

Using your mirrors

Check your mirrors every few seconds when you slow down, stop, change lanes or approach intersections. Also, check mirrors periodically to be aware of vehicles approaching or passing from behind.

Checking around you

Mopeds have “blind spots” that you need to check by turning your head. When changing lanes, always look over your shoulder at the traffic behind you.

Position for visibility

As a moped operator, you can often see things other vehicle operators can't.

- * At intersections, check around buildings, parked vehicles and bushes to see if other vehicles are coming.
- * When parked, pull back onto the road from an angled position for a better view of traffic coming from both directions.

Night riding

- * Reduce your speed. Use your headlight if you must ride a moped at night. Leave more room between you and others to allow more time to react in a dangerous situation. Check for rough spots in the road by watching the tail lights of vehicles in front of you.
- * Limit night riding. If you must ride at night, wear reflective clothing. It is difficult to see you and your moped in the dark.

Keeping your distance

Distance in front

- * Remain a safe distance behind the vehicle in front of you when coming to a stop.
- * Keep at least a three- to four- second traveling distance between you and the vehicle in front of you to allow time to react if the driver ahead suddenly stops. It gives you time to see potholes, slippery spots and debris.

Distance to the side

Be careful when a vehicle passes. Trucks can create gusts of wind that affect your steering. When you pass parked cars, allow for people opening doors and getting out of vehicles by moving to the left side of your lane. Move further over to the right when traffic passes you from behind.

Distance behind

Monitor traffic behind you. If another vehicle follows you too closely, allow the vehicle to pass. Brake or signal early to communicate that you are turning, slowing down or stopping.

Intersections

Most moped/car crashes occur at intersections, so enter them slowly and assume others do not see you. If you turn right, watch for approaching vehicles turning left in front of you. If you turn left, enter the intersection and turn when oncoming traffic has cleared.

Emergencies

- * If you have a blowout, hold the handle grips firmly, and concentrate on steering and maintaining a straight course. If the front tire blows, shift your weight as far back as you can. If the rear tire blows, do not shift your weight. Do not use either brake. Slowly close the throttle and coast. When your moped is going slowly and it is safe, edge to the side of the road and stop.
- * If you have a mechanical breakdown, get off the road. When walking your moped, stay on the right shoulder with your moped between you and passing traffic.

Remember... Never drink alcohol or use drugs before riding a moped!

For Your Protection... Always wear an approved safety helmet!



The Department of State is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you need an accommodation or have been denied services, telephone (888) SOS-MICH (767-6424). Hearing-impaired customers may access the department's telephone number by calling the Michigan Relay Center at 711.

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Riding A Moped Safely

If you are a moped operator, you must follow the same traffic rules as other motor vehicle operators. A moped is defined by law as a motor vehicle with two or three wheels that:

- Has an engine that does not exceed 100 cc piston displacement
- Does not have a gearshift
- Has a top speed of 30 mph or less on a level surface

Vehicles exceeding *any* of the criteria above must be registered and titled as a motorcycle. Other types of vehicles, such as electric scooters, “pocket rockets” and mini-choppers, may fit the definition of a moped or a motorcycle, but can’t be registered by the Department of State if they lack the equipment required by law to legally drive on public roads.

Registration requirements

- * **Mopeds must be registered at a Secretary of State office** unless operated solely on private property. A three-year registration decal costs \$15 and is displayed on the back of your moped so it is visible to law enforcement officers. It expires April 30 in the year on the decal.

License requirements

- * If you do not have a valid operator or chauffeur license and are at least age 15, you may apply for a moped license. You aren’t eligible for a moped license if your operator’s or chauffeur’s license is suspended, revoked or denied.
- * You must present proof of your Social Security number, legal presence, identity and two proofs of Michigan residency. For more information, visit Michigan.gov/SOS.
- * You must pass vision, knowledge and traffic sign tests to obtain a moped license. You don’t have to pass a driver education course or a driving skills test.
- * If you are under age 18, a parent or legal guardian must sign your license application.
- * You must give up your moped license if you obtain a regular operator’s or chauffeur’s license.
- * The original moped license fee is \$7.50. Applicants under age 20 years, 6 months receive a moped license valid until their 21st birthday. Any other moped license expires four years from the

applicant’s last birthday. The four-year renewal fee is \$6.

Rules of the road

- * Operators under age 19 must wear an approved and properly fastened safety helmet when riding a moped on a public road. The helmet must meet U.S. Department of Transportation safety standards.
- * Sit on a regular, permanently attached seat.
- * Keep both hands on the handle grips. Never hang on to another vehicle for a “tow.”
- * Ride on the right edge of the road, out of the flow of traffic, when possible.
- * Make sure all moped equipment is in good working order.
- * **Never** operate a moped on freeways, more than two side-by-side, between lanes of traffic or on sidewalks and bicycle paths.
- * **Never** allow an unlicensed operator to use your moped.
- * Only carry up to one passenger - it is illegal to carry more than one passenger.

Perform safety check before riding

- * Keep tires properly inflated.
- * Check the front and rear brakes, the throttle and cables for kinks and broken strands.
- * Test the horn and all lights including the brake light and turn signals.
- * Make sure the chain is properly adjusted.
- * Adjust and clean mirrors.

Riding techniques

Body position

Sit straight and close enough to the handlebars to reach them with your arms slightly bent. Hold the handle grips firmly.

Turning

- * Approach turns carefully and limit your speed until you learn to judge the safest speed.
- * Lean with your moped. The sharper the turn, the more you must lean.
- * Use turn signals whenever you plan to enter traffic, turn or change lanes, even if you do not see another vehicle or pedestrian.

- * Remember to turn off your signals after turning! They could confuse other drivers.
- * Use your left arm to signal turns if your moped does not have electric turn signals.

Be visible

- * Keep your headlight on at all times.
- * Wear brightly colored protective clothing that covers your arms and legs completely. Use reflective tape on your clothing, helmet and vehicle.
- * Wear protective boots and gloves.
- * Don’t ride in another driver’s blind spot. Stay behind and to the right of the vehicle in front of you, so you can see the vehicle’s turn signals.

Braking

- * Flash your brake light to warn others, by squeezing the brake lever before slowing down.
- * If you squeeze the brake lever too hard, you may lock the front wheel and tip your moped over, particularly on wet or loose surfaces.
- * Apply both brakes at the same time.
- * Brake before entering a curve or turn.
- * If you must stop quickly, keep the front wheel straight (do not slide). Apply the rear brake firmly and the front brake gently. Then, quickly increase the pressure on the front brake.

Ride defensively

Defensive driving is the key to safety. Expect the unexpected. Be aware of other vehicles and pedestrians. Be prepared for their mistakes. Watch for bicyclists, joggers, blind pedestrians, animals crossing the road, flying objects, gravel and icy or slippery roads.

The road ahead

- * Keep checking the road surface ahead. Slow down and test your brakes if you see slippery spots, oil, water, painted lane markings, manhole covers, bad bumps, loose gravel, grooves and gratings, broken or jutting pavement, railroad tracks or leaves.
- * Watch for vehicles leaving the curb or entering the road from side streets and driveways.
- * Look for places where you could leave the road safely in case of an emergency.