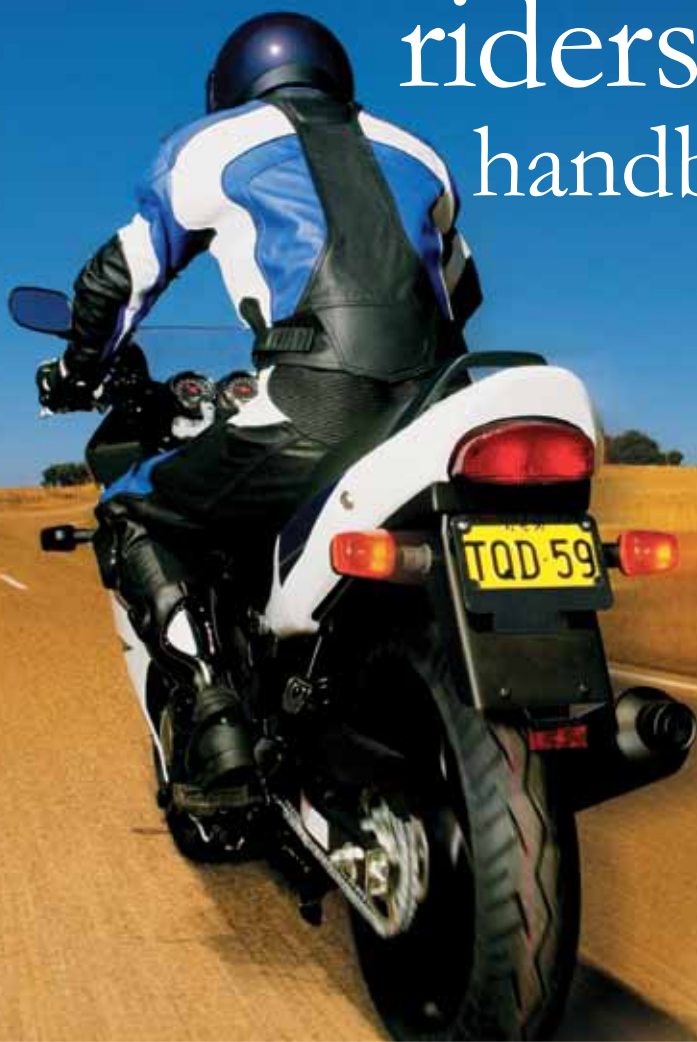




Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

Motorcycle riders' handbook



This handbook is only an interpretation of the law made easy to understand by using plain English. Laws change often so make sure you have the most recent handbook available on the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) website at www.rms.nsw.gov.au

■ OTHER RMS PUBLICATIONS FOR MOTORCYCLE RIDERS

- *Braking habits*
- *Road Users' Handbook*

Introduction

Motorcycling can be fun, economical and safe. It may reduce your carbon footprint.

However, motorcycle riding can also be hazardous.

Motorcycle riders are less protected than car drivers and have a greater chance of being killed or injured in a crash.

You can become a safe rider through acquiring the necessary skills and understanding of the road environment, by always being alert and defensive and by accepting that the prime responsibility for your safety on the road is yours.

Our procedures for getting a motorcycle rider licence are designed to help you become a safe rider. The *Motorcycle riders' handbook*, our training programs and the testing procedures are designed to get you confident in the fundamental skills. We trust you will maintain and further develop these skills.

This handbook contains important information about riding techniques, how to cope with hazards and some road rules for motorcycles. Please read it carefully.

Enjoy your riding, but above all, ride to survive.

Contents

1. HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK	6
2. LICENSING	8
Obligations of licence holders	8
Bribing people is against the law	8
Having the correct licence	9
Riding without a licence	9
Motorcycle Graduated Licensing Scheme	10
Licence types	
Learner rider licence	12
Provisional P1 rider licence	14
Provisional P2 rider licence	16
How to get a rider licence	18
Rider training courses	20
Summary – What you should know about licensing	21
3. RIDER MANAGEMENT	22
Concentration	22
Protective clothing	24
Summary – What you should know about rider management	28
4. SAFE RIDING	30
Observation	
Scanning	30
Speed management	
Maintain space to the front	32
Maintain space when stopped	33
Maintain space behind you	34
Reduce speed	34
Road positioning	
Space, surface and sight	35
Examples of buffering	38
Vehicles following	40
Vision	40
Blind crests	41
Multi-laned roads	42
Overtaking	44
Turns at intersections	46
Positioning for curves and bends	47
The danger of exiting wide	48
Planning a series of curves	50

Riding in groups	51
Making decisions	
Gap selection	52
Hazard perception	
Responding to hazards.	53
Examples of situation that require a response.	54
Basic riding techniques	
Riding posture	55
Braking technique	55
The five key points of riding posture apply to all types of motorcycles.	56
Steering technique	58
Leaning with the motorcycle in a curve	59
Summary – What you should know about safe riding.	60
5. ROAD RULES FOR MOTORCYCLE RIDERS	61
Motorcycle specific road rules and signs	
Riding on motorcycle.	61
Helmets	61
Keeping left	61
Hand signals.	62
Lending or borrowing a motorcycle	62
Motorcycle warning signs	63
Riding at night	63
Carrying passengers and loads	
Motorcycle passengers.	64
Sidecar passengers	64
Loading.	65
Towing and being towed	65
Parking	
Motorcycle parking	66
Restrictions on where to ride	
Road and road related areas.	66
Riding on footpaths.	67
Transit lanes	67
Bus lanes.	67
Bus only lanes.	67
T-way lanes.	67
Bicycle lanes	67
Summary – What you should know about road rules for motorcycle riders	68

6. MOTORCYCLE ROADWORTHINESS	70
Number plates	70
Roadworthiness	71
Summary – What you should know about motorcycle roadworthiness	73
7. PENALTIES	74
Traffic offences	74
Demerit points for traffic offences	74
Speeding offences	74
Over the speed limit by 30 km/h and 45 km/h	74
Other serious riding offences	75
Negligent or dangerous riding causing injury or death	75
Street or drag racing	76
Drink riding	76
Riding without a licence	77
Fine defaults	77
Summary – What you should know about penalties	78
8. GLOSSARY	79
9. INDEX	83

How to use this handbook

The *Motorcycle riders' handbook* is a comprehensive information source for the rules and regulations, information and advice that you need to ride safely on NSW roads.

Learners must read it thoroughly to be able to get a learner licence. For experienced riders the handbook offers a way to check current road rules, or to understand more about road safety and low risk riding.

To make it easy to find what you want to know the handbook is divided into sections. At the end of each section is a summary that helps you remember or revise key points. To help test your knowledge there are also sample sets of questions taken from the Driver Knowledge Test. In addition, you will find an overview of penalties for traffic offences.

The back of the handbook contains the answers for each section, an index and glossary of terms.

Other useful RMS publications are shown on page 1. Most are available at your nearest registry or on the website at www.rms.nsw.gov.au

Do not forget to study the *Road Users' Handbook* just as carefully. It contains the rest of the information that you will need to know to pass the knowledge test.

■ SECTION 2: LICENCES

This section is essential reading for people wanting to obtain a licence to ride on NSW roads.

SECTION 2 EXPLAINS:

- The licensing system.
- The various steps you must take to obtain a full licence.
- The Rider Knowledge Test.
- Information on eyesight tests and proof of identity.
- The obligations of licence holders.

■ SECTION 3: RIDER MANAGEMENT

This section considers in detail how to increase your enjoyment and safety when riding on the road and how to take responsibility for your own wellbeing.

SECTION 3 EXPLAINS:

- Recognising and managing fatigue.
- Alcohol and other drugs.
- Protective clothing.

■ SECTION 4: SAFE RIDING

This section provides key safe riding behaviours which are useful for all riders.

SECTION 4 EXPLAINS:

- Observation, speed management and road positioning.
- The importance of crash avoidance space.

■ SECTION 5: GENERAL ROAD RULES

Every motorcyclist needs to know the rules that apply to riding. This section offers comprehensive coverage of the main rules governing motorcycles.

SECTION 5 EXPLAINS:

- Motorcycle specific road rules and signs.
- Carrying passengers and loads.
- Restrictions on where to ride.
- Parking restrictions.

■ SECTION 6: MOTORCYCLE ROADWORTHINESS

All motorcycles using NSW roads must be registered and roadworthy. This section provides a brief explanation of motorcycle safety and registration requirements.

SECTION 6 EXPLAINS:

- Registering your motorcycle.
- Requirements for displaying number plates.
- Tyres (pressure, tread and wear).
- Defect notices on unroadworthy motorcycles.

■ SECTION 7: PENALTIES

This section provides an overview of the penalties for traffic offences.

SECTION 7 EXPLAINS:

- The penalties for exceeding the speed limit, including demerit points, fines and licence suspension.
- The implications of serious, negligent and dangerous riding offences.
- How street and drag racing penalties can result in the loss of a motorcycle.
- The implications of not settling a traffic fine.
- The penalties for drink riding and unlicensed riding.

Think of your licence as a ‘contract’, or an agreement between you as a rider and the rest of society. RMS and the NSW Police administer this contract on behalf of the people of NSW. When you get your licence, look after it. Do not abuse it or allow it to be misused. There are penalties if you fraudulently alter, use or lend a licence to another person or allow a licence to be used by another person.

■ OBLIGATIONS OF LICENCE HOLDERS

The State provides the roads for riders to use if they meet certain conditions.

Riders must:

- Show that they understand the road rules, most of which are written in this and the *Road Users’ Handbook* in plain English.
- Show that they understand society’s concerns to reduce the impact of traffic on the environment and to use the road system efficiently.
- Show the skills necessary to ride safely.
- Obey the laws and ride responsibly.
- Pay a licence fee which goes towards maintaining the system.

The contract can be broken by significant traffic offences which cause inconvenience, costs or suffering to others. These offences carry penalties such as fines, licence cancellation, disqualification or suspension or, in extreme cases, imprisonment.

■ BRIBING PEOPLE IS AGAINST THE LAW

It is illegal to offer, request or accept gifts or other favours in order to get a licence without passing the required tests. Penalties are severe and include fines and imprisonment. All cases of corruption will be investigated and strong action will be taken against all those involved.

The only licence fees and charges you have to pay are set by RMS. Do not pay any more or offer to pay more to get your licence.

If you know or believe that someone has received, or is about to receive, a NSW licence by offering, or responding to a request for a bribe – or if you suspect or know of any other corruption involving an RMS employee – telephone RMS on 1800 043 642 (free call) or the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) on (02) 8281 5999.

■ HAVING THE CORRECT LICENCE

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

- A current licence which is not expired, cancelled or suspended.
- The correct licence class for the type of motorcycle you are riding.
- A NSW licence if you have been a resident of NSW for more than three months.
- An interstate licence if you are a visitor from interstate.
- A current licence from another country if you are visiting 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.

In addition, you must not ride if you are disqualified from riding by a court in NSW or any State or Territory in Australia or overseas. Riders with licences from another State or Territory or overseas must not ride if their visiting rider privileges have been suspended by RMS.

■ RIDING WITHOUT A LICENCE

Heavy penalties apply for riding without a licence, with an expired, cancelled, suspended or disqualified licence or a licence of the wrong class. See the Penalties section for more information.



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 that they have the correct licence and that their licence is valid.



When starting out you must not ride on a road or road related area until you have completed your training and have been issued with a learner rider licence.

WHEN YOUR LICENCE IS CHECKED

Police check that you have the correct licence when:

- You are involved in a crash, whether you were at fault or not.
- You have been stopped because of a traffic offence.
- You have been stopped for a random breath test either by a stationary breath testing unit or by a mobile breath testing unit.



CARRY YOUR LICENCE WHEN RIDING

**You must carry your licence with you when riding.
Penalties apply for not having your licence with you.**

■ MOTORCYCLE GRADUATED LICENSING SCHEME

RMS has a Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) for new riders. To obtain a NSW rider licence you must complete various stages of training and testing. The training covers the key skills required for riding on the road and are taught in two stages – pre-learner and pre-provisional. If there is no training centre in your area, you are encouraged to do the rider training, but it is not compulsory.

HOW THE SCHEME WORKS

New riders are required to pass through three licensing stages before obtaining a full rider licence.

- Learner rider licence.
- Provisional rider licence, stage 1 (P1-red).
- Provisional rider licence, stage 2 (P2-green).

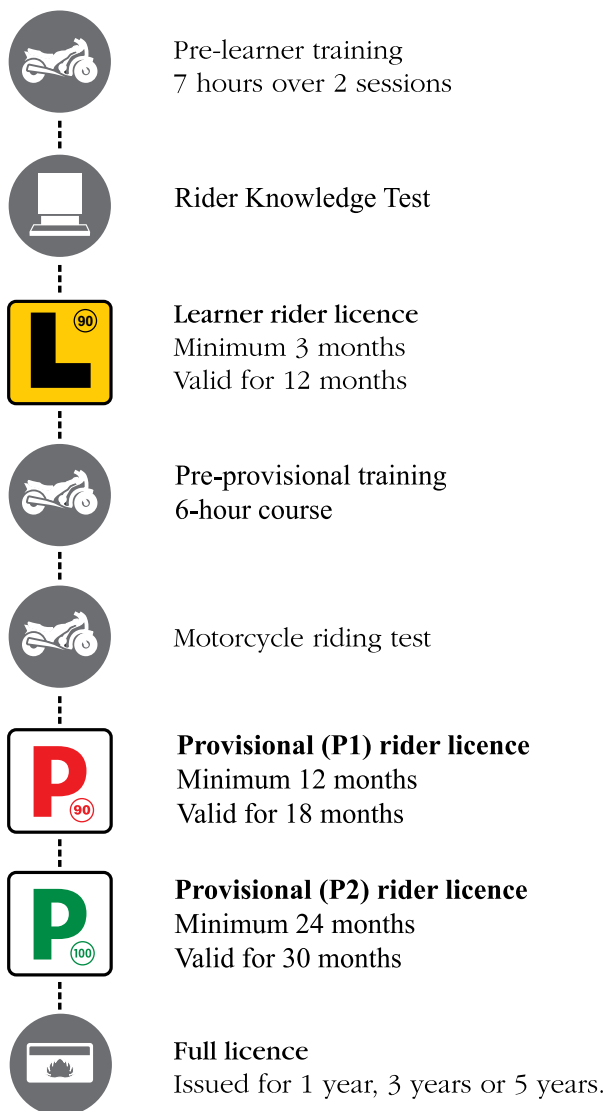
New riders will have at least 36 months of experience before graduating to a full rider licence.



ZERO TOLERANCE OF SPEEDING

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

This flow chart shows how a new rider will progress through the licensing scheme.



Licence types

■ LEARNER RIDER LICENCE

To get a Class R (rider) learner licence you must complete a pre-learner training course and pass a Rider Knowledge Test (DKT). You must be at least 16 years and nine months to be issued with a learner licence. However, you can attend an RMS training course at the age of 16 years and six months. Learner rider licences are issued for 12 months.

It is not necessary to hold a current car driver licence to be eligible for a learner rider licence.

SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF LEARNER RIDER LICENCE

A learner who commits driving offences may have their licence cancelled by a court or suspended or cancelled by RMS. A learner licence can be suspended by RMS for offences such as:

- Riding a motorcycle which is not approved for use by novice riders.
- Not wearing an approved motorcycle helmet.
- Carrying pillion passengers.



LICENCE RESTRICTIONS FOR LEARNERS

Automatic transmission motorcycle	You are restricted to riding automatic motorcycles if you completed your pre-learner training course on one.
Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Your BAC must be zero. This means you cannot ride a motorcycle after consuming ANY form of alcohol.
Demerit Points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur four or more points.
Display of L signs	An L sign must be clearly displayed on the back of the motorcycle. The letter on the plate must not be hidden or covered.
Helmet	You must wear an Australian Standard AS 1698 motorcycle helmet.
Mobile Phones	You must not use any function of a mobile phone, including hands free or loudspeaker devices when riding.
Motorcycles	<p>You must only ride motorcycles that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Are on the list of <i>Approved Motorcycle for Novice Riders</i> on our website, and– Have an engine capacity not greater than 660ml, and– Have a power to weight ratio not greater than 150 kilowatts per tonne.
Passengers	You must not carry any pillion passengers.
Speed limit	You must not ride faster than 90 km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 90 km/h.
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.



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.

■ PROVISIONAL P1 RIDER LICENCE

To be issued with a provisional rider licence you must be aged at least 17 years. A provisional stage (P1) rider licence is issued after you complete pre-provisional training and pass a riding test. You must have held your learner rider licence for a minimum of three months before you are eligible to attend the training or attempt the riding test. You can book your training and test any time after gaining your learner rider licence. The P1 rider licence is issued for 18 months, but may be upgraded after 12 months.

SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF PROVISIONAL LICENCE

A P1 licence will be suspended for a minimum of three months if you accumulate four or more demerit points. When a P1 licence is suspended because of offences, the period of suspension is not counted towards the minimum 12 months needed to progress to a full licence.

When a P1 licence is cancelled because of offences, the period the licence was held before the cancellation is not counted.



LICENCE RESTRICTIONS FOR P1 LICENCES

Automatic transmission motorcycles	You are restricted to riding automatic motorcycle if you completed your pre-provisional training course on one.
Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Your BAC must be zero.
Demerit points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur four or more points.
Display of P plates	A red P plate must be clearly displayed on the back of the motorcycle. The letter on the plate must not be hidden or covered.
Helmet	You must wear an Australian Standard AS 1698 motorcycle helmet.
Motorcycles	<p>You must only ride motorcycles that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Are on the list of <i>Approved Motorcycle for Novice Riders</i> on our website, and– Have an engine capacity not greater than 660ml, and– Have a power to weight ratio not greater than 150 kilowatts per tonne.
Passengers	You must not carry any pillion passengers.
Speed limit	You must not ride faster than 90 km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 90 km/h.
Towing	You must not tow a trailer or any other vehicle.

■ PROVISIONAL P2 RIDER LICENCE

To be issued with a provisional rider licence you must be aged at least 18 years. A provisional stage (P2) rider licence is issued after you have held your P1 rider licence for a minimum of 12 months. The P2 rider licence is issued for 30 months, but may be upgraded after 24 months.

SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF PROVISIONAL LICENCE

A P2 licence will be suspended for a minimum of three months if you accumulate seven or more demerit points. When a P2 licence is suspended because of offences, the period of suspension is not counted towards the minimum 24 months needed to progress to a full licence.

When a P2 licence is cancelled because of offences, the period the licence was held before the cancellation is not counted.



LICENCE RESTRICTIONS FOR P2 LICENCES

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Your BAC must be zero.
Demerit points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur seven or more points.
Display of P plates	A green P plate must be clearly displayed on the back of the motorcycle. The letter on the plate must not be hidden or covered.
Helmet	You must wear an Australian Standard AS 1698 motorcycle helmet.
Motorcycles	<p>You must only ride motorcycles that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Are on the list of <i>Approved Motorcycle for Novice Riders</i> on our website, and– Have an engine capacity not greater than 660ml, and– Have a power to weight ratio not greater than 150 kilowatts per tonne.
Speed limit	You must not ride faster than 100 km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 100 km/h.

■ HOW TO GET A RIDER LICENCE

LEARNER RIDER LICENCE

To obtain a learner rider licence you must:

- Pay the training fee and book a course either:
 - online at www.myRTA.com
 - by calling 13 22 13
 - or going to our registry or agency.
- Attend and complete the pre-learner training course.

After completing the course, you will be issued with a pre-learner certificate of competency (green in colour) which is valid for three months.

Visit any registry and:

- Take your pre-learner certificate of competency.
- Take proof of identity documents.
- Complete an application form.
- Pass an eyesight test.
- Pass the knowledge test. (A fee will apply).
- Pay the licence fee.

You will then be issued with a learner rider licence.

PROVISIONAL P1 RIDER LICENCE

To obtain a provisional rider licence you must:

- Pay the training fee and book a course either:
 - online at www.myRTA.com
 - by calling 13 22 13
 - or going to our registry or agency.
- Attend and complete the pre-provisional training course.
- Pass the riding test.

After completing the pre-provisional course and passing skill test, you will be issued with a pre-provisional certificate of competency (red in colour) which is valid for three months.

Go to any registry and:

- Take your pre-provisional course certificate of competency.
- Take your learner rider licence.
- Complete an application form.
- Pay the licence fee.

You will then be issued with a provisional P1 rider licence. The provisional P1 rider licence is issued for 18 months, but may be upgraded to a provisional P2 licence after a minimum of 12 months.

Failure to obtain a provisional rider licence within the three months of being issued with a pre-provisional certificate of competency will mean that you need to reattend and pass all training and tests again.



You can book all your rider training courses and tests online at www.rms.nsw.gov.au

PROVISIONAL P2 RIDER LICENCE

To qualify for a provisional P2 rider licence you must complete a minimum of 12 months on your P1 licence (not including any periods of licence suspension or cancellation).

Go to any registry and:

- Take your P1 rider licence.
- Pay the licence fee.

The provisional P2 rider licence is issued for 30 months, but may be upgraded to a full rider licence after a minimum of 24 months.

FULL RIDER LICENCE

To qualify for a full rider licence you must complete a minimum of 24 months on your P2 licence (not including any periods of licence suspension or cancellation).

Go to any registry and:

- Take your P2 rider licence.
- Pay the licence fee.

RIDERS OVER AGE 25

Riders over the age of 25 who meet RMS requirements may receive an exemption from the P2 phase. To be eligible for an exemption from the P2 phase, riders must:

- Be 25 years of age or older when they apply for the unrestricted 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. However, learning to ride a motorcycle requires a high level of balance, coordination and concentration and some people may require 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 COURSES

The pre-provisional course involves six hours of training and the motorcycle operator skills test, a further one hour. A motorcycle and protective clothing are not provided for the pre-provisional course or skills test.

If you have not passed the pre-provisional course and skills test by the time that your learner licence expires, you will have to attend the pre-learner course again. Licence extensions are not available.



Anyone who provides rider training to learner or provisional riders must hold a current NSW driving instructor licence for Class R. Heavy penalties apply for providing unlicensed instruction.



You can book all your rider training courses and tests online at www.rms.nsw.gov.au

Summary

■ WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT LICENSING

This section has explained the importance of licensing in New South Wales. 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.

NOTES

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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 that 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 has an effect on you at much lower levels than the legal blood alcohol limit and even two drinks can take you to 0.05. In 2007, 20 per cent of the motorcyclists killed in NSW had 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. Make sure you know the effects of any 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 fully exposed to all the elements and in a crash you are also 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

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. The approved standard for helmets is Australian Standards AS 1698.

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

Full face helmets that feature a chin panel which incorporates an integrated face shield (visor) offer 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

- Your helmet must be Australian Standard AS 1698 approved.
- It must fit comfortably but not too tightly (avoid helmets that fit loosely).
- 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.
- Only cleaned with mild soapy water. Some chemicals and cleaners may weaken the shell.



Never buy a second-hand helmet.

■ PROTECTIVE CLOTHING



Helmet: Must be Australian Standard AS 1698 approved.

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: Must be highly abrasion and tear resistant and completely cover your arms, legs and body. They must be secured at the wrists, waist and ankles to prevent riding up and exposing skin.

Footwear: Boots must overlap the pants and provide shin, ankle and instep protection. Zipper or velcro fasteners required to prevent the foot sliding and a protective cover to protect against wear when changing gear.

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 goggle 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 that are 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.

■ 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.

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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.

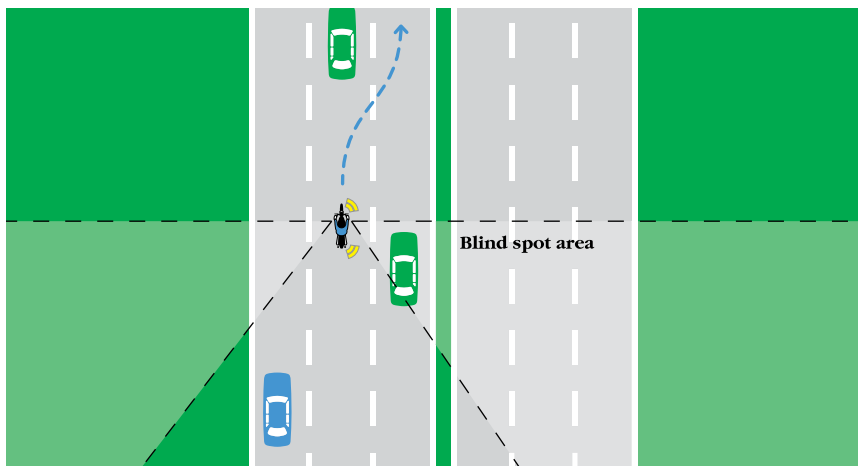


Before moving off from traffic lights check all directions to make sure the traffic has stopped.

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.



Have a head check before turning right into a street or driveway, just in case a following vehicle has not seen your indicator and is overtaking 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.

A total of three seconds crash avoidance space is needed to react and respond to a situation in front of you. You may need even longer in poor conditions such as rain and darkness.

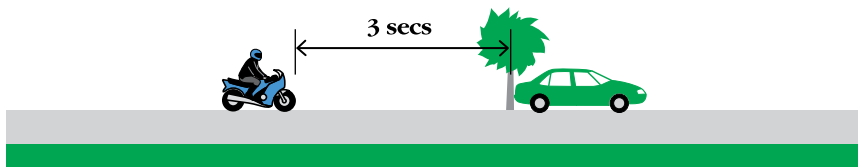
The three-second rule, explained below, can be used when following another vehicle or if there is potential for something to accelerate or steer into your crash avoidance space.

■ MAINTAIN SPACE TO THE FRONT

To calculate a three-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 three-second count ‘one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three’.

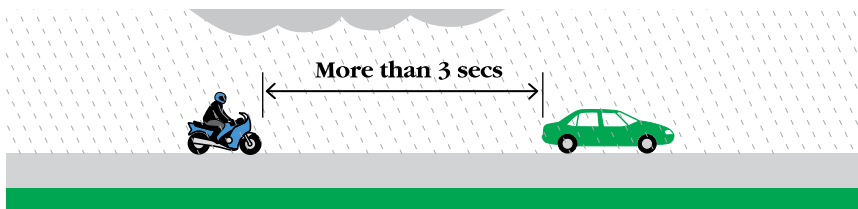


Be aware that in most situations cars can stop in a shorter distance than motorcycles, due to the greater grip provided by four tyres.



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 three-second crash avoidance space is achieved.



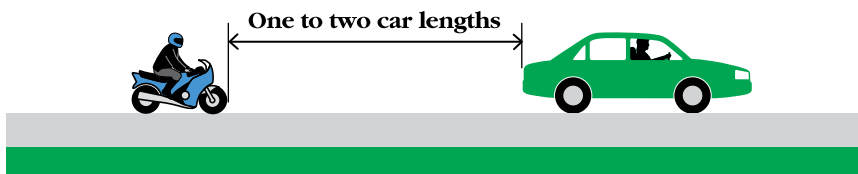
Increase following distance in poor conditions.

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

To reduce the risk of riding into the back of another vehicle, the three-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.

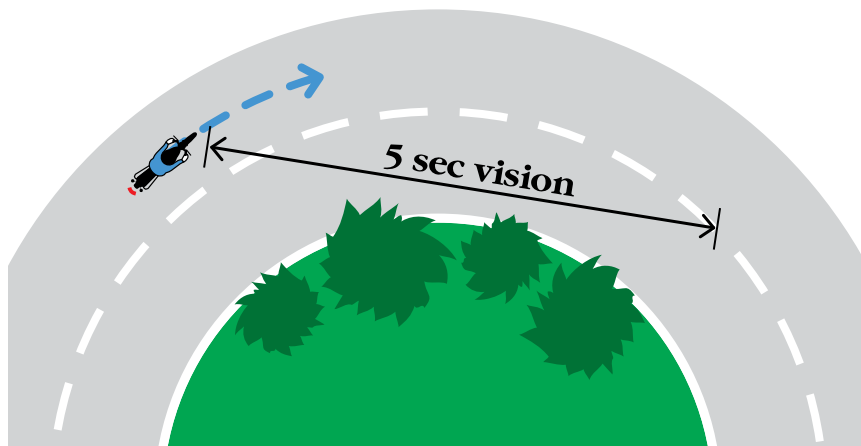
If a vehicle behind is travelling too closely, slow down slightly to increase the space you have in front of you. This will enable you to brake more gradually if you spot a hazard in front, which will enable the following vehicle more time to stop as well.

■ REDUCE SPEED

You must 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 five seconds ahead.



Slow down if you cannot see 5 seconds ahead.

To calculate five-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 five 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 key things must be considered when choosing your position on the road. These are: space, surface and sight.

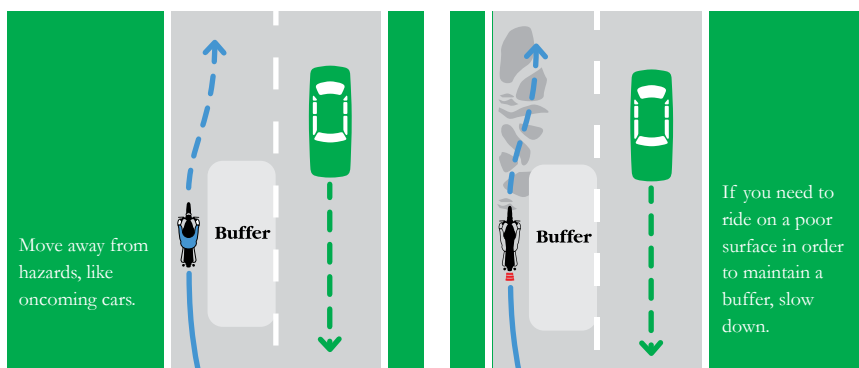
SPACE

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.



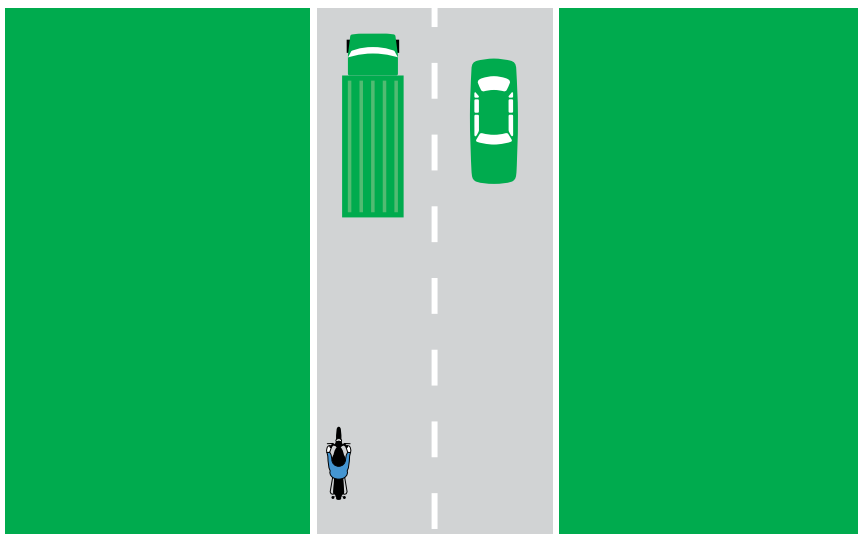
SIGHT

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.

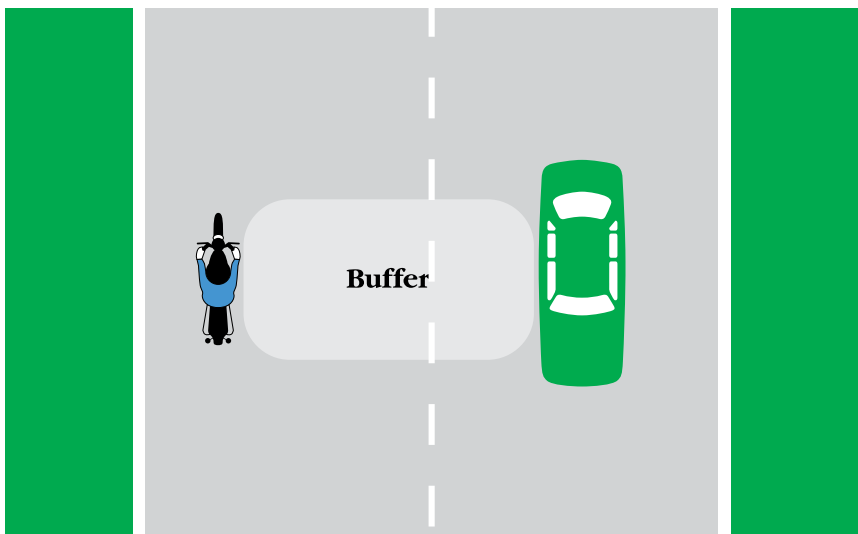
By actively managing space, surface and sight a rider can significantly reduce the risk of crashing.



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

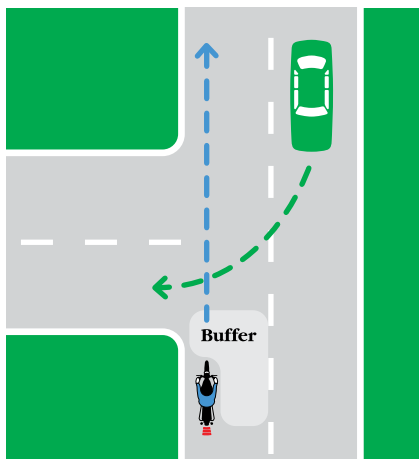


Maintain a buffer from hazards and a good following distance when vision is limited.

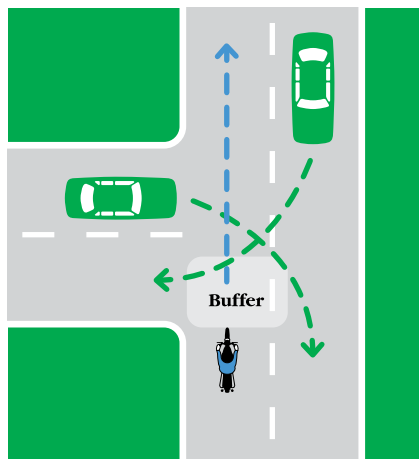


Create space (buffer) oncoming vehicles.

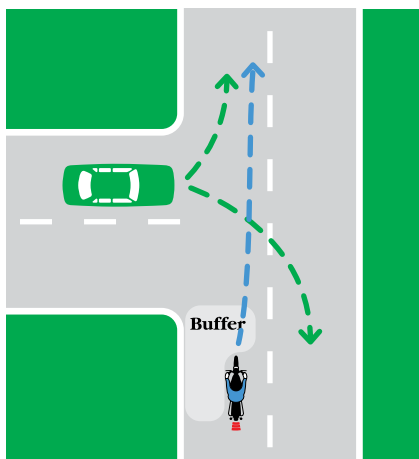
■ EXAMPLES OF BUFFERING



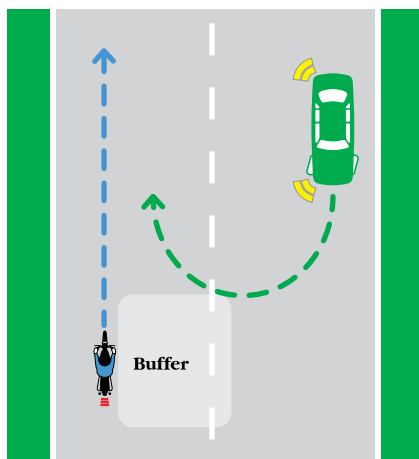
Slow down and buffer when a vehicle could turn across your path.



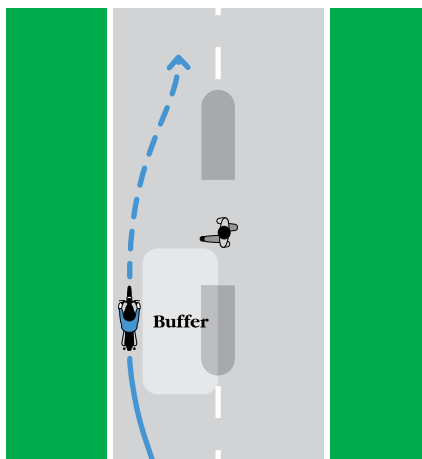
Buffer both vehicles and slow down.



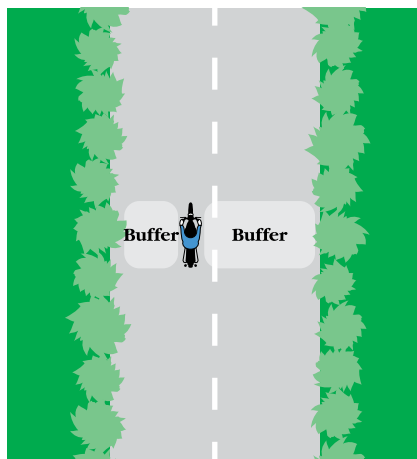
Slow down and buffer when a vehicle could turn across your path or enter the lane you are in.



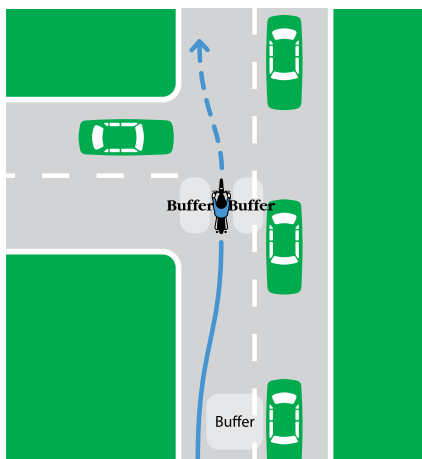
You may need to buffer hazards even when they are on the other side of the road.



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, you must remember to buffer oncoming vehicles and be in the correct position for crests and curves.

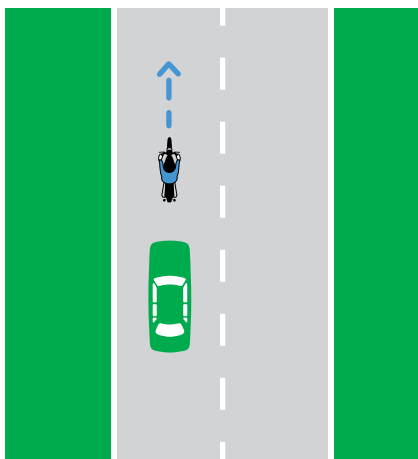


In busy traffic you may be in the left side of the lane for most of the time only moving right to buffer vehicles in side streets.

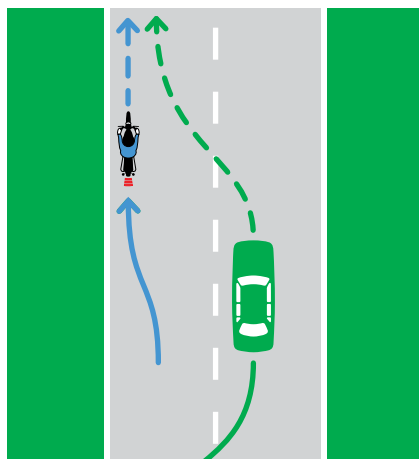


A motorcycle rider can legally use any part of their lane.

■ VEHICLES FOLLOWING

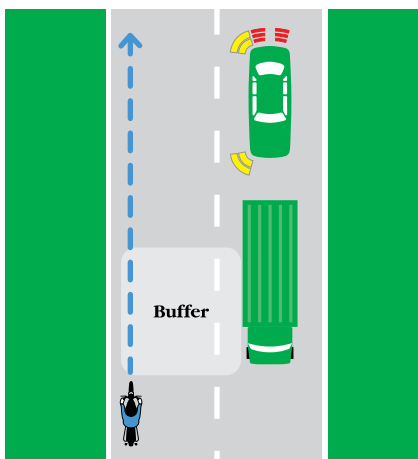


If vehicles are following close behind it is sometimes better to select the middle of the lane.



Maintain a buffer from vehicles as they pass you.

■ VISION

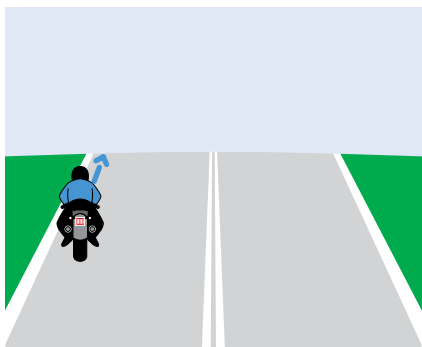


Buffering can improve your vision and make it easier for others to see you.

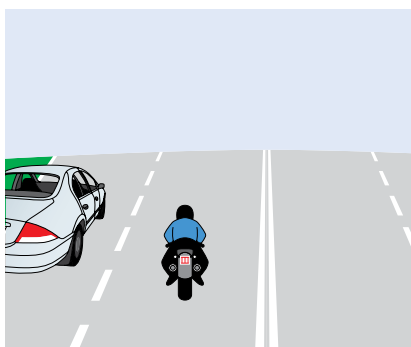


The further back you follow other vehicles the better you can see around them.

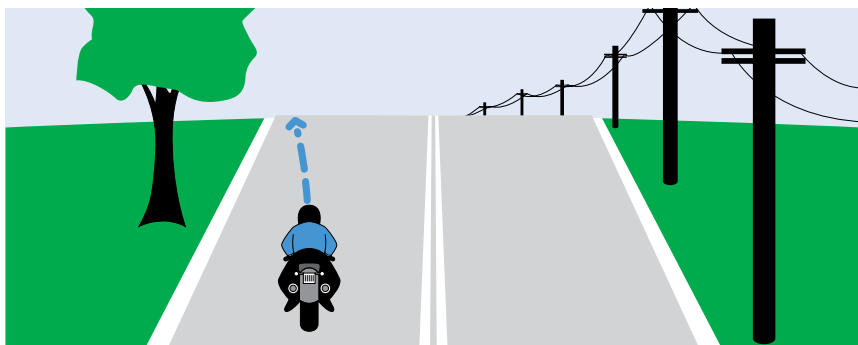
■ BLIND CRESTS



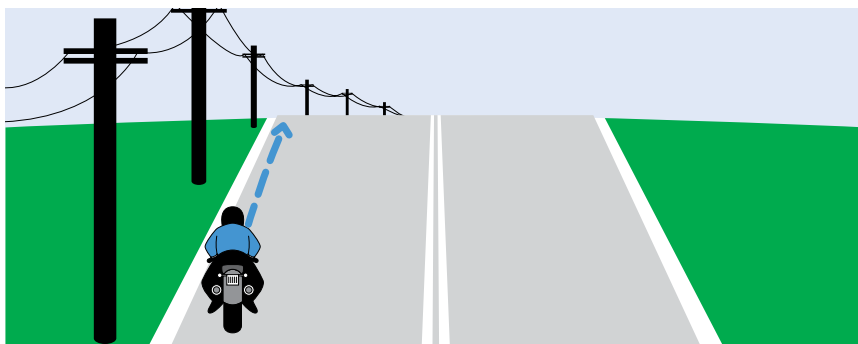
Approaching blind crests create a buffer from possible oncoming traffic.



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

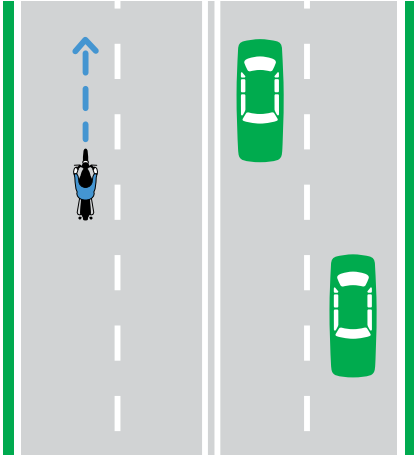


Approaching blind crests look for clues as to where the road goes. Slow down and select a road position to suit.

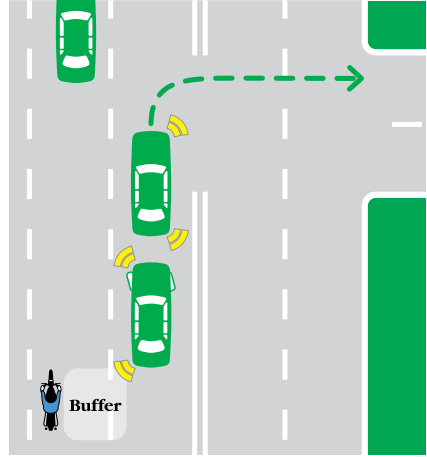


Approaching blind crests look for clues as to where the road goes. Slow down and select a road position to suit.

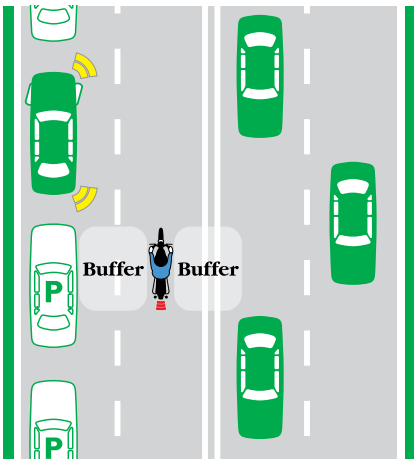
MULTI-LANED ROADS



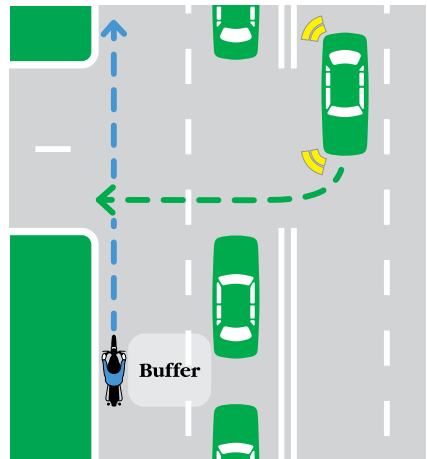
On multi-laned roads, reduce the risk of a head on crash by choosing a lane away from the oncoming traffic.



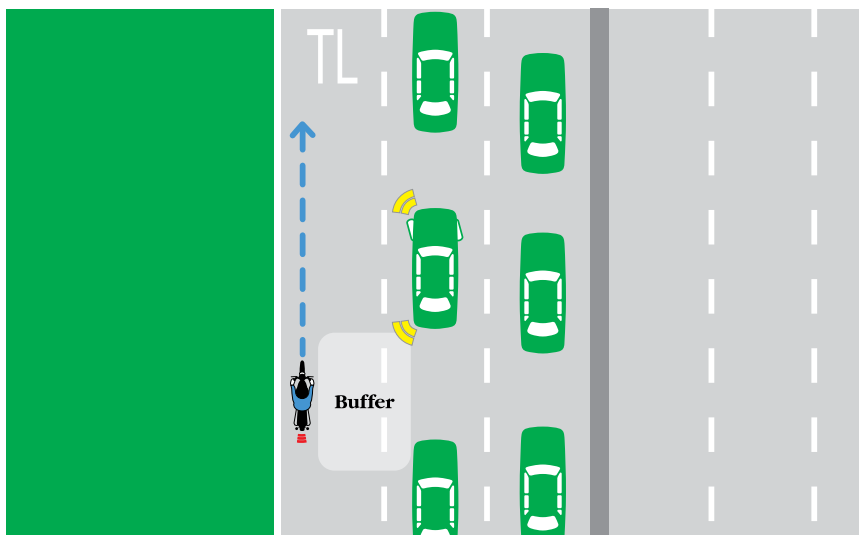
Create a buffer from turning vehicles in case not all the vehicles are turning.



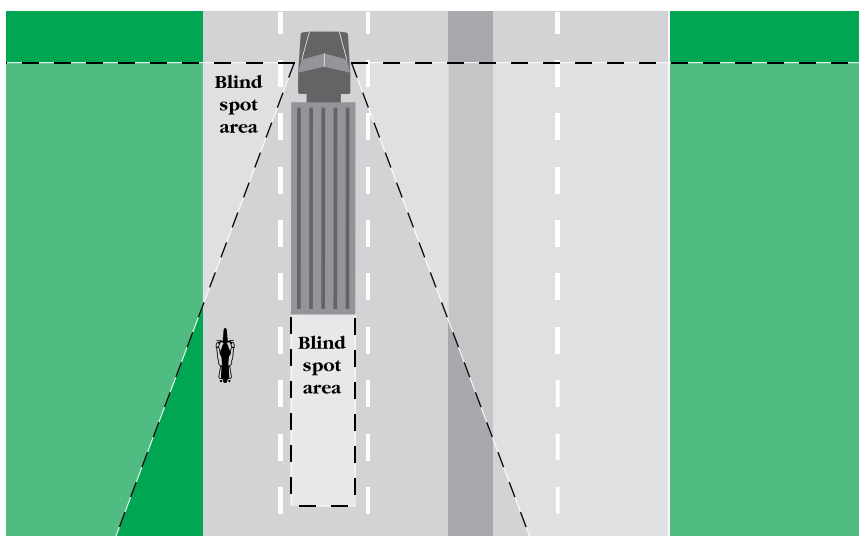
Buffer both parked and oncoming vehicles.



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

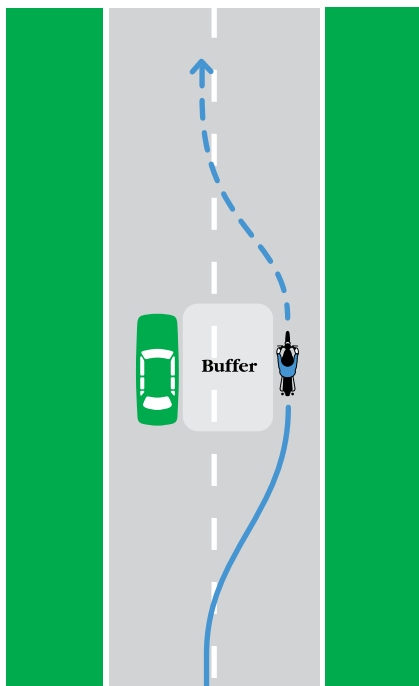


When using BUS or TRANSIT LANES keep a buffer from the other traffic in case they change lanes to make a turn..

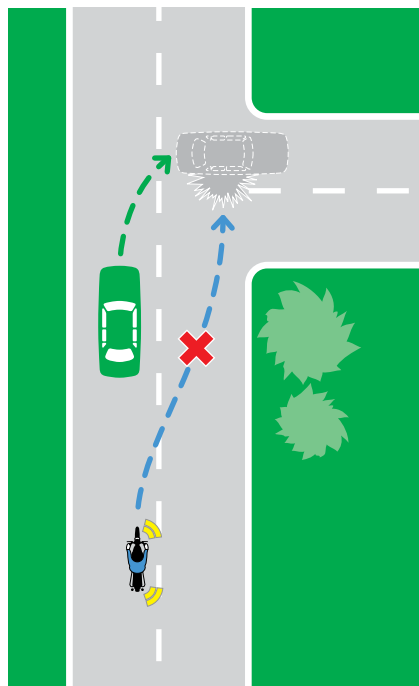


Do not ride beside other vehicles or in their blind spots.

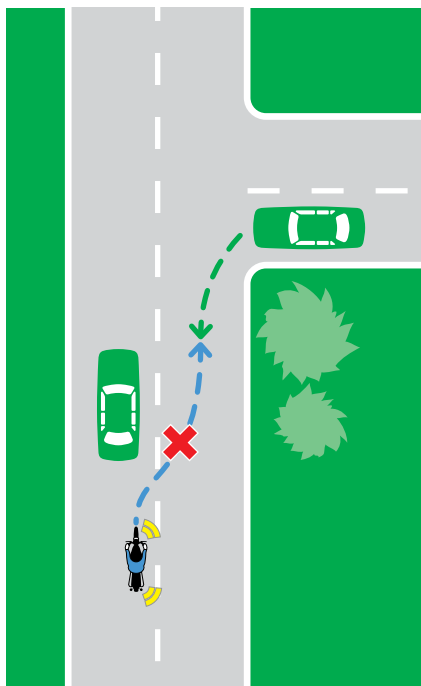
■ OVERTAKING



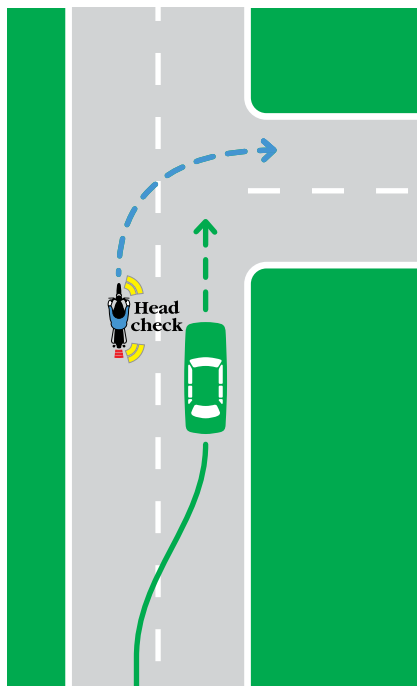
When overtaking create a buffer from the vehicle you are passing.



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

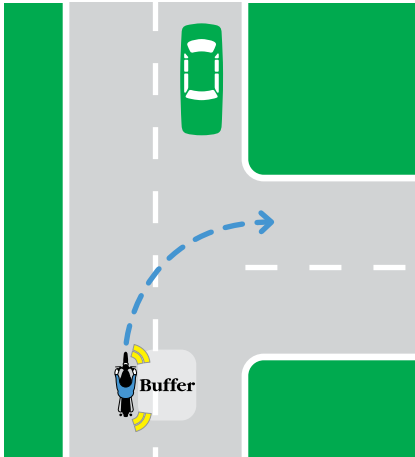


Before overtaking check for side streets and concealed driveways, particularly in country areas.

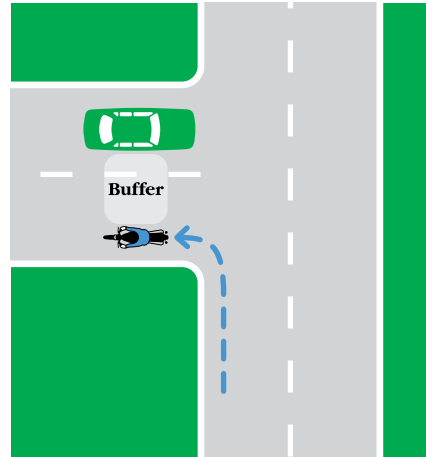


Before turning into a street or driveway have a head check for vehicles that may be overtaking you.

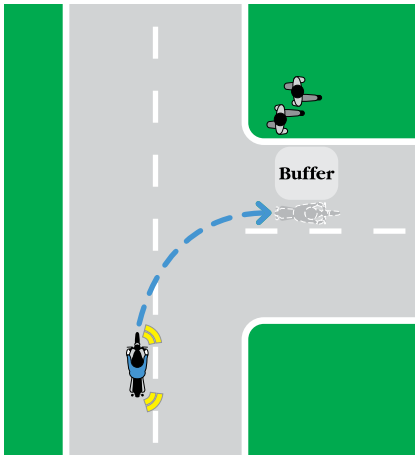
■ TURNS AT INTERSECTIONS



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.



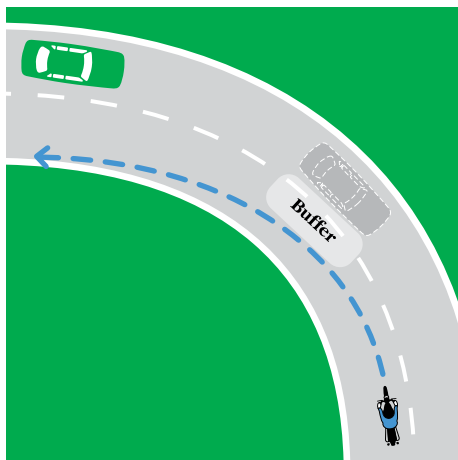
When turning right from a single lane, start the turn as near as practicable to the far right of the lane or middle of the road, buffering hazards as you exit the turn.



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

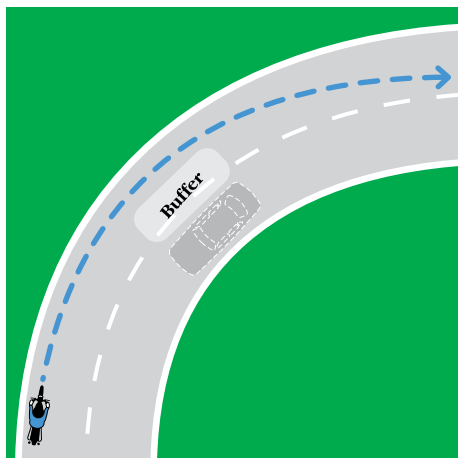
Starting curves wide will improve your vision. Planning to finish them in tight will help you get your speed right and leave you room for slight errors. Most importantly, keep away from the area where oncoming vehicles are likely to cross the centre of the road (the head on zone). Taking curves and bends 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.

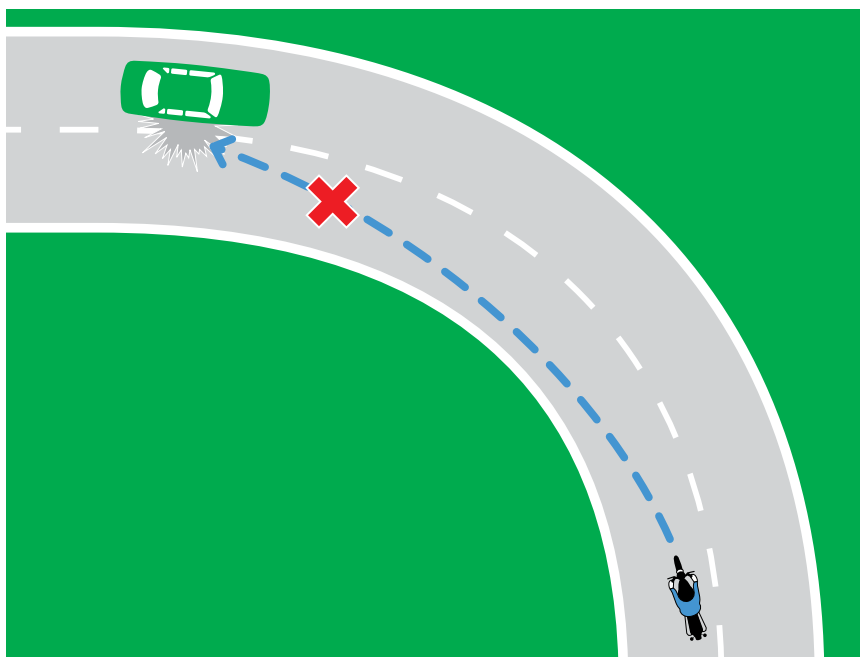


Many crashes happen because riders run wide on the exit of a turn.

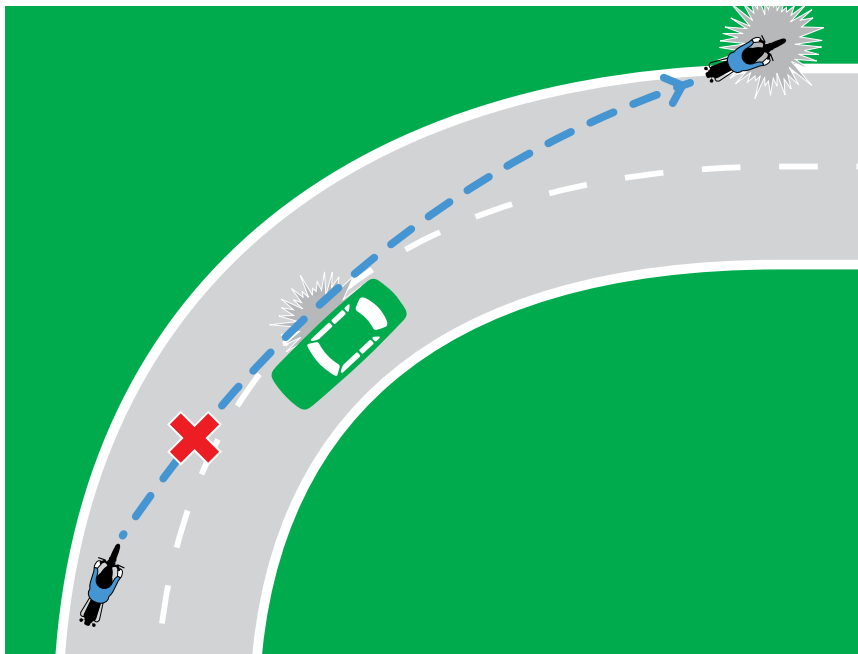
■ THE DANGER OF EXITING WIDE

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.

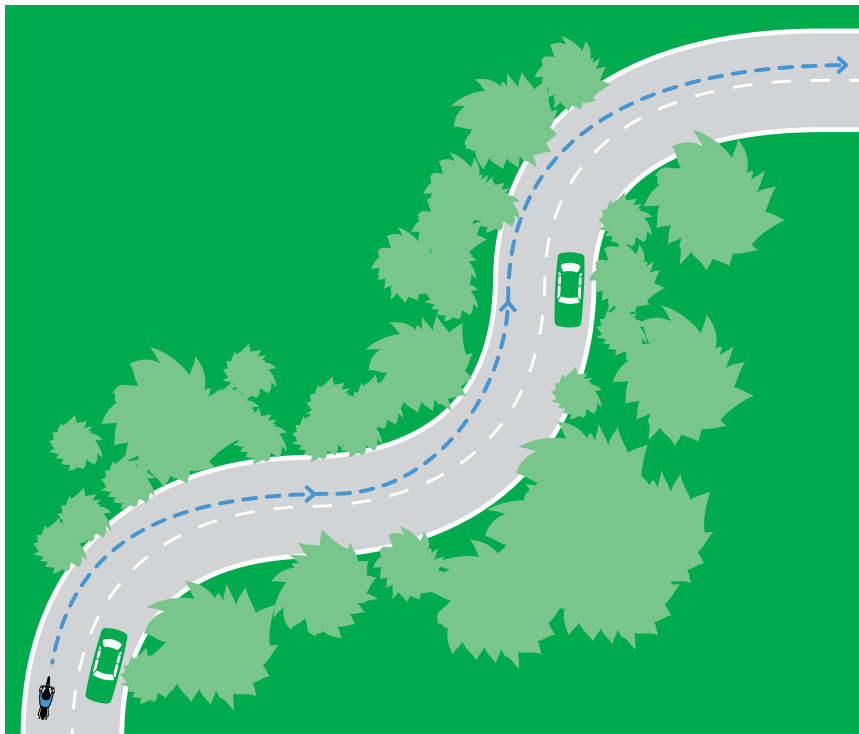


When a rider finishes a curve wide there is no room for error.

■ 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.

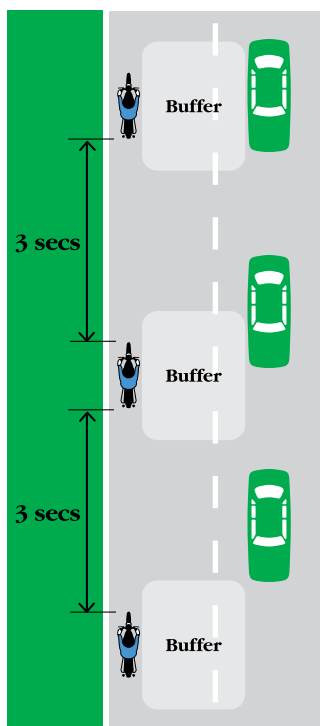


Planning to finish in tight will position you for the next curve.

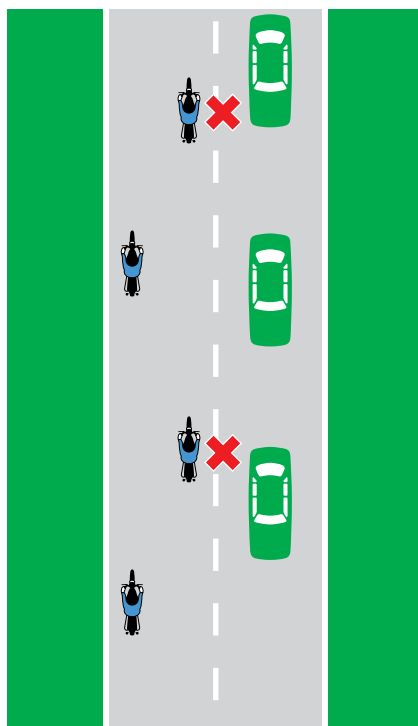


If you see an oncoming vehicle remember it is very important to create a buffer.

■ 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.



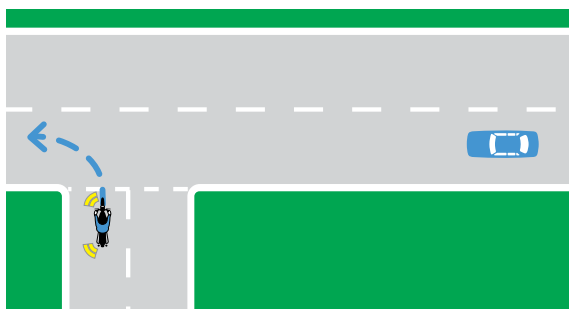
Riding 'staggered file' can be dangerous. Riders are unable to buffer hazards and vision is reduced by the other motorcycles in the group.

Making decisions

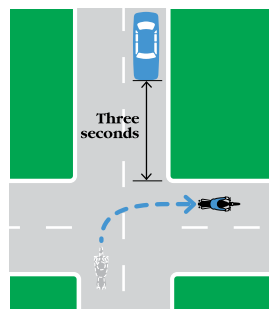
Selecting a safe gap when turning, overtaking or changing lanes is a critical skill to safe riding. Gap selection is also very important at intersections where the chance of colliding with another vehicle is very high if the gap you select is too small.

■ 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 three 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 three 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

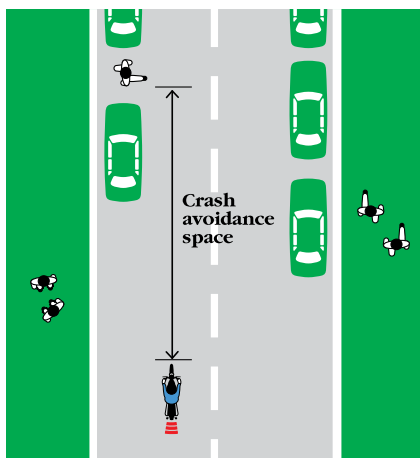
A hazard is something which has the potential to accelerate or steer into your crash avoidance space.

The three-second rule 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.

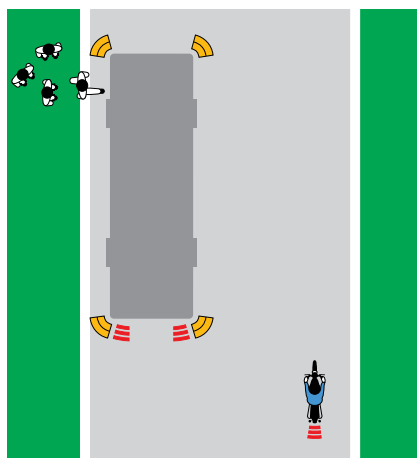
Experienced motorcyclists who ride low risk, are able to mentally judge a three-second crash avoidance space in front of their motorcycle. If there is potential for a hazard to enter this crash avoidance space, your response should be to protect it by:

- 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.

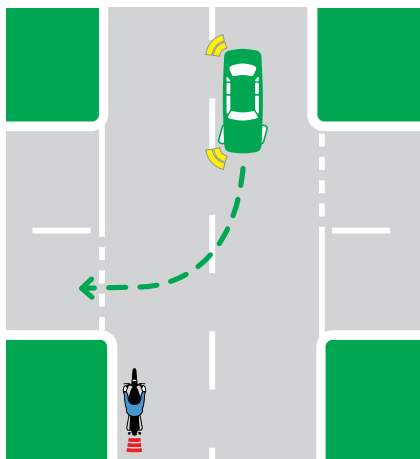


Respond before reaching the hazard.

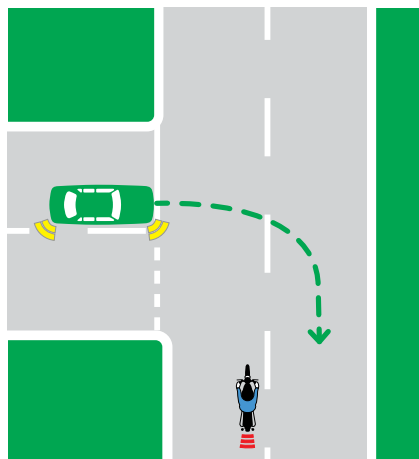


Respond when something can enter your crash avoidance space.

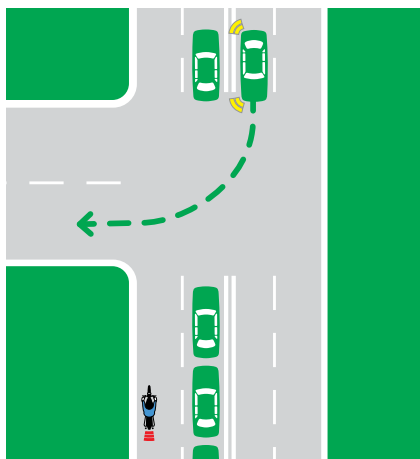
■ EXAMPLES OF SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE A RESPONSE



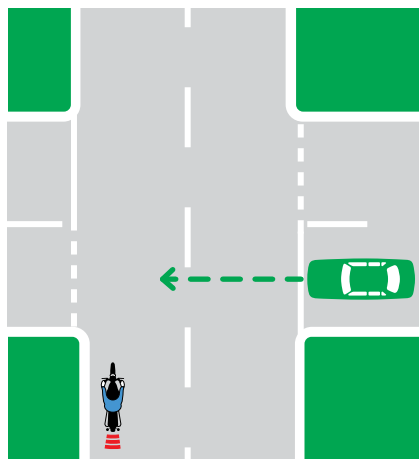
A vehicle waiting to turn in front of your path.



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, first put light pressure on the brake levers and pause (set up the brakes), then progressively apply the necessary braking pressure (squeeze).

Two-stage braking (set up and squeeze) improves braking effectiveness, reduces the likelihood of skidding and provides better control. When releasing the brakes ease them off gently to maintain the stability of the motorcycle. Easing off the brakes gently is particularly important when entering curves.

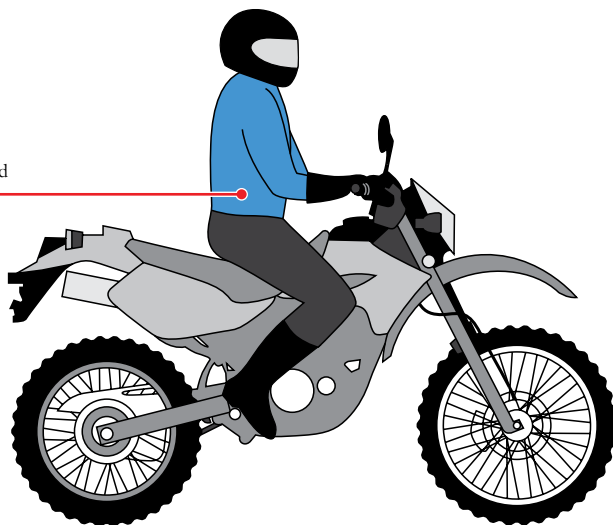
Harsh or excessive braking pressure may cause skidding and a loss of control, particularly on wet or gravel roads. If the front wheel begins to skid due to incorrect braking, or in an emergency situation, quickly release the front brake and reapply gently. If the rear wheel skids release the rear brake gently and reapply gently.



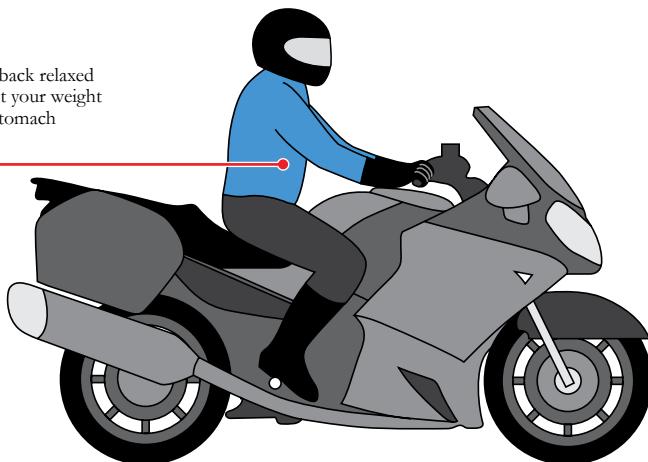
Applying the front brake in a curve can make the motorcycle run wide.

■ **THE FIVE KEY POINTS OF RIDING POSTURE
APPLY TO ALL TYPES OF MOTORCYCLES**

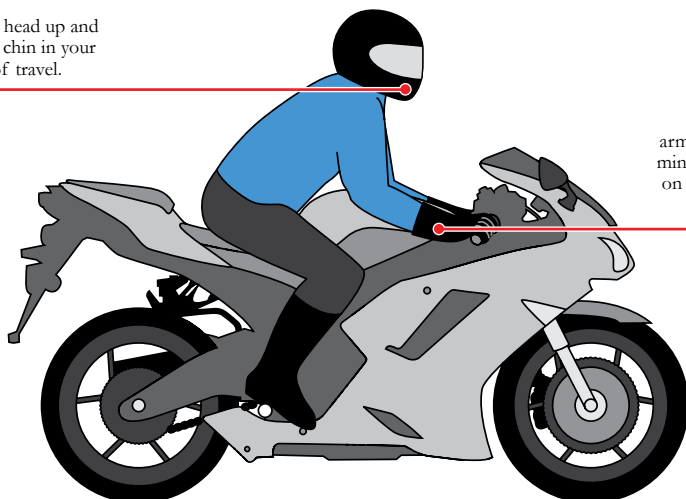
Sit well forward



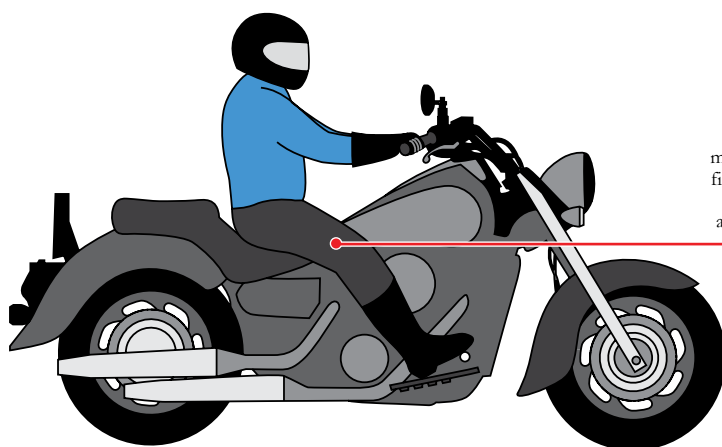
Keep your back relaxed
and support your weight
with your stomach
muscles.



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.

■ 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 three-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.

NOTES

Road rules for motorcycle riders

Motorcycle riders are required to adhere to the same road rules as other road users, so make sure that you keep up to date with the different road rules, signs and markings by reading the latest edition of the *Road Users' Handbook*.

There are some rules that are specifically for motorcycle riders which will be covered in this section.

Motorcycle specific road rules and signs

■ RIDING ON A MOTORCYCLE

The motorcycle rider must:

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

■ HELMETS

Motorcycle riders are required to wear a motorcycle safety helmet approved to Australian standards AS 1698 when riding a motorcycle. The helmet must be properly fitted and securely fastened to the rider's head.

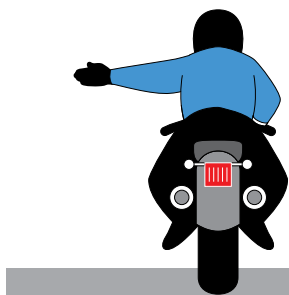
■ KEEPING LEFT

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

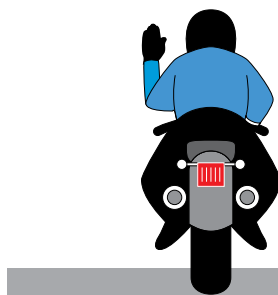
■ HAND SIGNALS

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

A large number of fatal motorcycle crashes occur on motorcycles that have been borrowed. It is an offence to allow another person to ride a motorcycle if they are not properly licensed to ride the particular motorcycle. Even if they have the right licence and you know them very well, every motorcycle handles differently and it is easy to make mistakes on an unfamiliar motorcycle. The best solution is not to lend or borrow motorcycles.

■ MOTORCYCLE WARNING SIGNS

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



■ RIDING AT NIGHT

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

Motorcycles with an engine capacity not exceeding 100ml are limited to a maximum of 40 km/h. For motorcycles with an engine capacity exceeding 100ml but not exceeding 200ml, a maximum speed of 50 km/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 any 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.
- Not project more than 300mm beyond the outer extremity of the rear wheel.
- Not project beyond the extreme outer portion of the motorcycle on either side.

Any load carried on a motorcycle and sidecar combination must:

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

All loads must:

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



ANIMALS AND VEHICLES

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

A rider must not ride with an animal on the fuel tank unless the rider is travelling less than 500 metres during 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

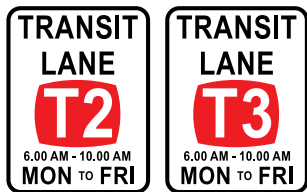
To ride a motorcycle on a road or road related area the rider must hold a current rider licence and the motorcycle must have current registration. Road and road related areas mean any area that is publicly accessible to vehicles. This includes:

- 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.

■ 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.

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Motorcycle roadworthiness

Before riding you will need to do some basic checks. Your motorcycle roadworthiness should be checked at regular intervals, and in most cases you will need an annual safety inspection report for motorcycle registration.

Your motorcycle must be registered. It must have a current registration label and it must not show any out of date labels.

It is an offence to cause or permit another person to ride an unregistered motorcycle on a road or road-related area. There could be significant financial implications for the rider and registered operator of the motorcycle because compulsory third party insurance is not valid when a motorcycle is unregistered. This means you could be held personally liable for compensation to any person injured as a result of a crash. There are severe penalties for riding an unregistered or uninsured motorcycle.



Make sure your motorcycle is roadworthy 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 roadworthy you will not be able to undertake the course. You will need to rebook and pay the training fees again.

■ NUMBER PLATES

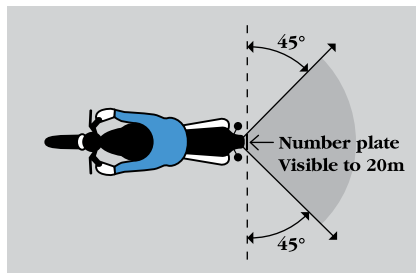
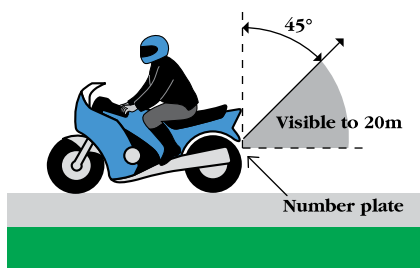
Number plates on the motorcycle you ride or own must be:

- Issued by RMS.
- The same as printed on the Certificate of Registration and label.
- Able to be seen and read clearly from anywhere within a 45 degree arc of the motorcycle's centre line, at a distance of at least 20 metres (see diagrams). That means they cannot be hidden by anything (such as a registration label holder).
- Clearly readable – not dirty, worn or damaged.
- Free of any characteristics that would prevent the detection of traffic offences.
- Given back to RMS after the registration has expired.

The rear number plate must have a light so that it is clearly visible at night.

It is an offence to:

- Alter number plates in any way.
- Attach a number plate to any vehicle other than the one to which it is RMS registered.
- 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. Take special care with registration label holders.

■ ROADWORTHINESS

Before you ride you need to make sure that your motorcycle is roadworthy. A roadworthy motorcycle is one 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 have any doubt about the rules that apply to your motorcycle, contact RMS 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.

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 MOTORCYCLE ROADWORTHINESS

This section has provided an outline of roadworthiness and registration requirements for your motorcycle. After reading this section you should know:

- The registration requirements of your motorcycle.
- How to check your motorcycle and ensure it's roadworthy.
- About defect notices on unroadworthy motorcycles.
- The requirements for number plates.

NOTES

[illegible]

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.

For more information about the points scheme, see our website or get the brochure *Demerit points - Encouraging safe driving* from any registry.

■ 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 30 KM/H AND 45 KM/H

If you go over the speed limit by:

- More than 30 km/h but less than 45 km/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 45 km/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, RMS will advise you 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 increase by up to an additional four years if 'aggravating circumstances' are proved to exist.

These circumstances are:

- Riding more than 45 km/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:

- When not the holder of a rider licence.
- With a licence that has expired.
- With an interstate or overseas licence more than three months after becoming a permanent resident of NSW.

Stiffer penalties apply if you are convicted of driving or riding while you are disqualified from holding or obtaining a driver licence, or when your licence has been cancelled, refused or suspended. These type of offences are heard in front of a magistrate at a local court and penalties include a large fine, a prison term of up to 18 months and disqualification from driving and riding. Heavier penalties apply for second or subsequent offences within a five-year period. For more information on penalties, check our website.



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

■ FINE DEFAULTS

If you do not settle a fine within the time allowed, the matter will be referred to the State Debt Recovery Office (SDRO).

When the outstanding amount is not paid to the SDRO, RMS will be advised to suspend your licence and/or cancel your motorcycle registration and refuse to do certain business with you until all fines have been paid.

If your licence is suspended, and you pay the SDRO, RMS will be advised to lift the suspension. RMS will send you a letter telling you that the suspension has been lifted and that you may resume riding. Alternatively, some fines can be paid at a motor registry to lift the licence suspension on the spot.

Payment not made after six months of licence suspension can lead to the SDRO directing RMS to cancel your licence. This means that when all outstanding fines are paid, you will need to go to a registry and apply for a new licence. Any demerit points you had prior to the suspension or cancellation are carried over when the suspension is lifted or when you get your new licence.

For more information about an unpaid fine which has been sent to the SDRO for collection, phone the SDRO Fineline on 1300 655 805.

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.

NOTES

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) – a motorcycle of a kind included in the list of 'Approved Motorcycles for Novice Riders' published by the RMS from time to time on its internet website and also available from motor registries, and has an engine capacity that is not greater than 660 ml and a power to weight ratio that is not greater than 150 kilowatts per tonne.

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 that the RMS is satisfied prove who you are and that you use a particular name.

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.

Sidcar – 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.

Three-second gap – a space between vehicles big enough for three seconds of time to pass between them.

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.

Index

A

Alcohol and other drugs
...13, 15, 17, 22, 23, 32, 34, 76, 79

B

Blind corners 34, 47
Blind crests 41
Blind spot 31, 79, 80
Braking 32, 53, 55, 79
Buffering 35-44, 46, 47, 51, 79
Bus lanes 67

C

Carrying passengers
..... 13, 15, 64, 74, 81
Carrying your licence 9, 10
Certificate of competency 18
Clothing 20, 24, 25, 26, 27
Counter steering 58
Crash avoidance space 33-39, 79
Curves and bends 47-50, 58-60

E

Exiting 48-50
Eye protection 26, 80

F

Fatigue 27, 32, 55, 79
Fines 74-77
Footwear 27

G

Gap selection 52
Gloves 25, 26

H

Hand signals 62
Hazards 53, 54
Helmet
.. 12, 13, 14, 17, 20, 24-26, 64, 74

I

In a curve 34, 47, 55, 58, 59

J

Jackets 20, 25, 26

L

Learner licence 10, 12, 14
Load projections 65

M

Mirrors 30, 72

N

Number plates 70, 71

O

Observation 30
Offences
..... 12, 14, 16, 62, 70, 71, 74-77
Overtaking 44, 45

P

Parking 66
Penalties 74, 75, 76, 77, 78
Posture 55, 56, 57
Protective clothing 24, 25, 26, 27
Provisional licence
..... 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

R

Registration 66, 70, 71, 77
Restrictions
..... 13, 15, 17, 63, 66, 74
Rider knowledge test 6, 12, 18, 80

Rider groups 51

Riders over age 25 19

Road positioning 35-49

Road surface 35

S

Scanning 30, 31, 81
Speed management 32
Steering 58

T

Training 20, 80

Turning 30, 45, 46, 49, 52, 58, 62

Tyres 71, 72

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For further enquiries:

www.rms.nsw.gov.au

13 22 13

Roads and Maritime Services

The information in this handbook is intended as a guide only and is subject to change at any time without notice. It does not replace the legislation.

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