

Safety Tips for Motorcyclists

FACT
sheet

In BC in 2004, there were 2,040 motorcycle-related crash incidents reported to ICBC. Approximately 1,250 people were injured and 43 people were killed. The following information will help riders make safe choices and reduce the risk of a crash.

Communication

Make eye contact — never assume that other road users see you. Always try to make eye contact with drivers who may be about to pull into your path.

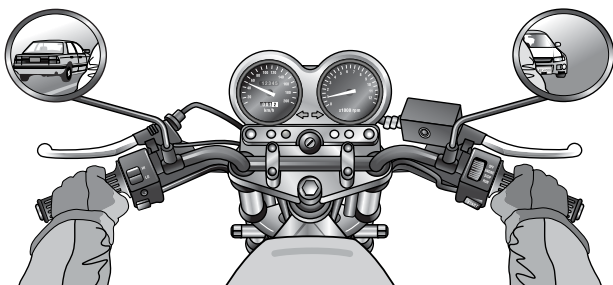
Read vehicle language — remember — even if they see you — drivers, cyclists and pedestrians often don't have an accurate sense of your distance or realize how fast you are approaching. Don't rely on the judgment of other road users.

Intersections — a common type of intersection crash for motorcycles involves an oncoming vehicle turning left in front of a motorcycle. Always be cautious when you see an oncoming driver signalling to turn left.

Leaving a highway — if you're turning left from a highway, watch your mirrors and make sure you have plenty of space behind. The drivers behind may not be prepared to slow down for you.

Curves

Many motorcycle crashes happen in curves. A rider may go off the road, or cross over the centre line and ride into oncoming traffic. Avoid this by observing the road ahead, slowing down and choosing the correct lane position, before you enter a curve.



Protection

Helmets — are mandatory in B.C. Helmets can prevent fatal injuries 37 per cent of the time and are effective in preventing head injuries in 67 per cent of crashes. Make sure your helmet has a sticker to show that it meets current safety standards. Choose a bright colour and add some reflective tape to the sides and back for more visibility. Avoid buying a used helmet. It may have been in a crash, and the damage may not be obvious.

Protective clothing — can provide some protection during a crash and protect you from weather and debris. Being warm and dry will help you stay alert and maintain coordination. Choose clothing that is designed for motorcycle riding and wear it in layers so you can adjust to changing conditions. Jeans give only minimum protection. Never ride in lightweight pants or shorts.

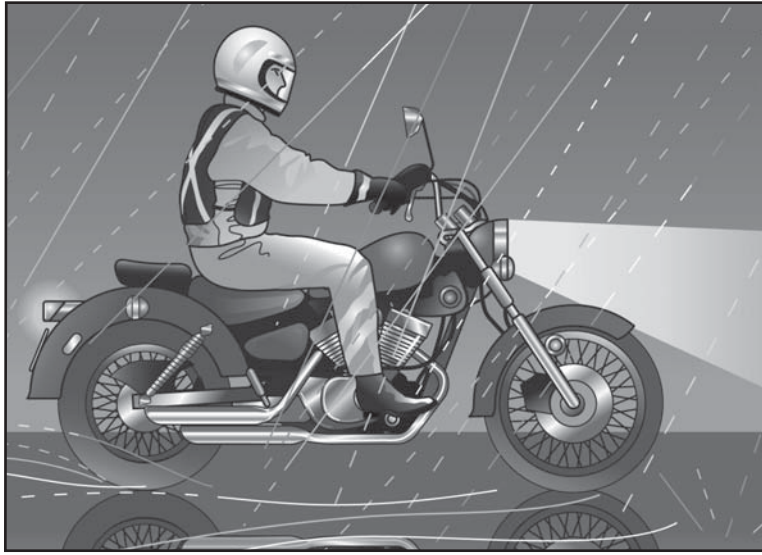
Protect your eyes and face — constant wind can make your eyes water, which can prevent you from being able to see hazards. Flying insects, dust and debris can hurt your eyes and face. The best protection is a full-face helmet with a built-in face shield because it protects both your eyes and your face.

Traction

Traction can be affected by many factors, including wet roads, fluid spills, sand, gravel, highway sealant, railroad tracks, rain grooves and potholes. Many falls are caused by road surface conditions. Keep your eyes open for potential problems.

Make yourself visible

- Wear bright and reflective clothing. Add extra reflective material to your clothing or wear a reflective vest.
- Keep your headlight on at all times.
- Ride in the lane position where other drivers can easily see you and where you've got room to move. Remember that all vehicles have blind spots.



Pre-trip check

Always check your motorcycle before riding. The pre-trip check doesn't take long and will soon become routine and automatic.

Your check should include:

- Tires — air pressure, tread and condition
- Wheels and rims — check for damage or cracks
- Drive system — chain, belt and shaft — check for tension, lubrication, wear, leaks
- Electrical — lights, brake lights, turn signals, horn and engine cut-off switch
- Fluids — check oil, coolant, fuel, leaks etc.
- Clutch — when you squeeze the clutch lever, the cable should move smoothly and feel tight
- Throttle — should snap back when you let it go
- Mirrors — clean, adjusted, securely fastened
- Brakes — check front and rear brakes to make sure they feel firm and work well.

The information in this fact sheet is intended to provide general information only. Nothing is intended to provide legal or professional advice or to be relied on in any dispute, claim, action, demand or proceeding. ICBC does not accept liability for any damage or injury resulting from reliance on the information in this publication.

For more information, pick up a copy of *RoadSense for Riders — BC's Safe Riding Guide* at your local driver licensing office

www.icbc.com