

What All Drivers Should Know About Motorcycles

When a Motorcycle is in Motion:

Don't think of it as a motorcycle; think of it as a person. When the motorcycle gets hit the rider gets hit.

Motorcyclists Often Slow Down:

By downshifting or merely rolling off the throttle, therefore they do not activate the brake light. Increase your driving distance when you find yourself behind a motorcycle, and maintain a cushion of at least 4 seconds. This cushion gives you time to react to the unexpected. When following a motorcyclist remember it may slow down without a visual warning.

Turn Signals on a Motorcycle:

Many motorcycles aren't equipped with self-canceling turn signals like cars are, so it's possible that a biker might have his turn signal on because the rider simply forgot to turn it off. Some riders, especially beginners, sometimes forget to turn them off after a turn or lane change. If you have to pass or drive next to a motorcycle with a lingering turn signal, proceed with caution. At an intersection, make sure a motorcycle's signal is for real by waiting.

Inform motorcyclists:

Of your intention to turn. Initiate your turn signal sooner than you normally would when you know there is a motor-cycle driving behind you. Not only is this courteous, it helps to reduce pile-ups involving motorcycles.

Always Look Before You Turn:

Almost half of all 2-vehicle, fatal motorcycle crashes are the result of a car trying to turn left while the motorcycle went straight. If you see a motorcycle at an intersection, attempt to make eye contact with its rider before turning in its direction. Be sure you have clear vision in front of you when making a left turn.

Don't Use Your Cell Phone:

Focus all of your attention on driving. Any distraction takes your eyes away from the road and could contribute to a crash. Put your phone in Do Not Disturb mode while driving and set-up voice mail to accept recorded messages from callers while you are driving. Cell phone use while driving is illegal. Please don't text and drive.

Weather Warning:

Bad weather has more drastic effects on motorcycle riders than it does on automobile drivers. Rain and winter weather in particular can make it almost impossible for motorcyclist to continue to travel. Windy conditions can make it difficult for motorcyclists to control their vehicle on the road. Also remember that weather conditions often reduce your own visibility and may cause motorcycles to be more difficult to see.

Because of its small size:

A motorcycle may look farther away than it is. It may also be difficult to judge a motorcycle's speed. When checking traffic to turn at an intersection or into, or out of a drive-way, predict a motorcycle is closer than it looks.

Check your Blind Spots Often:

Since motorcycles are smaller than cars, it's that much easier for them to slip into your blind spot - especially when they're attempting to pass you. Swivel your head to check your blind spots regularly and, in particular, before changing lanes or turning at an intersection.

Motorcyclists often adjust position:

Motorcyclists move within their lane to be seen more easily and to minimize the effects of road debris, passing vehicles, and wind. Understand that motorcyclists adjust lane position for a purpose, not to be reckless or show off or to allow you to share the lane with them.

Take a Second Look at Left-Turns:

Before you cross a lane or lanes of traffic to turn left, take a second look for approaching motorcycles. Vehicle accidents involving the collision of a left-turning car and an approaching motorcycle can be very severe, often because the motorcycle broadsides the car while it is mid-way through the left turn.

Maneuverability:

Is one of a motorcycle's better characteristics, especially at slower speeds and with good road conditions, but don't expect a motorcyclist to always be able to swerve out of the way or stop quickly.

Intersections are Danger Zones:

Most crashes that involve both automobiles and motorcycles occur at intersections. Always follow the safety protocol for intersections every single time that you approach one.

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Stopping Distance:

For motorcycles is nearly the same as for cars, but slippery pavement makes stopping quickly difficult. Allow more following distance behind a motorcycle, about 4 seconds, because it can't always stop "on a dime".

Night Riding:

Driving at night can be treacherous for motorcyclists. Help riders stay safe after dark by increasing your following distance, ensuring that your high-beams are turned off when you notice an approaching motorcycle, and refrain from passing.

Be Respectful:

This tip goes for all kinds of safe driving; just be nice. Give other drivers and riders a little slack, and remember that we all make mistakes. It will be good for your blood pressure and your driving record. By watching out for each other and understanding the obstacles faced, and posed by motorcycles, we can avoid needless accidents and safely share the road with our two-wheeling friends.

There is no Such Thing:

As a fender-bender for a motorcycle rider. They are completely exposed. Most multi-vehicle accidents involving motorcycles cause serious or fatal injuries to the motorcycle rider(s). It is your responsibility as the driver of an automobile to be cautious and do everything in your power to prevent motorcycle accidents.

Glare from the Sun:

According to New York State law, motorcyclists must wear eye protection at all times. Most motorcyclists keep two pairs of glasses for day and night time riding. Sunglasses protect our eyes from the glare of the sun. Sunglasses allow riders and drivers to see more clearly. Please keep a pair of sunglasses in your vehicle at all times so you are never caught without them. Especially driving toward the sun or winter driving. Sun reflecting off fresh snow can be blinding.

Large Groups of Motorcycles:

On Saturdays and Sundays many motorcyclists donate time and money to local charities by participating in a group ride. It is very important for safety to keep the group together. Please be patient and aware of the motorcycles. Do not try to cut in line of an organized ride.

Motorcycle Insurance Suggestion:

NY State Insurance Laws specifically exclude motorcycles from certain benefits. One of those benefits is No Fault. Motorcyclists can't get No Fault benefits. Since the minimum insurance in NY State is only \$25,000, very often the other vehicle does not have enough to cover the damage it causes. What is the answer? You need to make sure you have insurance to cover yourself so that you are not relying on the other person's insurance. Ask your insurance agent for Supplemental Under-insured Motorist (SUM) coverage. This is the only way to be sure that you will be covered.

Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration with a grant from the New York State Governors Traffic Safety Committee and New York State Association of Traffic Safety Boards