely around their motorcycle.

To determine the crash avoidance space to the front of your motorcycle you need to take into account two key factors – reaction time and response time.

Reaction time is the time the rider needs to:

- see the information
- perceive what it means
- decide on a response
- instigate that response.

A rider who is fit, concentrating, alert and not affected by alcohol, drugs, fatigue or a distraction, will require about one and a half seconds to react to a sudden and unexpected change in traffic conditions.

Response time is the time required to take action. Generally a minimum of one and a half seconds is needed to respond. In many situations braking may be the only possible response. Swerving is rarely appropriate and is likely to result in a more severe crash, for example a head on collision.

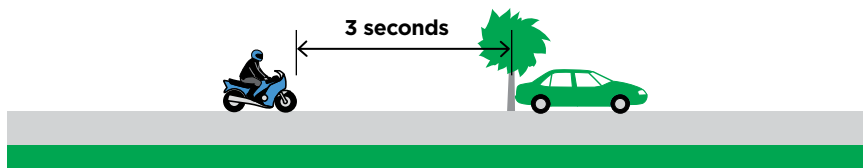
In good driving conditions, most people need a 3-second crash avoidance space (often called the 3-second gap) to react and respond to a situation safely and avoid a crash.

You should increase your crash avoidance space to 4 or more seconds when driving in poor conditions, such as on unsealed (dirt or gravel), icy or wet roads, or at night.

Maintain space to the front

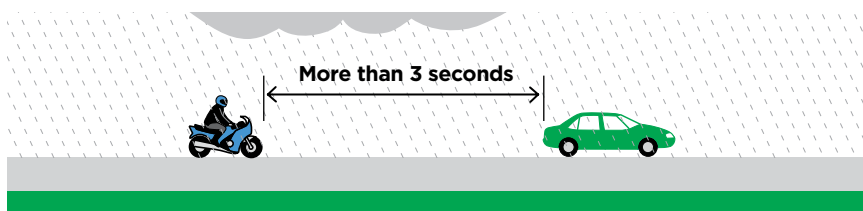
To calculate a 3-second crash avoidance space when following another vehicle, use this basic technique: as the rear of the vehicle in front of you passes a stationary object at the side of the road, such as a power pole, tree or sign, start a 3-second count 'one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three'.

Be aware that in most situations cars can stop in a shorter distance than motorcycles, due to the greater grip provided by four tyres.



Stay at least 3 seconds behind the vehicle ahead.

If your motorcycle passes the point you picked before you finish the count, you are following too closely. Your crash avoidance space is not large enough. Slow down and repeat the count again until the 3-second crash avoidance space is achieved.



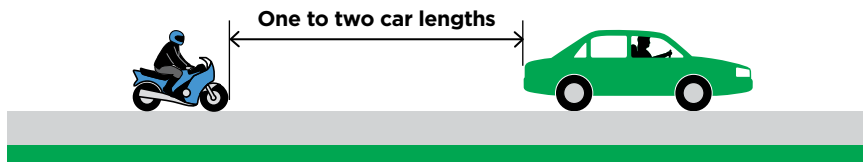
Increase following distance in poor conditions.

In poor conditions such as rain, night and gravel roads, it may be necessary to increase your crash avoidance space to 4 or more seconds.

To reduce the risk of riding into the back of another vehicle, the 3-second crash avoidance space is essential, as the vehicle in front has the ability to stop very quickly, especially if it collides with another vehicle or a stationary object.

Maintain space when stopped

When you stop behind another vehicle leave at least one car length between your front wheel and the back of the vehicle in front. This will provide some space in case they roll back or if you need to ride around them.



Leave one to two car lengths in front when stopped.

Maintain space behind you

It is difficult to maintain a crash avoidance space behind you, as another driver or rider controls the space.

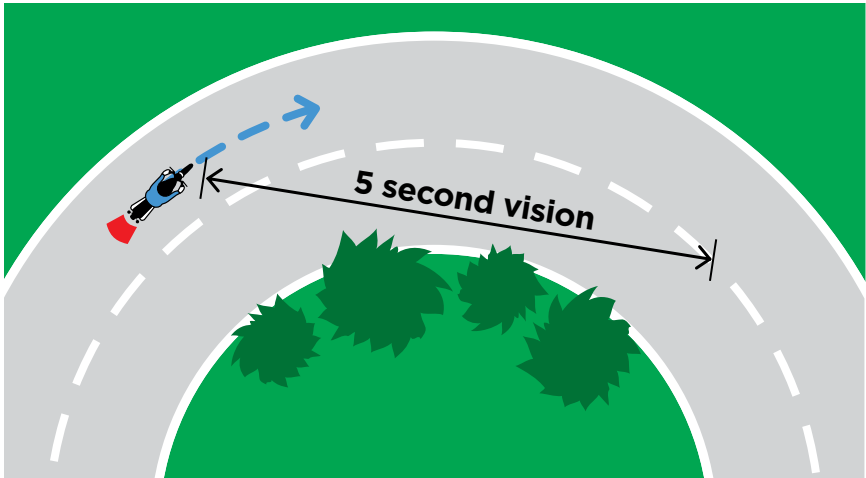
If a vehicle behind is travelling too closely, slow down slightly to increase the space you have in front of you. This will enable you to brake more gradually if you spot a hazard in front, which will enable the following vehicle more time to stop as well.

Reduce speed

Slow down if you do not have a clear view of the road ahead. Situations where your vision may be reduced include:

- blind corners
- blocked intersections
- crests
- poor weather conditions.

Slow down if you cannot see 5 seconds ahead.



Slow down if you cannot see 5 seconds ahead.

To calculate 5-second vision in a curve, pick a fixed point in the oncoming lane that has just come into view and start a count 'one thousand and one, one thousand and two... one thousand and five'. If you reach the point before 5 seconds you are riding too fast for the available vision.

Road positioning

Traffic and road situations are constantly changing and so does the safest position on the road. Low risk riders aim to be in the right place all the time.

Space, surface and sight

Three important things to consider when choosing your position on the road. These are: space, surface and sight.

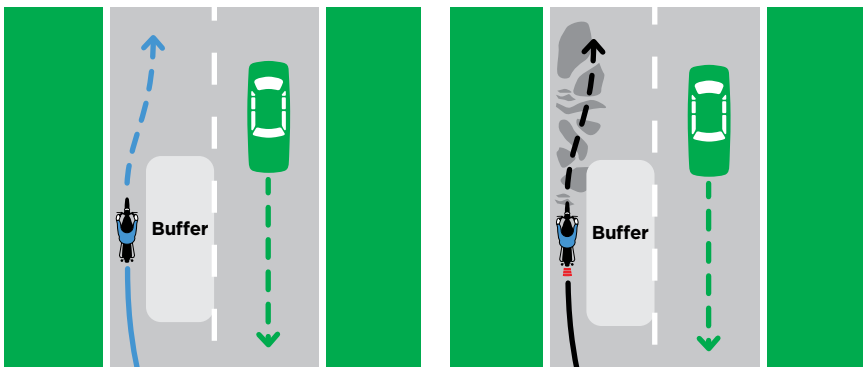
Space

As a motorcycle rider you have very little to protect you in a crash other than your riding gear. The more space from other vehicles and pedestrians the better. Creating space from hazards is referred to as buffering. Moving away from hazards can also increase the likelihood of being seen.

Surface

As the operator of a two-wheel vehicle motorcycle riders need to be very aware of the road surface. Paint, oil, water, sand, gravel, pot holes and metal plates are all examples of different road surfaces that a rider needs to manage. For a motorcycle rider a relatively small change in road position can result in a significant change in the quality of road surface.

Although it is best to avoid riding on a poor surface, sometimes this is not possible, for example when buffering an oncoming vehicle the best road position may be the left side of the lane. The left side of the road may be bumpy and broken up, however it may be preferable to ride on this surface to get a safe buffer from the oncoming hazard. The solution is easy, if you need to ride on a poor surface to buffer a hazard, just slow down.



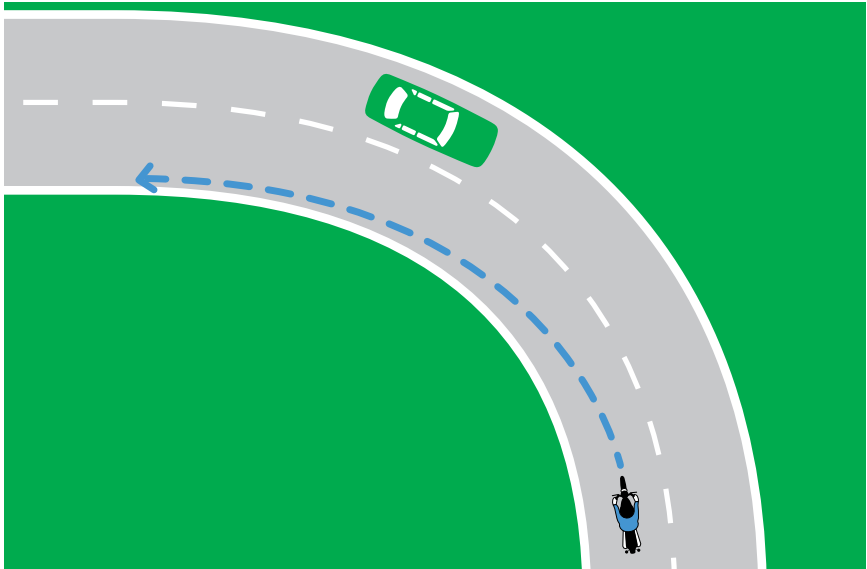
Move away from hazards, like oncoming cars.

If you need to ride on a poor surface in order to maintain a buffer, slow down.

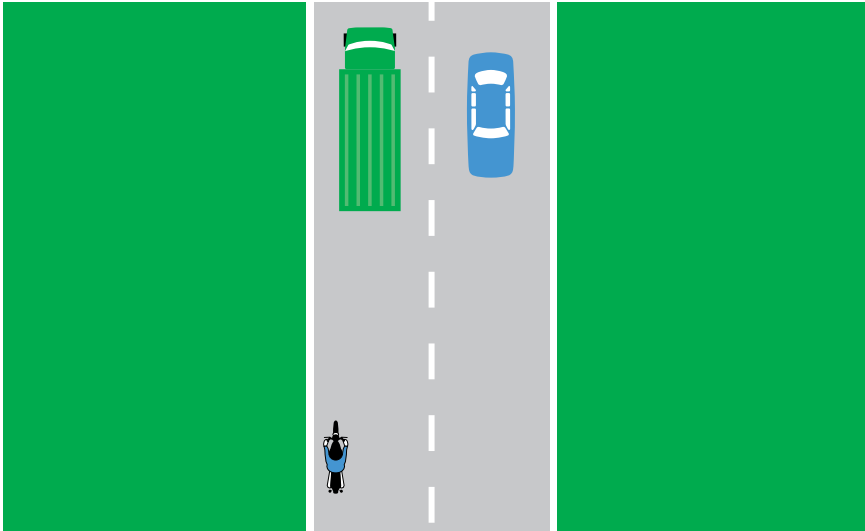
Sight

A good road position can allow you to see further and get more information about what is happening up ahead. Generally the right side of the lane provides good vision up the road, to the sides and also behind you. However the right side of the lane is a dangerous position to be in if there is oncoming traffic. Try to choose a road position that provides good vision without compromising your buffer from hazards. This is particularly true when following large vehicles or when taking left bends.

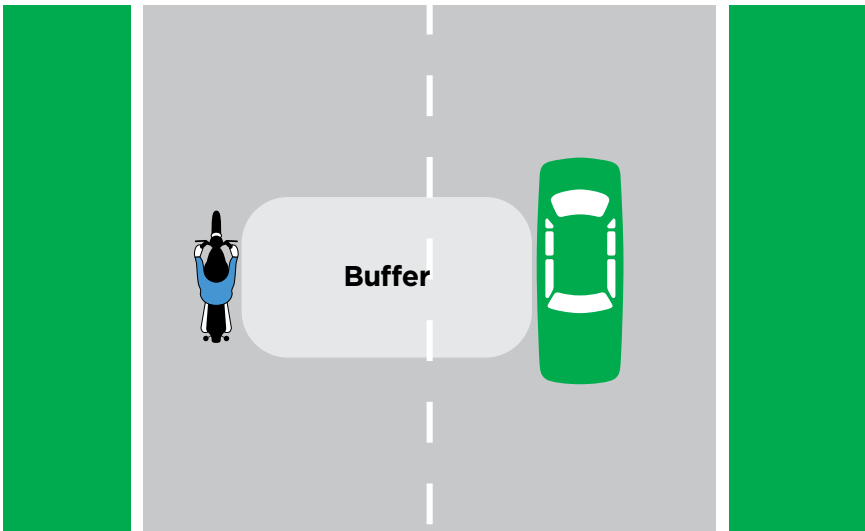
By actively managing space, surface and sight a rider can significantly reduce the risk of crashing.



Maintain a buffer from hazards and slow down if vision is limited.

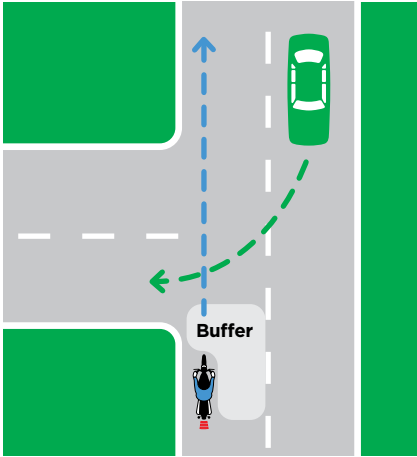


Maintain a buffer from hazards and a good following distance when vision is limited.

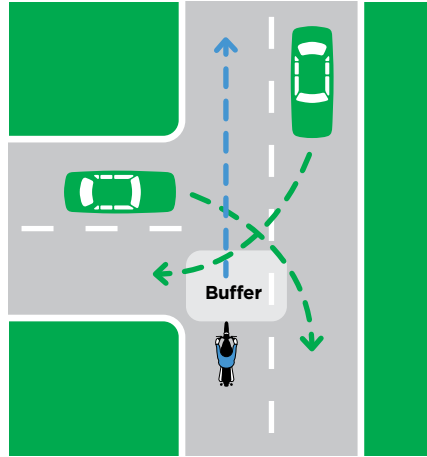


Create space (buffer) oncoming vehicles.

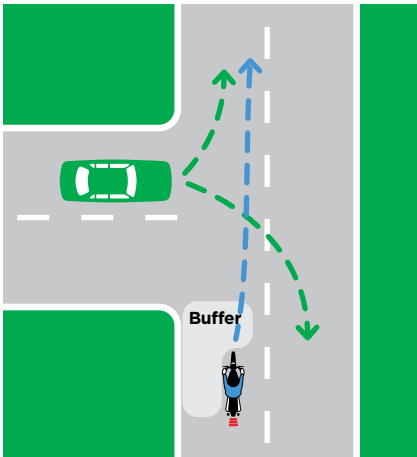
Examples of buffering



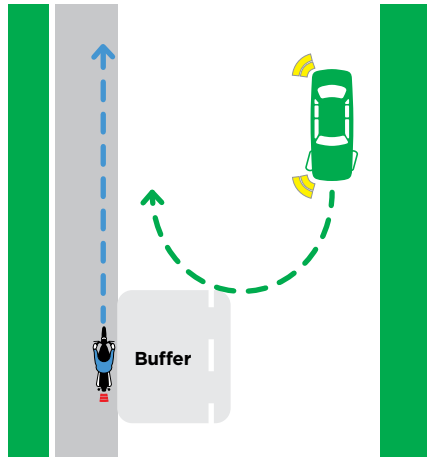
Slow down and buffer when a vehicle could turn across your path.



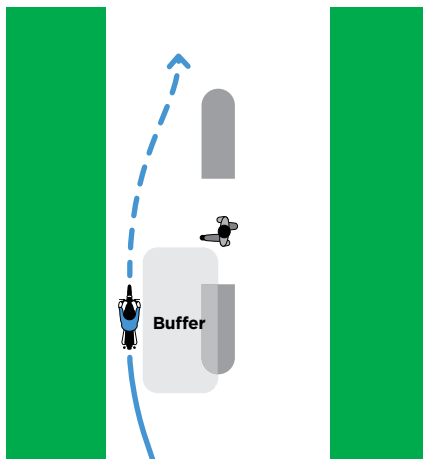
Buffer both vehicles and slow down.



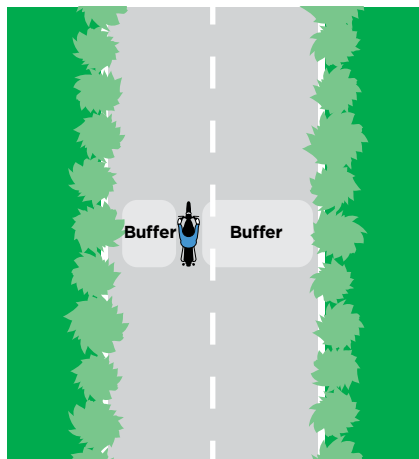
Slow down and buffer when a vehicle could turn across your path or enter the lane you are in.



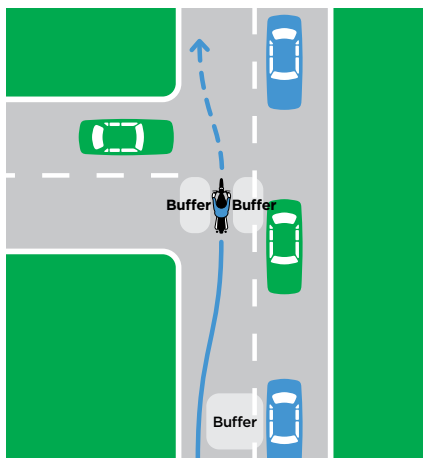
You may need to buffer hazards even when they are on the other side of the road.



Buffer all hazards including pedestrians.



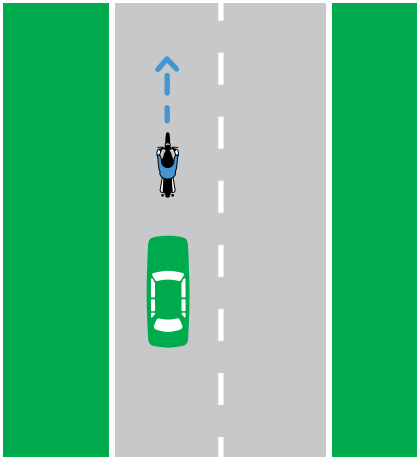
On country roads staying on the right side of your lane can provide space from wildlife and improve vision. However, remember to buffer oncoming vehicles and be in the correct position for crests and curves.



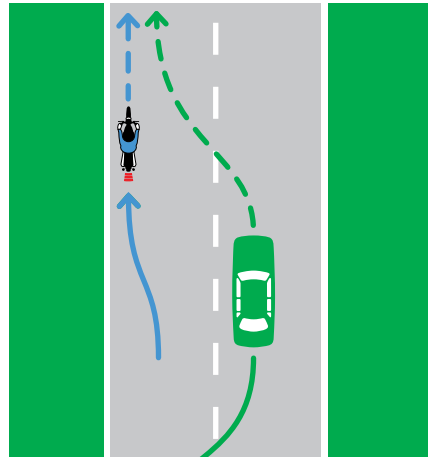
In busy traffic you may be in the left side of the lane for most of the time only moving right to buffer vehicles in side streets.

A motorcycle rider can legally use any part of their lane.

Vehicles following

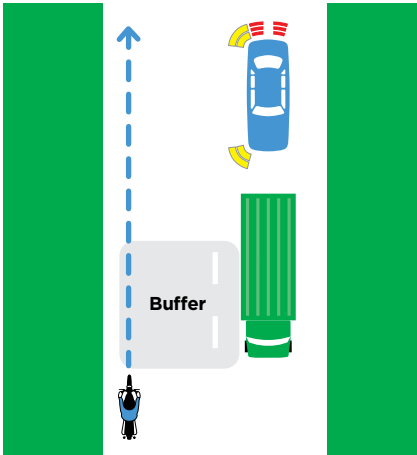


If vehicles are following close behind it is sometimes better to select the middle of the lane.



Maintain a buffer from vehicles as they pass you.

Vision

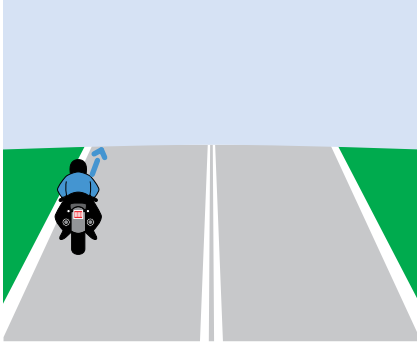


Buffering can improve your vision and make it easier for others to see you.

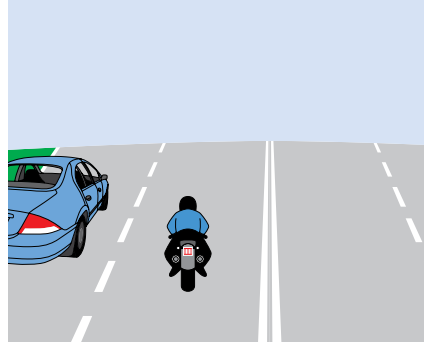


The further back you follow other vehicles the better you can see around them.

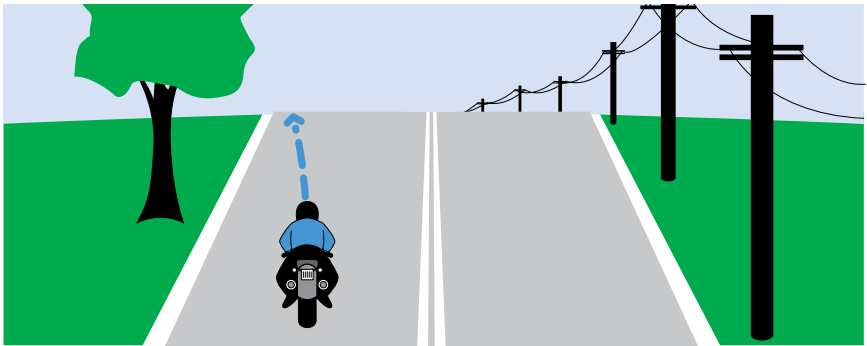
Blind crests



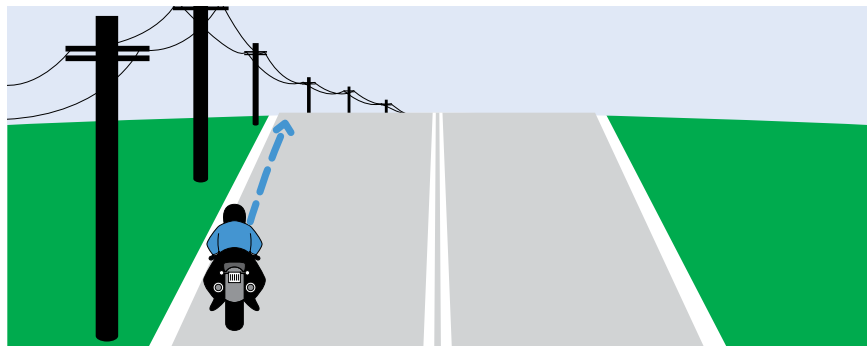
Approaching blind crests create a buffer from possible oncoming traffic.



If there is a possibility of multiple hazards, slow down and buffer both sides.

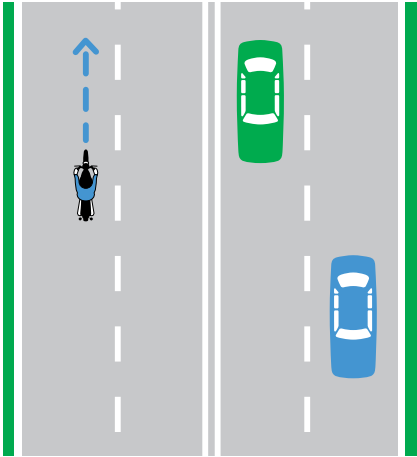


Approaching blind crests look for clues as to where the road goes. Slow down and select a road position to suit.

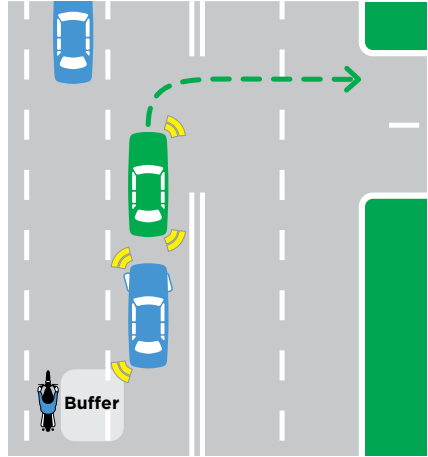


Approaching blind crests look for clues as to where the road goes. Slow down and select a road position to suit.

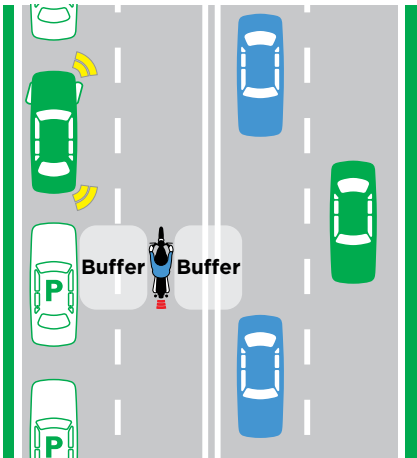
Multi-laned roads



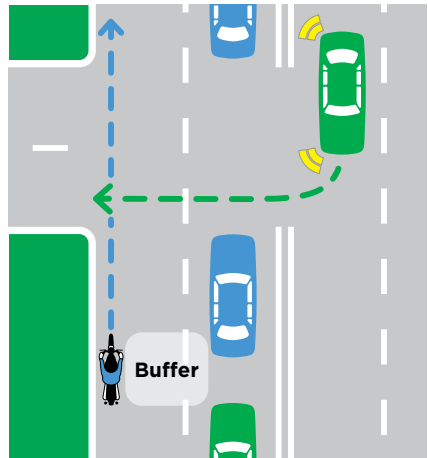
On multi-laned roads, reduce the risk of a head on crash by choosing a lane away from the oncoming traffic.



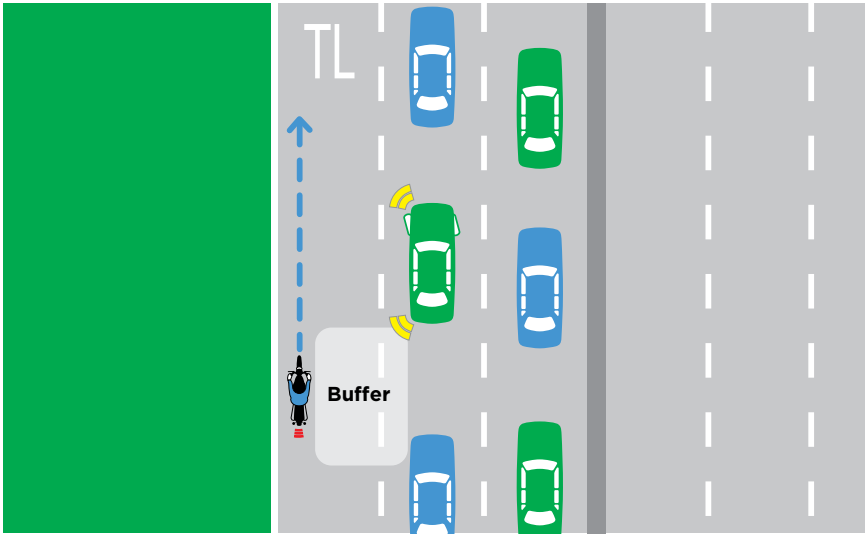
Create a buffer from turning vehicles in case not all the vehicles are turning.



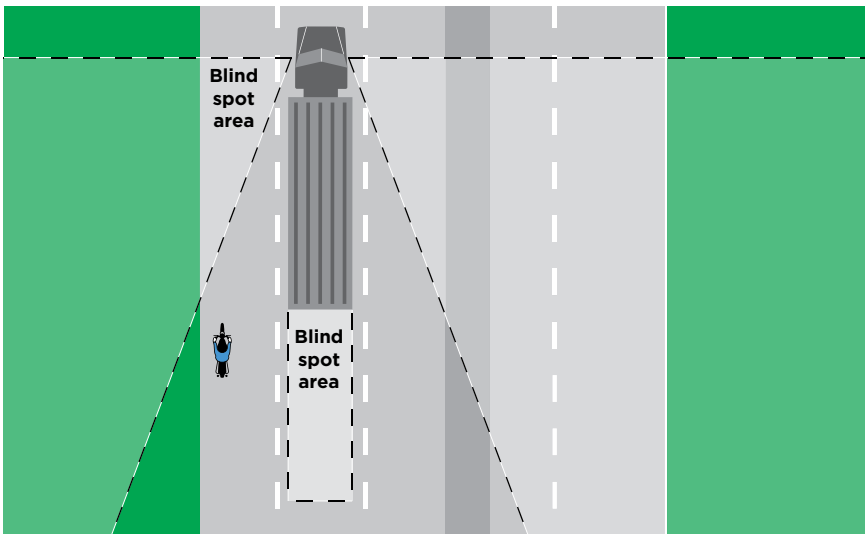
Buffer both parked and oncoming vehicles.



Slow down and buffer slow moving or stopped traffic, they may be blocking the view of a turning vehicle.

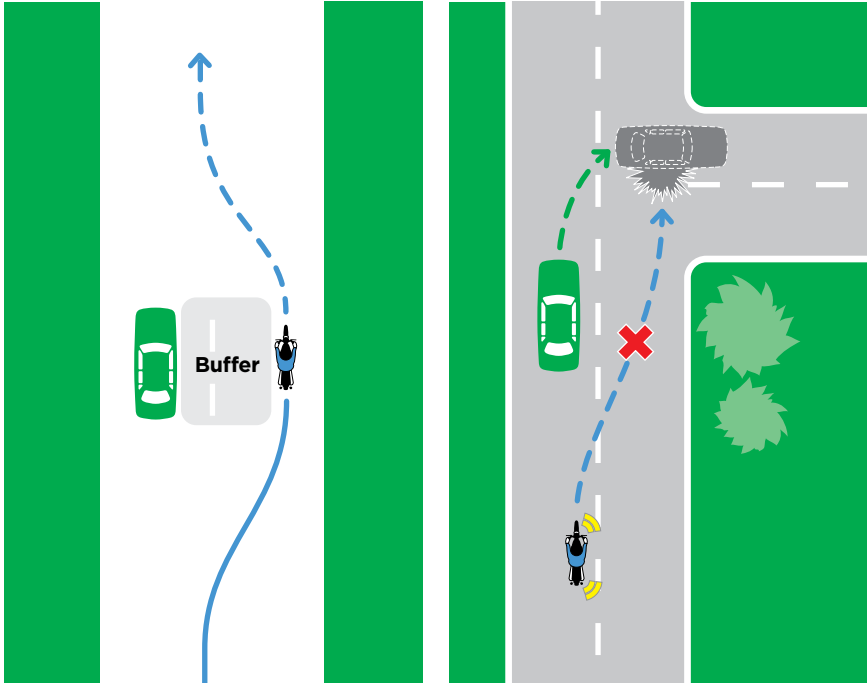


When using bus or transit lanes keep a buffer from other vehicles in case they change lanes to make a turn.



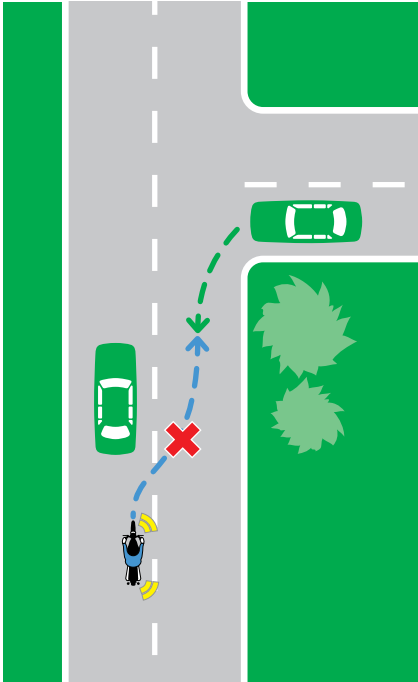
Do not ride beside other vehicles or in their blind spots.

Overtaking

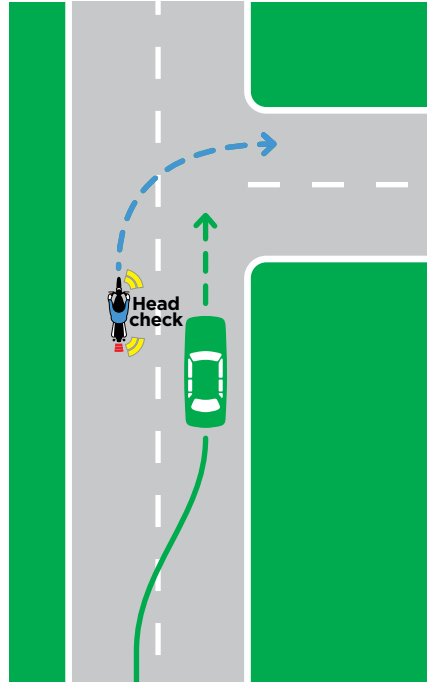


When overtaking create a buffer from the vehicle you are passing.

Before overtaking a slow moving vehicle check for side streets and driveway that they may be turning into.

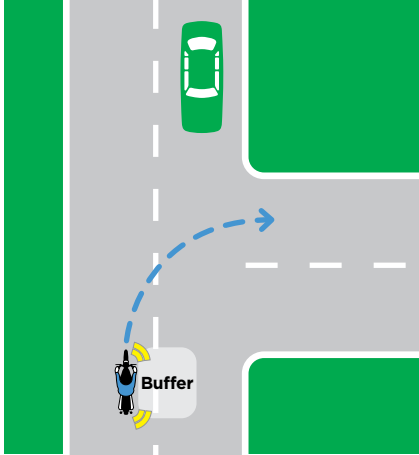


Before overtaking check for side streets and concealed driveways, particularly in country areas.

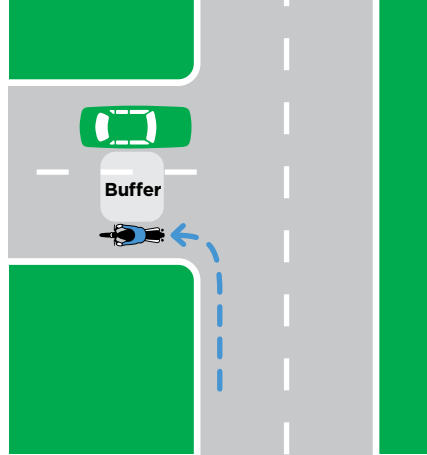


Before turning into a street or driveway have a head check for vehicles that may be overtaking you.

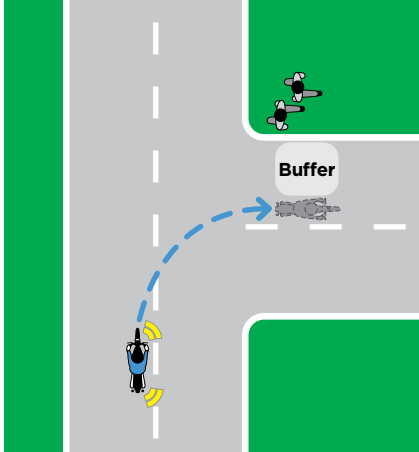
Turns at intersections



Maintain a buffer from oncoming traffic while you are waiting to turn right.



When turning left from a single lane, start the turn as near as practicable to the far left side of the road. Buffering hazards as you exit the turn.

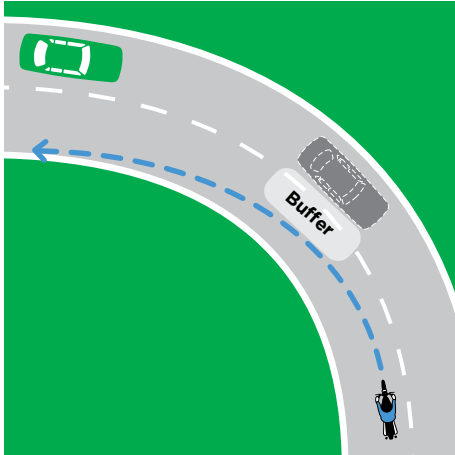


When turning right from a single lane, start the turn as near as practicable to the far right of the lane or middle of the road, buffering hazards as you exit the turn.

When turning left or right you must give way to any pedestrians crossing the road into which you are turning.

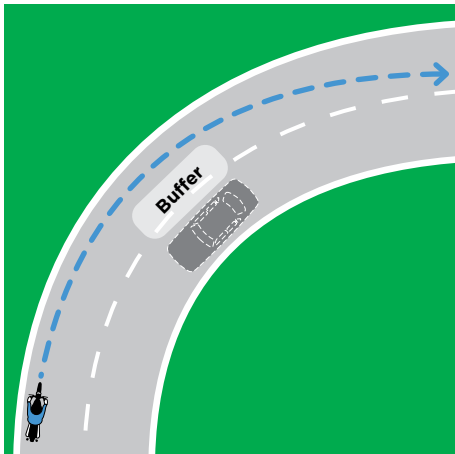
Positioning for curves and bends

Starting curves wide will improve your vision. Planning to finish them in tight will help you get your speed right and leave you room for slight errors. Most importantly, keep away from the area where oncoming vehicles are likely to cross the centre of the road (the head-on zone). Taking curves and bends this way will slow you down a little on the approach but will allow you to accelerate out much earlier, when you have a clear view.



On blind left curves slow down and begin to move left as vision becomes limited.

Plan to start curves wide for vision. Plan to finish in tight. Keep away from the head-on zone.



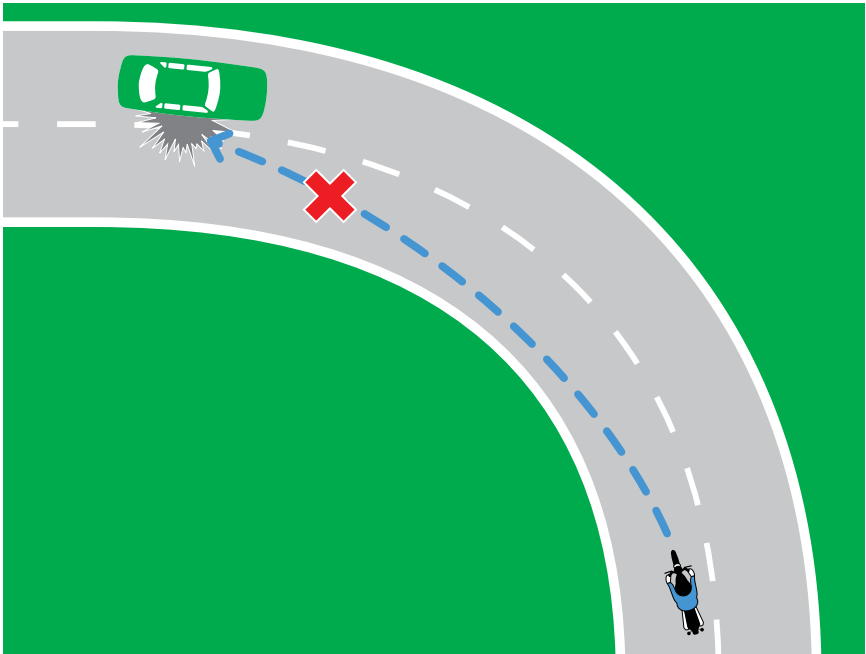
On right curves slow down and keep to the left until you see the road is clear of oncoming traffic.

Many crashes happen because riders run wide on the exit of a turn.

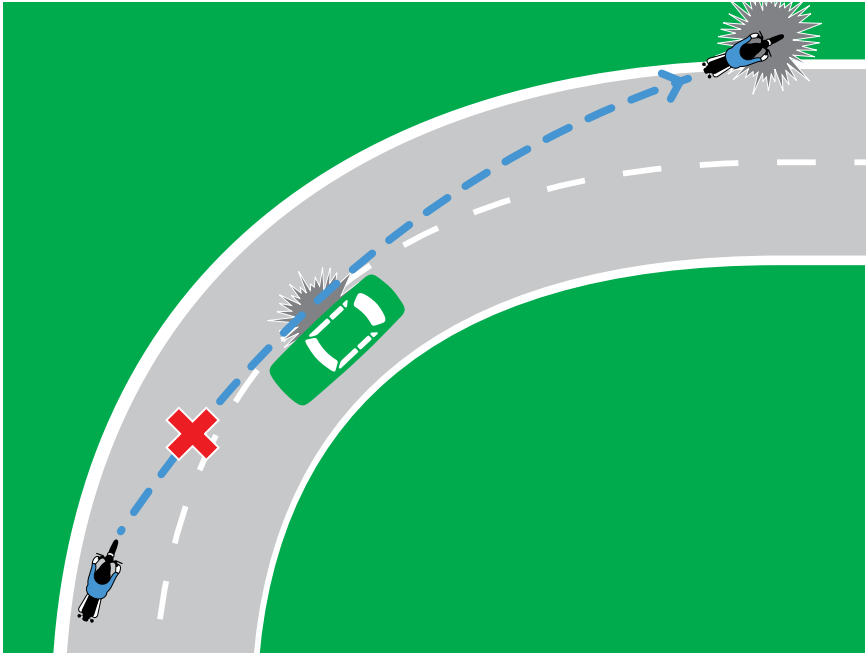
The danger of exiting wide

Many riders try to straighten turns resulting in the motorcycle exiting the curve out wide.

This is a particularly dangerous practice as it allows no room for error. If the curve 'tightens up' or changes direction the rider will need additional effort to complete the turn. Furthermore, on right curves the risk of a head-on collision is greatly increased.



Exiting wide can result in a crash.



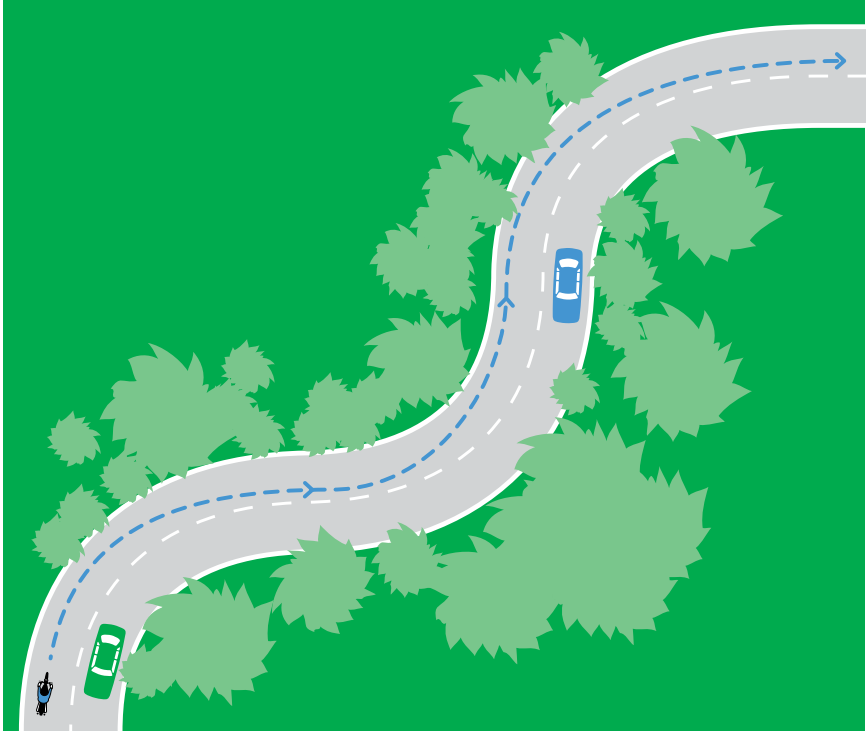
Turning in too early can result in a head-on collision or a crash on the exit of the curve.

When a rider finishes a curve wide there is no room for error.

Planning a series of curves

Starting curves wide and planning to finish them in tight allows you to link a series of curves together.

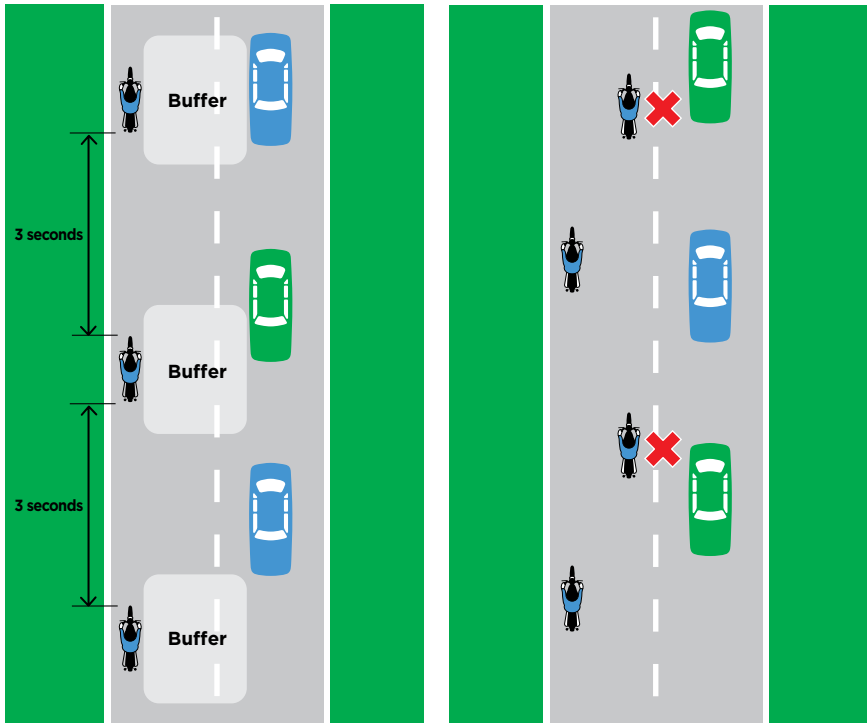
By exiting each curve in tight you will be perfectly positioned for the entry into the next curve.



Planning to finish in tight will position you for the next curve.

If you see an oncoming vehicle remember it is very important to create a buffer.

Riding in groups



Riding 'single file' allows every rider to buffer hazards and if a 3-second following distance is maintained vision is less affected.

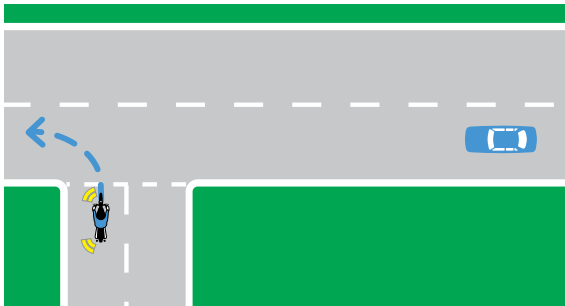
Riding 'staggered file' can be dangerous. Riders are unable to buffer hazards and vision is reduced by the other motorcycles in the group.

Making decisions

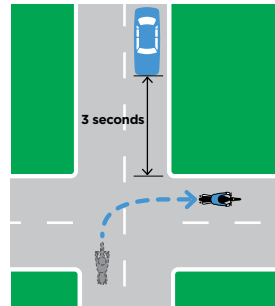
Selecting a safe gap when turning, overtaking or changing lanes is a critical skill to safe riding. Gap selection is also very important at intersections where the chance of colliding with another vehicle is very high if the gap you select is too small.

Gap selection

A safe gap is one that enables you to turn, overtake, change lanes or cross an intersection without affecting the crash avoidance space of other road users.



Choose a gap so other vehicles are not forced to change speed or road position.



Be clear of the intersection for 3 seconds before other vehicles arrive.

A safe gap ensures that other vehicles do not need to change their speed or position. When turning across traffic make sure your vehicle is clear of the intersection by at least 3 seconds before the approaching vehicles arrive. When joining a traffic stream select a gap that allows you to reach the traffic speed before the approaching vehicles are within 3 seconds of your motorcycle.

Overtaking other vehicles is very hazardous. You not only need to be able to judge the gap between your motorcycle and an oncoming vehicle, you also need to have enough space between your motorcycle and the vehicle you are overtaking.

When overtaking maintain a buffer zone between your motorcycle and the vehicle you are overtaking.

On country roads and highways there are often overtaking lanes at regular intervals that allow you to safely overtake.

Hazard perception

When riding a motorcycle good hazard perception is important and responding to hazards correctly is essential.

Responding to hazard

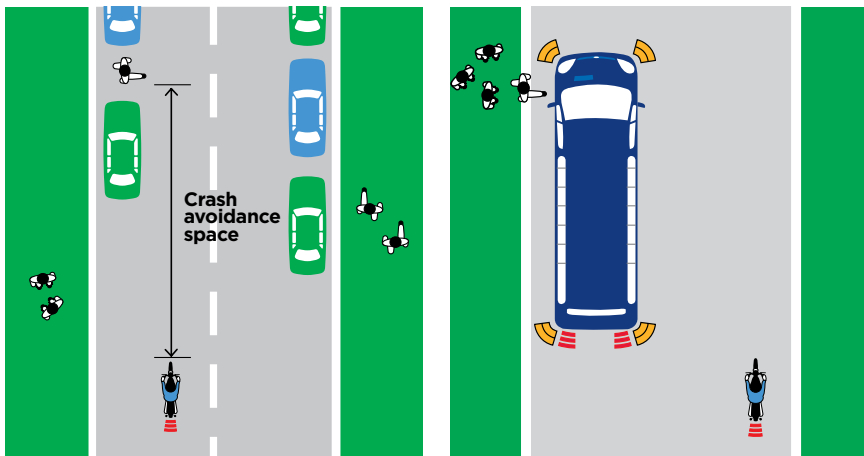
A hazard is something which has the potential to accelerate or steer into your crash avoidance space.

The 3-second gap can also be used for situations where there is potential for something to accelerate or steer into the space. For example, a vehicle in an adjacent street could fail to give way and accelerate out. Or a vehicle approaching could turn without warning into an intersection and steer across your path.

Experienced motorcyclists who ride low risk, can mentally judge the 3-second gap in front of their motorcycle. If there is potential for a hazard to enter this crash avoidance space, your response should be to protect it by:

- slowing down ('Setting up' or covering the brakes)
- moving away, creating a 'buffer' from the hazard by changing your position on the road or changing lanes.

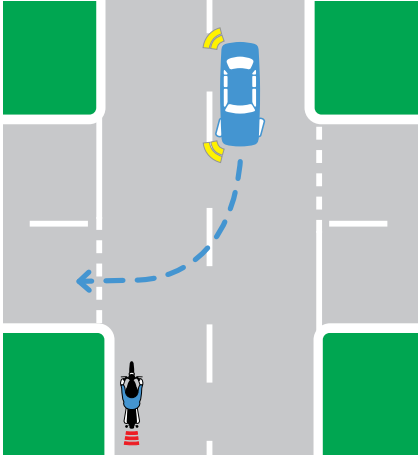
Your ability to respond means that you are better able to deal with any dangerous situation that might occur.



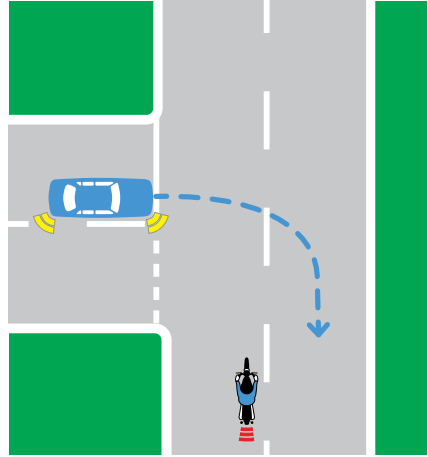
Respond before reaching the hazard.

Respond when something can enter your crash avoidance space.

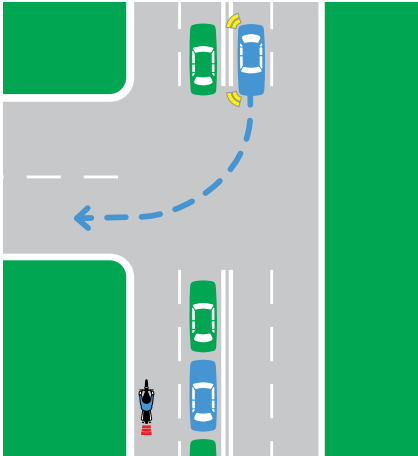
Examples of situations that require a response



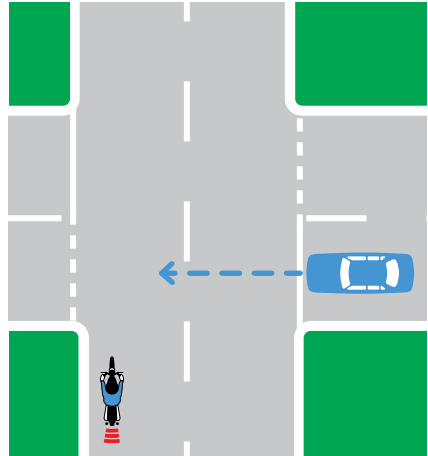
A vehicle waiting to turn in front of your path.



A vehicle waiting to pull out from the left side.



Stopped traffic obscuring vision at an intersection.



A vehicle waiting to pull out from the right side.

Basic riding techniques

The key to good riding technique is smoothness, and the key to smoothness is good preparation and practice.

Riding posture

When you first get a motorcycle take the time to adjust the controls to suit your height and build. Correct riding posture reduces fatigue and improves control.

Five key points of posture

To control a motorcycle well, your body must be in the correct position:

- sit well forward
- keep your head up and point your chin in your direction of travel
- relax your arms and place minimal weight on your wrists
- keep your back relaxed and support your weight with your stomach muscles
- grip the motorcycle firmly with your legs and knees.

In curves, point your chin through the turn and scan the road with your eyes.

Braking technique

Correct braking is done in two stages:

1. put light pressure on the brake pedal and pause (set up the brakes)
2. progressively apply the necessary braking pressure (squeeze).

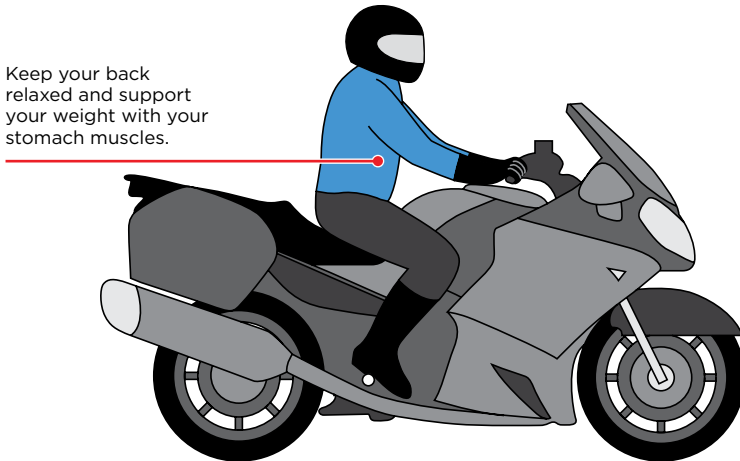
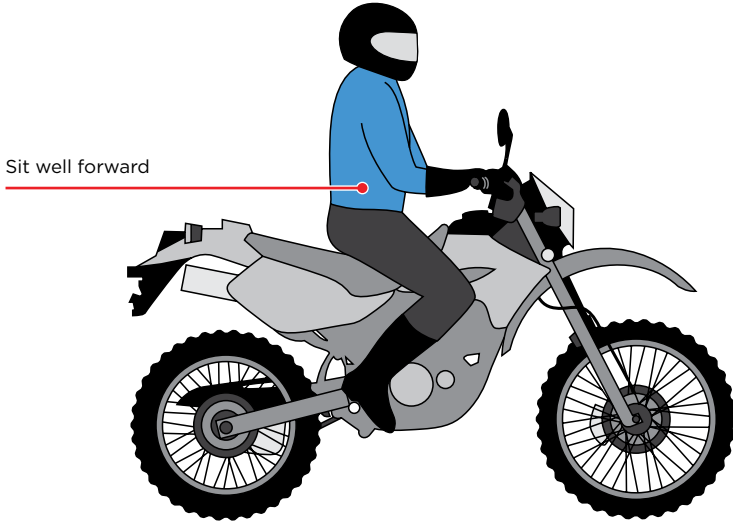
Two-stage braking makes braking more effective, reduces the chance of skidding and gives you better control.

Harsh or excessive braking pressure may cause skidding and a loss of control, particularly on wet or gravel roads.

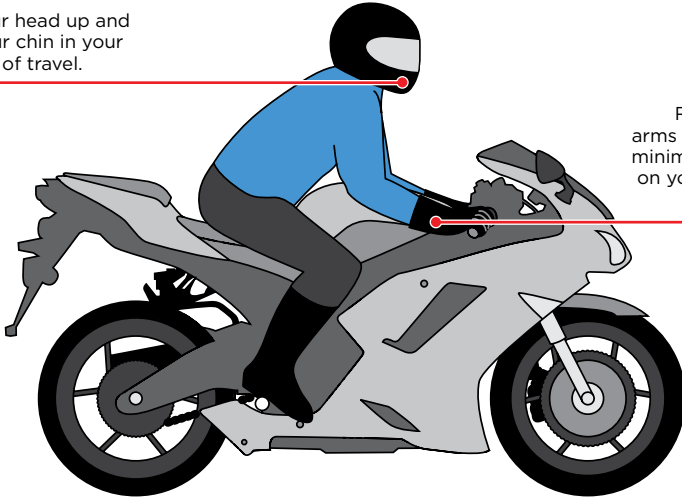
If the front wheel starts to skid, quickly release the front brake, and reapply gently. If the rear wheel skids, gently release the rear brake and slowly reapply.

Applying the front brake in a curve can make the motorcycle run wide.

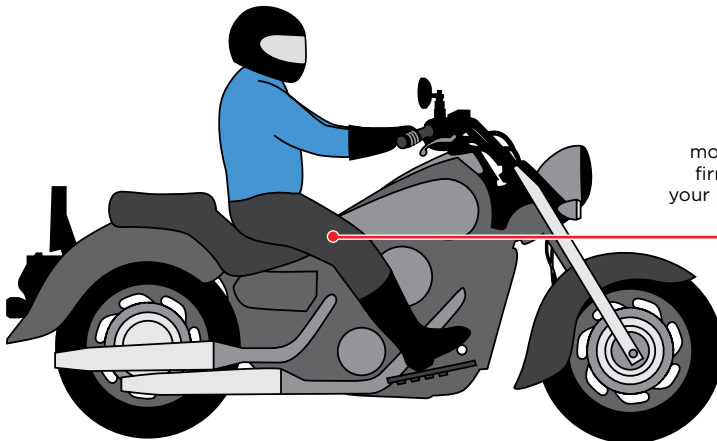
The five key points of riding posture apply to all types of motorcycles



Keep your head up and point your chin in your direction of travel.



Relax your arms and place minimal weight on your wrists.



Grip the motorcycle firmly with your legs and knees.

Steering technique

A motorcycle can be steered using a number of different inputs. Handle bar pressure, body weight and changes in speed all have an effect on a motorcycle's direction of travel. Good riders use a combination of these inputs to achieve smooth and precise turns.

Handle bar pressure

A motorcycle can be steered by direct steering or counter steering. With direct steering the motorcycle goes in the direction to which the handle bars are turned. With counter steering the motorcycle goes in the opposite direction to which the handle bars are turned, for example a slight forward pressure on the left handle bar will make the motorcycle turn left. Direct steering is only used for very low speed turns, such as U-turns and turns at intersections. Counter steering has more effect as speed increases.

Body weight

How a rider uses their body weight will have a significant effect on a turning motorcycle. Leaning with the motorcycle in a curve allows the motorcycle to be more upright thereby giving the tyres better grip and the motorcycle greater ground clearance. With low speed turns leaning out from the turn can help balance the motorcycle.

Effect of speed

The faster a motorcycle is travelling the harder it is to turn. Reducing speed before turning is essential. Wait until the motorcycle begins to straighten before accelerating. Accelerating will stand a motorcycle up and too much will make the motorcycle run wide.

During very low speed turns, for example U-turns, a gentle use of the throttle, clutch and rear brake can be used to control speed.

Leaning with the motorcycle in a curve



Head and eyes level with chin pointed in the direction of the turn.

Arms relaxed with slight pressure on the inside handle bar.

Body weight on the inside of the turn.

Knees firmly gripping the motorcycle.

Summary

What you should know about safe riding

This section has explained how to reduce the likelihood of being involved in a crash by applying the principles of low risk riding. After reading this section you should know:

- how to calculate a 3-second crash avoidance space
- the two stages of effective braking
- the most appropriate road position to adopt based on space surface and sight
- how to steer a motorcycle
- the most effective riding posture
- how to plan a series of curves.

Road rules for motorcycle riders

Motorcycle riders must follow the same road rules as other road users. So, make sure you keep up to date with the main road rules and requirements, found in the Road User Handbook.

The rules covered in this section only apply to motorcycle riders.

Motorcycle specific road rules and signs

Riding on a motorcycle

Motorcycle riders must:

- sit astride the rider's seat facing forwards
- wear an approved motorcycle helmet, properly fitted and fastened securely to their head
- 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, unless it is travelling at less than 10km/h and the rider is:
 - (a) manoeuvring to park the motorcycle
 - (b) decelerating to come to a stop
 - (c) accelerating from a rest.

Riders can have one foot off a foot peg to stretch and relieve leg cramps.

Helmets

Riders must wear a motorcycle helmet complying with either the:

- Australian Standard 1698 (AS 1698)
- Australian/New Zealand Standard 1698 (AS/NZS 1698)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Standard 22.05 (UNS 22.05).

Keeping left

Vehicles must travel as near as practicable to the left side of the road.

This rule does not apply to the rider of a motorcycle. Lane positioning is important to a rider's safety. They can use any part of a lane to position safely and avoid hazards.

Lane filtering (unrestricted riders only)

Unrestricted riders can lane filter between vehicles in traffic stopped side by side at intersections, only when it is safe to do so and;

- where there are marked lanes with traffic travelling in the same direction
- the speed travelled by the motorcycle is 30km/h or less
- there is a safe distance between vehicles to avoid a crash.

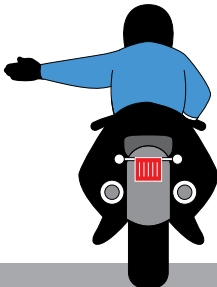
Lane filtering is not allowed through moving traffic. Riders must not overtake on the left side of vehicles stopped at the far left side of the road.

Riders must not lane filter in a 'school zone' or 'bus only' lane. Learner and provisional riders are not permitted to lane filter at any time.

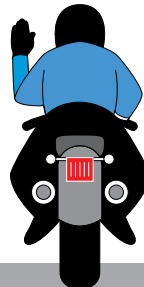
Hand signals

Motorcycle riders can use hand signals for stopping, slowing or turning. Hand signals can improve rider safety in situations where very bright light conditions made 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.



You are turning left.



You are stopping or slowing down.

Lending or borrowing a motorcycle

Many fatal rider crashes occur on borrowed motorcycles. It is an offence to let a person ride your motorcycle if they are not licensed for the motorcycle type. Even if a person has a licence and you know them well, it is still easy to make mistakes on an unfamiliar motorcycle. The best solution is not to lend or borrow motorcycles.

Motorcycle warning signs

This warning sign shows a motorcycle rider needs to use caution for the road ahead.



Riding at night

Riding at night, particularly on country roads can be more dangerous for motorcyclists. The risk of hitting an animal, misjudging a curve, or not seeing a problem on the road surface is also increased at night. If you ride at night, slow down to a speed to reduce these risks and ride within the range of the motorcycle's headlight.

Motorcycles with an engine capacity not exceeding 100ml are limited to a maximum of 40km/h. For motorcycles with an engine capacity exceeding 100ml but not exceeding 200ml, a maximum speed of 50km/h applies. However, if your motorcycle's headlight has an effective range of at least 50m the restrictions above do not apply.

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

Carrying passengers and loads

Motorcycle passengers

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

- sit astride the motorcycle pillion seat facing forward
- keep both feet on the footrests designed for use by the pillion passenger
- wear a correctly fitted and securely fastened approved motorcycle helmet
- be eight years of age or older
- not interfere with the riders control of the motorcycle.

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

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.

Children under eight are allowed to travel in a sidecar.

Before you carry passengers you must have held a motorcycle rider licence for at least 12 months (not including a learner rider licence). Learner and Provisional P1 riders cannot carry passengers.

Loading

Any load carried on a motorcycle must not project:

- more than 150mm beyond the outer extremity of the front wheel
- more than 300mm beyond the outer extremity of the rear wheel
- 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
- more than 900mm beyond the outer extremity of the rear wheel
- 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 unless the rider is travelling less than 500 metres for farming activity.

Towing and being towed

If a motorcycle is being towed by another vehicle, with a towline (chain, rope, fabric, strap or wire), the distance between the two vehicles must not exceed 2.5 metres.

If the towline is longer than 2 metres, a white or brightly coloured flag, piece of cloth or other similar material must be attached to the line as a warning.

Parking

Motorcycle parking

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

A motorcycle is generally more stable when parked facing up a slope.



Some areas are designated motorcycle parking only.

Restrictions on where to ride

Road and road related areas

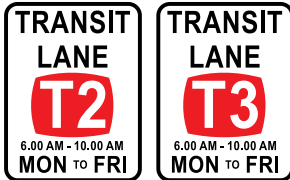
To ride a motorcycle on a road or road related area the rider must hold a current rider licence and the motorcycle must have current registration. Road and road related areas mean any area that is publicly accessible to vehicles. This includes:

- roads
- the shoulder of the road
- car parks
- fire trails
- state forests
- recreation areas.

Riding on footpaths

A motorcycle must not be ridden on a footpath. Exemptions apply for postal delivery officers provided their motorcycle does not exceed 110ml and is ridden at a speed not exceeding 10km/h.

Transit lanes



Motorcycle riders are allowed to use these lanes.

Bus lanes



Motorcycle riders are allowed to use these lanes.

Bus only lanes



When the words BUSES ONLY appear on a BUS LANE sign, or lane markings indicate a BUS ONLY lane, only buses are allowed to drive in these lanes. Motorcycle riders are NOT allowed to use these lanes.

T-way lanes



These are special lanes which can only be used by authorised buses and service vehicles. Motorcycle riders are NOT allowed to use these lanes.

Bicycle lanes

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

Summary

What you should know about road rules for motorcycle riders

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

- the rules regarding 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.

Notes

Motorcycle safety and compliance

Before you ride a motorcycle, do some basic checks to ensure your safety while riding. In most cases you will need an annual safety inspection to register the motorcycle.

Your motorcycle must be registered.

It is an offence to allow another person to ride an unregistered motorcycle on a road or road-related area. An unregistered motorcycle is not covered by compulsory third party insurance. This means you could be liable for compensation to any person injured in a crash. The penalties are severe for riding an unregistered or uninsured motorcycle.

Make sure your motorcycle is suitable for safe road use for your pre-provisional training course. At the start of the course your motorcycle will be inspected.

Lights, tyres, mirrors, chain guard etc will all be checked. If your motorcycle is not suitable for safe road use you will not be able to undertake the course. You will need to rebook and pay the training fees again.

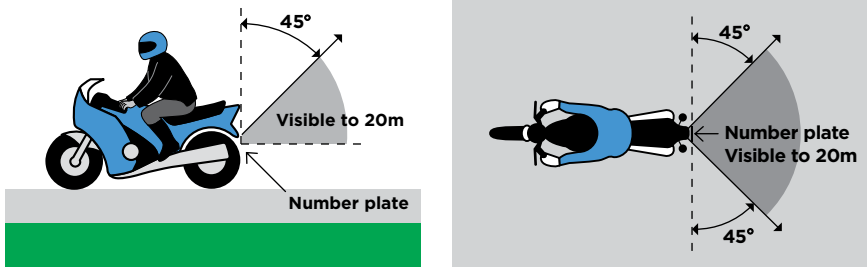
Number plates

NSW number plates on the motorcycle you ride or own must:

- be issued by Service NSW
- match what is printed on the Certificate of Registration
- be clean and not damaged
- be readable from a distance (at least 20m), from above and from the side (within a 45-degree arc from the centre of the motorcycle), see diagrams
- not be obscured, for example, hidden by L plates or P plates
- ensure if a plate cover is used, they are clear, clean, untinted, non-reflective and flat
- be returned to Service NSW if the registration is cancelled
- be placed on the back and have a light for clear visibility at night.

It is an offence to:

- alter number plates in any way
- attach a number plate to any vehicle other than the one registered with Transport for NSW
- use a number plate cover that is not flat, clear and untinted
- have an obscured number plate.



Don't obscure any part of your number plate as heavy penalties apply.

Suitable for safe road use

Before you ride you need to make sure that your motorcycle is suitable for safe road use. A motorcycle that is safe to ride and meets the standards required by law.

Some of the most important rules about motorcycles are described here. If you want to check the rules applying to your motorcycle, visit our website or call us on **13 22 13**.

Tyres

Your motorcycle's tyres must be in good condition and have a tread at least 1.5 mm deep across the tread surface. Motorcycles must not have regrooved tyres, unless the tyre was manufactured to be regrooved.

Keep the tyres inflated to the pressure recommended by the manufacturer or they may overheat and fail. The sidewalls of the tyres should not have any cracks or bumps. If your tyres wear unevenly there may be a problem with the steering or suspension.

Tyre pressures are critical to a motorcycle's handling. Under-inflated tyres significantly increase the risk of crashing.

Mirrors and indicators

A rear vision mirror must be fitted to each side of motorcycles made after 1st January 1983. All other motorcycles must have a right side mirror. Mirrors must not project more than 150mm beyond the extreme width of the motorcycle.

Flashing turn indicators must be fitted front and rear. Motorcycles manufactured before 1 January 1979 do not require indicators.

Checking your motorcycle

Check your:

- lights – headlights, brake lights, indicators
- brakes
- steering
- horn
- tyres
- chain guard.

Adjust the controls of the motorcycle so they are right for you. You should be able to reach all the controls easily without being cramped.

Make sure that your lights all work and can be clearly seen. Make sure that your lights and mirrors are clean. Adjust the mirrors so that you have a good view to the rear and sides.

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

Summary

What you should know about motorcycles being suitable for safe road use

This section has provided guidelines to ensure your motorcycle is suitable for safe road use and the requirements for registration. After reading this section you should know:

- the registration requirements of your motorcycle
- how to check your motorcycle and ensure it's suitable for safe road use
- about defect notices on unroadworthy motorcycles
- the requirements for number plates.

Penalties

Under NSW laws, if you do not comply with the road rules you can be penalised.

Traffic offences

Penalties for traffic offences include fines, disqualification from holding or applying for a licence, licence cancellation, refusal or suspension, passenger restrictions and in extreme cases, imprisonment.

Demerit points for traffic offences

If you break the road rules, you can be fined and for certain traffic offences, you will have demerit points recorded against your licence. There is a limit to the number of points you can build up before your licence is suspended.

Some riding offences attract double demerit points during holiday periods. These offences are speeding and not wearing a motorcycle helmet. Increased penalties apply for offences committed in a school zone.

For more information about demerit points, visit our website or call us on **13 22 13**.

Speeding offences

Penalties for exceeding the speed limit include demerit points, fines, licence suspension or disqualification. Penalties increase depending on how many kilometres over the speed limit you are going. The minimum penalty for speeding is one demerit point. Any provisional rider caught speeding will incur at least four demerit points and will have their licence suspended for at least three months.

Over the speed limit by 30km/h and 45km/h

If you go over the speed limit by:

- more than 30km/h but less than 45km/h you will get a minimum of five demerit points, a large fine and your licence will be suspended for at least three months
- more than 45km/h you will get a minimum of six demerit points, a larger fine and your licence will be suspended for at least six months. The six months suspension can be applied by police at the roadside.

If your licence is suspended for speeding, a letter will be sent to you to advise when the suspension starts. This will happen even if your demerit points are under the relevant limit.

Your licence will be suspended for a longer period should the demerit points for a speeding offence bring your total points to or over your relevant limit.

Other serious riding offences

If you are convicted of more serious riding offences you may be disqualified from riding by a court. Some offences carry minimum disqualification periods. When these do not apply the court decides how long you should be disqualified; it can be up to five years or longer. You may even be sent to prison. These offences include:

- riding or attempting to ride under the influence of alcohol or any other drugs
- riding or attempting to ride when your alcohol level is over the legal limit for your licence
- refusing to take a breath test
- not stopping after a crash in which someone was injured or killed
- riding at a dangerous speed
- riding in a dangerous manner.

Negligent or dangerous riding causing injury or death

The law provides for serious charges to be laid against people riding a motorcycle in a negligent or dangerous manner which causes injury or death.

As the rider of a motorcycle involved in a crash where somebody is injured because of your negligent riding, you could be imprisoned, face a heavy fine and a period of disqualification. If somebody is killed in such a crash you could be imprisoned and face a higher fine.

If you are riding a motorcycle at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public, and you are involved in a crash which results in injury or death, the penalties can be very severe.

Should somebody be injured as a result of your dangerous riding, you could be imprisoned for up to seven years. If somebody is killed in such a crash, you could be imprisoned for up to 10 years.

The maximum penalties for these offences can increase up to an additional 4 years if 'aggravating circumstances' are proven to exist.

These circumstances are:

- riding more than 45km/h over the maximum speed limit that applies on that section of road
- having a blood alcohol level of 0.15 or more
- riding a motorcycle to escape Police.

Street or drag racing

The penalties for hoon driving or riding are very severe. If the police suspect you have been involved in street or drag racing, or performing a burnout in circumstances of aggravation, they may take possession of your motorcycle on-the-spot. If convicted in a court, you will get a large fine and your motorcycle can be impounded for up to three months. You will also have to pay for storage fees when you get your motorcycle back. A second conviction for this offence can mean your motorcycle may be forfeited, taken away and sold. Under the demerit points scheme, three demerit points apply to burnout offences.

Drink riding

The drink riding penalties are increased according to the level of alcohol detected in the blood.

Penalties are severe and may include:

- large fines that increase if a second offence is committed
- immediate licence suspension
- prison terms that increase when a second offence is committed
- a period of disqualification from riding, up to lifetime disqualification.

Riding without a licence

Heavy penalties apply for riding without a licence. You can receive an on-the-spot fine or be required to attend court for riding:

- if you are not the holder of a rider licence
- with a licence that has expired
- if you have received permanent residence in NSW and are still using your interstate or overseas licence more than three months later.

Firmer penalties apply if you are convicted of driving or riding while you are disqualified from holding a driver licence, or when your licence has been cancelled, refused or suspended. These types of offences are heard in front of a magistrate at a local court. Penalties include a large fine.

You may be imprisoned and/or disqualified from driving and riding. Heavier penalties apply for second or subsequent offences. For more information on penalties, visit our website or call **13 22 13**.

Penalties also apply for allowing an unlicensed person to ride your motorcycle.

Fine defaults

When the outstanding amount is not paid to Revenue NSW, Transport for NSW will be advised to suspend your licence or vehicle/motorcycle registration. Certain business may also be restricted or refused until your fine is paid.

When you pay Revenue NSW, you will receive a letter to advise if any suspensions are lifted.

Alternatively, some fines can be paid at a service centre to lift the licence suspension on the spot.

If a payment is not received by Revenue NSW after 6 months from a licence suspension your licence can be cancelled. This means when all outstanding fines are paid, you will need to go to a service centre and apply for a new licence.

For more information about fines see **revenue.nsw.gov.au** or call:

- **1300 138 118** for penalty notices
- **1300 655 805** for overdue fines
- **1300 130 112** to pay by credit card.

Summary

What you should know about penalties

This section has provided an outline of the penalties for traffic offences. After reading this section you should know:

- how the demerit point scheme works
- the implications of serious, negligent and dangerous riding offences
- how the street and drag racing penalties can result in the loss of a motorcycle
- what happens if a traffic fine is not settled
- the implications of drink riding and unlicensed riding.

Glossary

Accelerate – increasing speed.

Adjacent direction – coming from the left or right, across your path.

Approaching – getting closer to, from any direction.

BAC – blood alcohol concentration given as grams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood.

Blind spot (see also head check) – area beside and behind that is not seen in mirrors.

Buffer/Buffering – positioning the motorcycle to create maximum space around you, away from hazards.

Certificate of competency – certificate issued on successful completion of a pre-learner or pre-provisional rider training course.

Colliding – crashing into.

Crash avoidance space – the space a rider needs in order to prevent a potential crash.

Combination (motorcycle and sidecar) – a motorcycle with a sidecar attached (also known as an outfit).

Compulsory – necessary, required, must do.

Contact patch (tyre) – the part of the tyre that is in contact with the road.

Covering the brakes – where the rider's fingers are over the front brake lever and their toes over the rear brake pedal without activating the brakes. See also setting up the brakes.

Counter steering – The action of applying slight pressure on the handlebar in the opposite direction of the turn to cause the motorcycle to lean into the turn.

Declared area (training) – a geographical area where completing a rider training scheme is required to obtain a licence.

Direct steering – the action of turning the handlebars in the direction you want the motorcycle to turn.

Dual purpose motorcycle – motorcycle made to ride on sealed or unsealed roads (see trail motorcycles).

Fairing – bodywork designed to deflect wind.

Fatigue – the experience of feeling sleepy, tired or exhausted. Fatigue affects your body and your ability to ride safely.

- Footpeg** – pegs attached to the motorcycle to support your feet.
- Friction point** – where the clutch begins to transmit drive to the rear wheel.
- Full face helmet** – a helmet fitted with a visor that has inbuilt chin protection and so covers all of the rider's face.
- Goggles** – eye protection that covers and forms a seal around the eyes.
- Hazard** – any object or feature, fixed or moving, that contains an element of actual or potential danger.
- Head check** – looking over the shoulder to the left or right to make sure that nothing is in the blind spot. Also known as a shoulder check.
- Intersection** – where two or more roads meet or join.
- Knowledge test** – a computer based test of the road rules.
- Lane** – an area of road marked by continuous or broken lines, designed for use by a signal line of traffic.
- Lean angle** – how far the motorcycle leans in a corner or turn.
- Lean in** – the physical movement of the riders upper body into the turn and slightly forward so that the motorcycle lean angle is reduced.
- Lean out** – the physical movement of the riders upper body away from the turn to allow the motorcycle lean angle to increase and tighten a turning circle.
- Lean with** – where the rider leans at approximately the same angle as the motorcycle.
- Learner Approved Motorcycle (LAM)** – learner and provisional riders must only ride a learner approved motorcycle (LAM). A list is published on our website. LAMs have an engine capacity of not more than 660ml, a power to weight ratio not more than 150kw per tonne and for electric motorcycles power of up to 25kw.
- MOST** – Motorcycle Operator Skill Test – the practical riding test.
- Motorcycle pre-learner training course** – a training course undertaken in order to obtain a learner rider licence.
- Motorcycle pre-provisional training course** – a training course undertaken in order to obtain a provisional rider licence.
- Multi-laned road** – a road with more than one lane in the same direction.
- Must** – a mandatory requirement.
- Oncoming** – a vehicle approaching, and travelling in the opposite direction.
- Overtaking** – to pass a vehicle travelling in the same direction as you.
- Pannier** – luggage boxes fitted to the sides of the motorcycles.
- Pillion** – motorcycle passenger.

Pot holes – holes in the road surface.

Power to weight ratio – engine power – in kilowatts to weight of motorcycle
– in tonnes including the rider.

Pressure (tyre) – the measure of how hard a tyre is inflated.

Proof of identity – documents to prove who you are.

Protective clothing – clothing designed to reduce rider injury and fatigue.

Rack – carrying tray/frame.

Rev – to increase engine speed.

Revs – engine speed measured in RPM (Revolutions Per Minute).

Road – an area that is opened to or used by the public and is developed for, or has as one of its main uses the driving or riding of motor vehicles.

Road related area – includes an area that divides a road, a footpath, nature strip, cycleway and parking areas,

Road motorcycle – motorcycle made primarily to ride on sealed roads.

Scanning – moving the eyes to different areas to build up a picture of events.

Screen – windscreen.

Setting up the brakes – the action of taking the freeplay out of the front and rear brake levers (see two stage braking).

Should – a recommendation, advice.

Sidocar – a wheeled attachment fitted to the left side of a motorcycle (see combination).

Size (engine) – usually measured in millilitres or cubic centimetres.

Skid – when a tyre loses grip on the road surface.

Special purpose motorcycle – motorcycle designed for racing and other specific purposes, often unregistrable.

Speed limit – the legal maximum speed for any particular stretch of road, licence or vehicle.

Speeding – excessive or inappropriate speed, including not adjusting your speed to suit the conditions or speed limit.

Speed limit – the legal speed for any particular stretch of road, licence or vehicle.

Squeeze (brakes) – progressively applying more pressure to the brake levers (see two-stage braking).

Stationary – not moving.

Suspension – front forks, rear shock absorbers, springs.

Swerving – quickly turning in one direction.

Tailgater – someone who follows other vehicles too closely to be safe.

3-second gap – 3-second gap – is the crash avoidance space needed for a rider/driver to react and respond to a situation safely and avoid a crash.

Throttle – a control used to vary the motorcycle's engine speed.

Traction – grip between a tyre and the ground.

Trail motorcycles – motorcycles built primarily for riding on unsealed roads.

Tread – the pattern of rubber on the surface of a tyre that grips the road.

Two-stage braking – a braking technique consisting of setting up and squeezing the brake levers.

Un-declared area – a geographical area where rider training is not required to obtain a rider licence.

U-turn – a complete change of direction, approximately a 180 degree turn.

Visor – clear, plastic shield on the front of a helmet designed to protect your face.

Wheel track – the mark on the road made by other vehicles' tyres.

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