

SAFETY CORNER

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8 Motorcycle Safety Tips Every Rider Should Know

There's no denying that motorcycles are cool fun, and fuel efficient. But it's also true that riding a motorcycle is riskier than driving a car. The reality

is, a crash as a motorcyclist is almost 30 times more likely to be fatal than a motorist. There are plenty of dedicated riders who are able to steer clear of accidents and enjoy their bikes without incident. But their success comes from following basic motorcycle safety practices. To make sure you stay on the safe side of riding, here are eight ways to keep your rides accident-free.

1. Gear Up! Contrary to popular belief, looking cool is not the top priority when getting on your bike. No matter how hot it is outside, shorts, a t-shirt, and sandals are not the proper riding attire. Even blue jeans provide minimal protection against injury and road rash. You can go the extreme protection with leathers or reinforced jackets, pants, and boots. Glasses or goggles are a must if you have an open faced helmet, and to protect your hands always wear gloves. In warm weather, there is specially designed gear that is intended for ventilation and cooling. Always ride with a DOT approved helmet.

2. Stay in your comfort zone. Know your abilities and make sure that neither your chosen route nor motorcycle is more than you can handle. If you are riding in a group, don't push yourself just to keep up with the pack.

3. Inspect your bike before hitting the road. Things you should check out every time you ride is your tires' air pressure, mirrors, and lights. You also need to be diligent about regular care and maintenance.

4. Use your head - the mirrors are there for a reason, but you can't solely rely on them to be aware of your immediate riding space. Experienced riders know that it's important to keep your head and eyes up while rounding corners and changing lanes. You will also be able to get a feeling for whether the other drivers are pay attention to you.

5. Watch the road. As a motorcyclist you need to pay attention to the road you are driving on. Be careful crossing railroad tracks because they can be slippery.

6. Find your happy place. One of the biggest dangers to a rider is getting on your bike in the wrong state of mind. Riding angry, drowsy or distracted is a recipe for disaster.

7. Know the forecast. Weather is a regular foil to a perfect ride. Wet and or icy roads multiply when you're on two wheels or three. Lack of visibility is a riders worst nightmare, and when you're caught in bad visibility it could be a nightmare. Being pelted by rain at 50 or even 30 miles per hour can hurt.

8. Make sure that two isn't a crowd. You need to make sure that you and your passenger are comfortable when riding. Ensure your passenger has on the right gear also. They need a helmet and protective gear as much as you do. It is always a good idea to take a test ride in a safe environment like a parking lot before hitting the road.



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