



Club Safety Handbook

Revision 2.0, 2005

Scooter and Moped Club
www.scooterandmopedclub.com
info@scooterandmopedclub.com

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
1.1	About this Guide.....	3
1.2	About Scootering Manitoba.....	3
2	Personal Gear	4
2.1	Helmet / Eye Protection	4
2.2	Gloves	5
2.3	Jacket and Pants.....	5
2.4	Footwear	6
2.5	General Tips.....	6
3	Your Bike / General Riding Tips	7
3.1	Critical Mechanical Checks	7
3.2	Starting & Moving Your Bike	7
3.3	Proper Grasping of the Throttle / Brakes	8
3.4	Riding Position	10
3.5	The “Jerky Take Off”	10
3.6	Riding Slowly and In Control.....	11
3.7	Hand Signals.....	11
3.8	Passengers	12
4	Riding Alone	13
4.1	Lane Positioning.....	13
4.2	Lane Changes & Turns	14
4.3	Defensive Driving Tips	16
5	Club Group Riding Procedures	18
5.1	Overview	18
5.2	Riding in Staggered Formation	18
5.3	Riding in Single File Formation	19
5.4	Common Misconceptions/Mistakes	20
5.5	Pack Sizes & Routes.....	20
5.6	The Buddy System: City Routes	21
5.7	Passengers on Group Rides	21
5.8	Hand Signals.....	22
5.9	Designated Ride Leaders.....	23
5.10	Ride Protocol	23
5.11	Established Routes.....	24
5.12	FRS Radios.....	25
6	Gaining Riding Experience.....	26
6.1	One-on-One Riding	26
6.2	Ridebuddies Email	26
6.3	Director of Safety	26

6 Gaining Riding Experience

Group Rides are not training sessions. The Club expects each participant to be confident in their skills and be familiar with the procedures outlined in this guide.

6.1 One-on-One Riding

- If you are feeling nervous about your own skills, the Club can pair you up with a more experienced rider who is willing to spend time with you and help you practice your skills. Contact the Director of Safety for more information.

6.2 Ridebuddies Email

- Use the Ridebuddies email service to invite a more experienced rider to join you for one-on-one riding if you wish to gain experience on the road with another rider.

6.3 Director of Safety

- Members may contact the Director of Safety if they require any special assistance, safety advice, or training beyond what the Club offers in the safety orientation and Ridebuddies services.
- Not all requests can be accommodated; however, the Club will endeavor to do its best to meet your needs.

1 Introduction

1.1 About this Guide

- Information contained in this handbook was derived from the Manitoba Safety Council's Motorcycle Safety Course, the Province of Manitoba's Motorcycle Handbook, and the experience of Scootering Manitoba members and Directors.
- This guide has not been assembled or reviewed by certified safety instructors; however, Scootering Manitoba has made reasonable efforts to ensure the information in this guide is in keeping with the safety material and curriculum of the Province of Manitoba and the Manitoba Safety Council.

1.2 About Scootering Manitoba

Scootering Manitoba is a non-profit club established in 2003 with the following objectives:

- Promote safety to scooter and moped riders in Manitoba.
- Organize events and develop a community for scooter and moped enthusiasts in Manitoba.
- Provide members with access to valuable information resources and help with scooter maintenance, repair, and tuning.
- Lobby and represent the interests of Club Members to government and/or private organizations in order to maintain scooters/mopeds as an affordable and accessible transportation choice.

2 Personal Gear

Due to the small size and slower speed of a scooter/moped you might think that you don't need to wear safety gear. Traveling at 50km/hr and impacting a car or the pavement is no different on a small bike than it is on a Harley. Your gear is the last line of defense between you and severe injury.

Personal injury claims/costs are responsible for driving up our insurance costs. Along with lobbying to keep insurance rates low, riders should minimize injuries by driving safely and reducing severity of injuries by wearing protective gear.

The Club respects your personal choices in gear but encourages you to wear safety gear as outlined below. Following the advice on gear below will ensure you are protected as much as possible in the event of a crash.

2.1 Helmet / Eye Protection



- A CSA/SNELL/DOT approved helmet is required by law for all scooter and moped riders and passengers.
- The Club recommends a full face helmet over an open face helmet.
 - A full face helmet will keep your face looking like a face if you ever end up in a serious collision.
 - Less wind noise at higher speeds means that you can hear horns and emergency vehicles better.
 - Warmer in the colder mornings/evenings but most have good vents that make summer bearable (you can always ride with the visor up if you wear some type of glasses).
 - Riding in the rain is more bearable.
- If selecting an open face helmet, be sure to wear some eye protection. Avoid wearing sunglasses at night.
- Helmets should be replaced after 4-5 years.
- Dropping a helmet erodes its ability to protect you in a crash. Always place your helmet on the ground when not in use (not on your seat or floorboards).

5.12 FRS Radios



- FRS Radios (approx \$80 per pair) combined with a voice activated headset (approx \$40 per pair) can be an inexpensive alternative for bike-to-bike communications.
- The voice activated headsets work fairly well for full-face helmets but will not operate effectively with open face helmets as the wind noise will interfere with the microphone and continuously set off the communicator.
- For safety reasons these radios should not be used in "push-to-talk" mode where riders must press a button to communicate.
- Higher quality communication systems from companies such as Collett (www.collett.mb.ca) are able to deal with more background noise and open face helmets.

2. City Route Stage

- Riders proceed through the route working with their designated buddy. Staying with the pack is not necessary at this stage.
- Ride Rendezvous Stop: Re-Assembling the Pack

3. Rural Ride Stage

- Depending upon the route, larger packs may be more feasible during this stage.
- The ride lead may designate a stop or point on the route where it may be suitable to re-assemble into a larger pack for riding in a more rural setting.

4. Destination Point

- Some rides will include a stop for food or coffee.
- The specific destination should be known to all riders and should not be altered. If, upon arriving at the destination the shop/restaurant is closed, the group should wait for all riders to arrive before electing to proceed to another location.

5. End Point

- The end point will usually be very near the re-entry point into the city from the rural stage.
- This will allow riders to break off and head home or pair up and ride to different areas of the city.
- This is done to avoid confusion among the pack when riders “suddenly” leave the ride by dropping off, or pulling over.
- From the drop off point, riders are free to leave on their own or continue a ride with other members.

5.11 Established Routes

- Scootering Manitoba’s Director of Safety will publish designated ride routes.
- These routes should be used under normal circumstances for weekly group rides.
- The routes may be altered by the Designated Ride Lead(s) if agreeable to all riders or if necessary due to special circumstances (construction / special events & traffic snarls).

2.2 Gloves



- Wearing protective gloves that will save your skin in a skid just makes good sense.
- The gloves should ideally be snug to allow precise operation of your instruments and cover the exposed wrist area between your hand and jacket.
- Ideally, the gloves will cover the cuff of your jacket.
- Armored gloves offer additional crash protection and some gloves also have thermal insulation which keep your hands cool in summer and warm in winter.

2.3 Jacket and Pants



- A good fit is essential for your jacket and pants. Loose clothing will slide up in a crash leaving you unprotected.
- It is not always possible to wear full body armor, particularly if you rely on your scooter/moped for transportation to the office, however, we recommend the following:
- An armored nylon/kevlar or leather jacket which fits snugly at the waist and wrists offers the best protection.
- A nylon-based rain jacket that will slide in a crash and has a soft inner lining is your next best option if protective jacket is too costly or not an option for you.
- Denim jackets offer fair protection but are a safer choice than no jacket at all.
- Armored pants are available which look like regular pants/jeans are now available. These offer very good crash protection and padding.
- Denim jeans are your best option after armored pants. Your jeans should be thick denim and fit snugly (baggy jeans will slide up in a crash and create more abrasions).
- Shorts or a skirt are never a good idea at 50km/hr.

2.4 Footwear



- Avoid obvious mistakes like sandals or flimsy dress footwear and stick to leather shoes or boots.
- Less grip on the soles of your shoes (harder rubber or leather) will slide better in a crash and avoid knee/hip/ankle injuries.
- Ideally, wear a boot which covers your ankles from abrasion and your hot exhaust pipe (if so equipped).
- Unlike motorcycles, scooters do not typically have pegs so having a heel on your boot is not required unless you have pegs for the driver or passenger.
- Newer footwear from companies like Joe Rocket are designed to look like running shoes but have many of these safety characteristics.

2.5 General Tips

Fit

- Your gear should fit snugly with no hanging flaps or laces but should allow sufficient movement to operate controls and shoulder check properly.
- Keep your gear done up when riding. Riding with your jacket partially open is OK on hot days, but avoids riding with it totally undone.

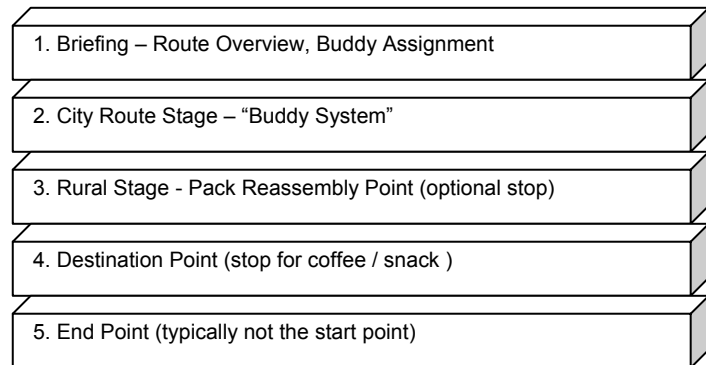
Color Choice

- Choose light or reflective colors if you can. These will make you more visible and will generally be cooler on hot days.
- Adding reflective tape to your gear is a great idea, particularly if you choose to wear a darker color.

5.9 Designated Ride Leaders

- Scootering Manitoba's Designated Ride Leader will ensure that group ride safety procedures are followed and will confirm that everyone knows the route and rules at the start of the ride.
- Designated ride leads are expected to act courteously and responsibly in their roles.
- Ride leads will determine which route will be taken on the ride and if any alterations to the route are required due to special circumstances (construction, special event traffic).
- Ride leaders may ask a member/attendee to refrain from riding with the group if they refuse to follow procedure and are endangering the group.

5.10 Ride Protocol







1. Briefing




- The ride leader performs a quick briefing and confirms that each member knows the route and any stops that will be made.
- The ride leader confirms that everyone is OK for the ride, has enough gas, and does not need to stop for any other reason.
- Buddy riders are assigned during the briefing.
- Members with cell phones should bring them to the ride. Exchanging phone numbers with the ride lead is recommended.
 - Cell phones are useful in an emergency and enable the ride leader(s) to contact riders that do not arrive at the destination.

5.8 Hand Signals

Signals That May Be Used on Any Group Ride

Hazard		<p>HAZARD LEFT. Extend your left arm at a 45 degree angle and point towards the hazard.</p>		<p>HAZARD RIGHT Extend your left arm upward at a 45 degree angle with your elbow bent to 90 degrees and point towards the hazard over your helmet.</p>
Formation		<p>Staggered - Extend left arm upward with index and pinkie finger extended. Indicates the leader wants riders to fall out to the right into staggered formation.</p>		<p>Single File - Rider On Right Fall In. This indicates the leader wants the group in a single file formation.</p>

Signals That Are Only Used On "Special" Rides

Speed		<p>SLOW DOWN. Extend your left arm at a 45 degree angle and move your hand up and down.</p>		<p>SPEED UP. Raise your left arm up and down with your index finger extended upward. This indicates the leader wants to speed up.</p>
Formation		<p>TIGHTEN UP Raise your left arm and repeatedly move up and down in a pulling motion. This indicates the leader wants the group to close up tighter.</p>		

3 Your Bike / General Riding Tips

3.1 Critical Mechanical Checks

Consult your owners' manual on inspecting for wear and tear. In addition to the checks for tire wear, brake cable fraying, and electrical inspection, the following checks are particularly important on automatic scooters/mopeds.

Kill Switch

- Turn your bike off with the kill switch every time so that (a) you know it works and (b) you will instinctively know where it is in an emergency.
- Should the throttle on your bike stick, it will be critical that your kill switch be operational.
- Since the clutch is automatic it cannot be disengaged like that of a motorcycle, your only option in the case of a stuck throttle is to apply the brakes and kill the engine.

3.2 Starting & Moving Your Bike

Starting Your Bike & Taking It Off The Centre Stand

- The most stable technique to take your bike off the centre stand is to straddle the scooter/moped and push it forward with both hands on the handlebars, applying the brakes as required.
- Preferably, do not start your bike until you have taken it off the stand and are in a seated position with both feet on the ground.
- If you have to kick start your bike or warm it up while it is on the centre stand, ensure that you use the straddle technique and apply the brakes as you roll it forward.

Pushing Your Bike

- Do not push your bike while it is running. Your grip on the bars will naturally accelerate if you stumble or slightly lose your balance.
- If you must move your bike while it is running, straddle the bike and walk it while sitting on the seat.

3.3 Proper Grasping of the Throttle / Brakes

Throttle Grasp

Incorrect Position – High Wrist



- In this image, a sudden jerk forward would cause the wrist to pivot down further increasing acceleration and loss of control.
- Reaching for the brake in an emergency may cause the bike to accelerate.
- Grasping the brake is also awkward/slow (as shown) which translates into slower response time for braking in an emergency.

Incorrect Position – Low Wrist



- While a forward jerk would decelerate the throttle, this position creates an awkward/slow reach for the brake.
- This position is also dangerous as your wrist would be more likely to “buckle” under the force of hard braking.

Correct Position – Flat Wrist



- The wrist is flat with a slight downward bend.
- A sudden jerk forward would cause the wrist to pivot up slightly or not at all, reducing or neutralizing the acceleration.
- Grasping the brake is natural and quick. Most bikes place the lever slightly lower than the grip making this the most effective position to reach for the lever.

5.6 The Buddy System: City Routes

- When riding through the city portion of a route in a pack of 4 or 6 the group will likely be separated.
- Riders should not run lights or attempt risky maneuvers for the sake of staying together.
- At the start of each ride you will pair up with a buddy. You should ride together as a pair during the city and not worry about being separated from the rest of the pack.
- In typical situations you will become separated and re-join the pack several times as you go through the city portion of the route.
- If you become separated from your buddy at a light, you should ride slowly to allow them to catch up or pull over if there is a safe, visible location to do so.
- In the case of an odd number of riders, a group of three riders will be assigned as buddies.

5.7 Passengers on Group Rides

- Passengers are not permitted to ride in formation or as part of a pack on group rides.
- The weight of a passenger makes the scooter/moped less agile and difficult to maneuver in an emergency.
- Effective stopping distance increases with a passenger on board and acceleration power decreases.
- IF YOU SHOW UP WITH A PASSENGER, YOU MAY JOIN THE GROUP AT THE RIDE DESTINATION, HOWEVER, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO RIDE WELL AHEAD OR BEHIND THE GROUP (5-10 MINUTE LEAD/TRAILING TIME).

5.4 Common Misconceptions/Mistakes

A Bigger Pack is Safer

- You need the same defensive driving skills as you do on your own plus the precision control of your speed and following distance.
- Unlike riding alone, you have more vehicles sharing your lane.
- A big pack incites anger from cars trying to pass the group. A larger pack of slow scooters/mopeds is at higher risk of road rage and a driver making a “death defying” pass attempt.

Tunnel Vision

- Novice riders tend to stare at the rider in front of them and are not looking ahead or around them.
- Riders need to be aware of what is happening well ahead of them just as if you were riding alone.

“Sure, Sure, I Know the Route”

Not knowing the route puts you and others in danger:

- Riders who do not know route will often speed, make panic lane changes, and last-minute turns for fear of losing the pack (The Club has witnessed this first hand).
- Getting lost is also a concern as the riders will be concerned if you do not arrive at the destination.
- If you don't know the route tell the ride leader so he can pair you up accordingly.

5.5 Pack Sizes & Routes

- City Routes – Packs larger than 4 or 6 should not be attempted.
- Rural Routes – Packs of 4 or 6 are possible (or larger in ideal situations where passing lanes are available to cars).
- Escorted Rides – Large “parades” are only possible when rides are sanctioned and escorted.
- Official Club Ride Routes are known ahead of time and will usually be posted on the web site. Review the route and try and ride it alone ahead of time.

Handlebar Grasp

- When riding normally, grasp the handlebars normally with all fingers.
- Do not ride with your fingers “covering” the brake levers:
 - This reduces your control of the bike in general and ability to swerve in the event of an emergency.
 - You may accidentally brake hard if you hit an unexpected bump/pothole (if you are losing your balance, you'll naturally close your fists).
 - Your brake lights may go off sporadically, confusing drivers behind you (some brake lights are very sensitive).
- There are two scenarios when “covering” the brakes is acceptable.
 1. Controlling the clutch/acceleration during slow maneuvers.
 2. You judge that braking is the only option to react to a traffic situation developing in front of you.

Brake (and/or Clutch) Lever Grasp

- Use all four fingers to grasp the brake lever(s).
 - Many scooters/mopeds use cable-based brakes or small hydraulic systems which require more force to stop the bike than a typical motorcycle.
 - The amount of force required increases dramatically if you are carrying a passenger or additional weight in your pack.
- Leaving other fingers on the handlebar is not recommended:
 - The fingers not on the brake will get crushed between the lever and handlebar in hard braking.
 - Braking with all four fingers naturally rotates the wrist upward, decelerating the bike in the process.
 - Using only two fingers may not have the same effect or cause slight acceleration while braking.

3.4 Riding Position

Riding position on bikes with floorboards and leg shields is as follows:

- Toes up against the leg shield (some models have an angled footrest).
- This position will allow the rider to stabilize your seating position during emergency braking and maneuvers and reduces the possibility of your foot slipping along the floorboards.
- If the bike is equipped with pegs or pedals, ideal footwear with a heel will allow the rider to “lock” their riding position firmly.

3.5 The “Jerky Take Off”

A new automatic bike will have a tight/sensitive clutch. New riders will experience difficulty controlling acceleration and may report the following challenges:

- “Wobbling” off balance because their feet were lifted too soon before the clutch engaged.
- “Jerky” acceleration in stop-and-go traffic (risk of hitting vehicle in front of them).
- Experiencing loss of control because of accelerating unexpectedly or too strongly from a stopped position into a 90 degree turn.
- A crash due to losing control over acceleration during a turn on sand or slippery surfaces.

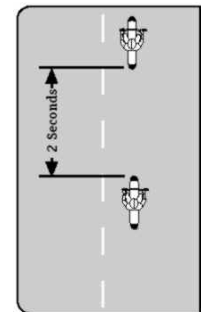
Technique 1: Rear Braking During Initial Acceleration

This technique works extremely well in all situations and is particularly effective when you need to control acceleration from a stop to an immediate 90° turn.

- Apply light/moderate pressure to the rear brake as you accelerate.
- Release the brake gradually when you feel the clutch engage.
- Lift your feet onto the bike.
- Fully release the brake when you are ready to accelerate normally.
- If acceleration is too strong, apply slightly more pressure to the brake and ease off slightly on the throttle.
- If making a 90° turn, do not accelerate strongly until you are at least 50% through the turn.

5.3 Riding in Single File Formation

Single File Formation



When is it used?

- The ride leader decides when single file formation is required. Below are some examples of when single file may be required:
 - Construction / narrow roadway.
 - Narrow residential street with parked cars on one side.
 - Need to pass a slow moving vehicle on a single lane undivided roadway.

How is the transition signaled/made from staggered to single file?

- *Right Tire Track File In* - The ride leader will move purposely to the right tire track.
- *Left Tire Track Fall In* - The ride leader will signal the rider on their immediate right to “fall in” by tapping their right shoulder.
- Riders down the pack continue to fall in one-by-one.



How is the transition made back to staggered formation?

- *Left Tire Track Fall Out* - The ride leader will signal the rider behind them and (if required) move purposefully to the left tire track.
- *Right Tire Track Fall Out* - If the pack is riding single file in the left tire track, the second rider behind the lead will move purposefully to the right track upon receiving the “staggered” signal.
- Riders down the pack continue to fall into staggered formation one-by-one.



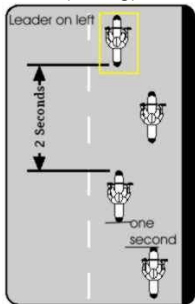
5 Club Group Riding Procedures

5.1 Overview

- Group riding is not safer than riding alone, it is inherently more dangerous. Group rides are not for learning basic riding skills.
- **DO NOT ATTEND A GROUP RIDE IF YOU ARE NOT CONFIDENT IN YOUR SKILLS, YOU ARE PUTTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS IN DANGER.**

5.2 Riding in Staggered Formation

Staggered Formation
(Riding)

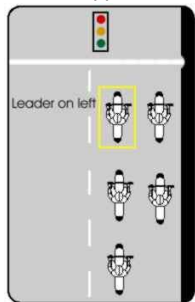


- The main formation used for group riding is the staggered formation.
- Leader is always on the left, remaining bikes file in as illustrated.

Safe Distance Principles:

- “Time” between bikes is difficult to judge and sometimes causes riders to focus on the other riders instead of looking ahead.
- The rider immediately in front of you should be able to swerve unexpectedly into your path without affecting you.
- You should not be so far apart that a car may be tempted to “cut in”.

Staggered Formation
Stopped



Stopping & Starting In Formation: Stop Sign

- Each pair of bikes must come to a complete stop at a stop sign and generally behaves as one car.
- When leaving a stop sign, both bikes leave together. Riders on the right allow riders on their left to accelerate at a faster rate.

Stopping & Starting In Formation: Stop Light

- Bikes stop side-by-side as illustrated.
- When leaving a light, each pair of bikes accelerates together as soon as the pair in front of them is in motion. Riders on the right allow riders on their left to accelerate at a faster rate.

Technique 2: Foot Plant/Pressure (The Slingshot Technique)

This technique is designed to avoid the off balance wobble caused by lifting your feet too early, before the clutch is engaged. The technique is most practical when accelerating in a straight line from a stopped position such as a stop light. This technique may not be workable for shorter riders who may not be able to plant their feet far enough away from the bike.

- Plant both feet firmly on the ground in a slightly forward position (knees almost straight). Your feet need to be further away from the bike than usual to avoid contacting your foot/heel as the bike takes off.
- Accelerate until the bike begins to pull against the pressure of your foot plant.
- Lift your feet onto the bike and increase acceleration.

3.6 Riding Slowly and In Control

- Riding in stop-and-go traffic or in busy parking lots requires that you control the clutch on your bike and its acceleration.
- The automatic clutches on most bikes are tricky to control at low speeds and can “surprise” the rider by engaging unexpectedly.
- Control can be obtained by using the same technique described above for entering 90° turns from a stopped position.
- Riding the rear brake and applying slight pressure to control acceleration as required.
- When riding slowly, the rider will balance the amount of brake and throttle to keep the scooter moving at the desired pace.

3.7 Hand Signals

- On automatic bikes with dual hand brakes, hand signaling is not advised as you lose the ability to apply both brakes.
- An exception to this can be made in low-visibility situations (e.g., riding into a bright sunset), where hand signals may be the only way to ensure other drivers are aware of an upcoming change in direction/lane.
- If the bike is equipped with a rear foot brake, hand signals should be used during the day.

3.8 Passengers

Moped-Class Scooters

- Legally, you may **not** carry a passenger regardless of what type of license you have.
- Oddly enough, you may carry an infant in a properly designed and mounted child carrying seat (moped laws, originally designed for bicycle-style bikes are out of date).

Motorcycle-Class Scooters

- A scooter which is > 50cc or can exceed 50 km/hr and is designed to carry two people may carry a passenger. You must register and insure your bike as a motorcycle (aka: motorscooter).
- To ride these bikes, the driver must have a valid class 6 motorcycle license.

Tips for Riding with Passengers

- Driver mounts first, followed by passenger. Passenger dismounts first, followed by driver.
- On the lightweight scooter/moped it is more critical that the passenger be as still as possible. A mere turn of their head can cause a weight shift.
- The extra weight of the passenger will require more brake pressure in general to stop and more throttle to accelerate quickly. Increase distance between yourself and other vehicles when riding with a passenger.
- Avoid carrying passengers until you have developed good riding skills and are familiar with the feel of your bike.

Other Tips

Scenario	Tip/Advice
Cars suddenly change lane changes without checking to get around parked cars/buses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate that these drivers do not see you, particularly if there is no vehicle behind you. • Move to the left tire track momentarily and reduce speed.
Vehicles making left turns in front of you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume they can't see you. • Slow down and move to the right most position in your lane.
Two vehicles coming from opposite directions are making left turns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The driver facing your direction of travel cannot see you (almost guaranteed). • Slow down and move to the right most position in your lane.
You are stuck riding beside or behind a big bus/truck.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a sure recipe for disaster as you are totally invisible to on-coming traffic. • Pass when safe or, fall back as far away from the vehicle to make yourself more visible.
You are about to be cut-off or "threatened" by another vehicle changing lanes or entering the roadway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honk your horn to alert the driver to your presence.
A vehicle got a bit too close for comfort when they moved into your lane.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not honk your horn (this may induce a road rage incident). • Remain calm and enjoy your scooter/moped.

4.3 Defensive Driving Tips

Offensive Driving: The “I Have The Right of Way” Attitude

- Many drivers are accustomed to not slowing down or yielding to other vehicles because they have the right of way in a traffic situation.
- Many times collisions that could have been avoided by the driver who was not at fault occur because of the “right of way” attitude.
- In the case of passenger cars this leads to fender benders and crashes, on a moped/scooter this same attitude is likely to get you killed or seriously injured.
- If you think someone is going to cut you off, slow down, honk your horn in a friendly “hey hey I’m here” way, and let them cut you off – don’t speed up to see if you can “win”...you will lose.
- If you think a car is about to turn into your path of travel, slow down and change lane positions if safe.

Intersections

The majority of collisions occur at intersections when vehicles make left turns or enter from side streets.

At intersections:

- If you are riding with no other vehicles close behind you, assume the drivers at the intersection can’t see you.
- Slow down.
- Pay extra attention to your lane position to ensure you have the most maneuvering room possible.
- Change lane position if necessary to maximize visibility and maneuvering room (do this well ahead of the intersection to avoid confusing drivers who may assume you are setting up for a turn).
- Be prepared to stop if necessary. Your “right of way” may make you “right”, but it will not prevent an accident.

4 Riding Alone

4.1 Lane Positioning

Learning to be in the right place at the right time is critical. **Focus on learning the principles and guidelines below** rather than the specific examples and scenarios.

Principles

Positioning yourself correctly in traffic is based on these objectives:

- Increase your visibility to other drivers.
- Claim your lane and discourage other vehicles from infringing on your lane space.
- Ensure you have the maximum amount of space possible for collision avoidance.

Terminology

- “Left Tire Track Position” – riding just left of the center of the lane, partially in the right tire track area.
- “Right Tire Track Position” – riding just right of the center of the lane, partially in the right tire track area.

Left Tire Track Unless...

- When riding alone, you generally ride in the left tire track (a more visible position for drivers ahead and behind you) unless that places you next to a curb, parked cars, or on-coming traffic.

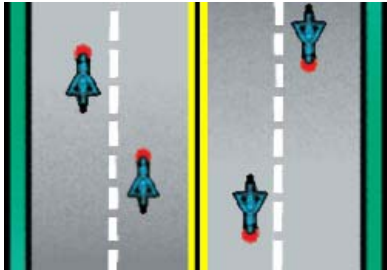
Scenario 1: Single Lane Undivided Roadways



- Try and ride just left of the center roadway.
- If the road is clean and dry (no significant oil spills), ride in the center.

(diagram adapted from Manitoba Motorcycle Safety Handbook)

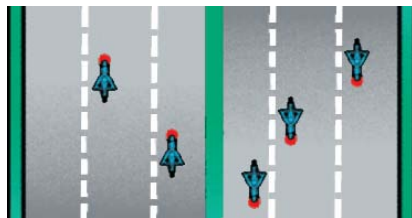
Scenario 2: Multi-Lane Undivided Roadways



(diagram adapted from
Manitoba Motorcycle Safety Handbook)

- The preferred positions are shown in the diagram.
- Ride in the left tire track in the curb lane.
- Ride in the right tire track in the median lane.
- Riding in the left tire track in the median lane is not the norm as it puts you closer to oncoming traffic, however, this is advisable if you are anticipating cars lane changing unexpectedly to get around parked cars or buses in the curb lane.

Scenario 3: Multi-Lane Divided Roadways



(diagram adapted from
Manitoba Motorcycle Safety Handbook)

- When riding in the median lane, ride in the right tire track.
- When riding in all other lanes, ride in the left tire track.
- If you have a choice of lane, pick the center lane rather than the curb or median lane (generally there are less cars entering and exiting to this lane from side streets).
- A disadvantage to riding in the center lane is that you may not be as visible to other drivers (particularly in busy traffic).

4.2 Lane Changes & Turns

Lane Changing (excerpt from MB DDVL Motorcycle Handbook)

- Signal and shoulder-check before changing from one traffic lane to another.

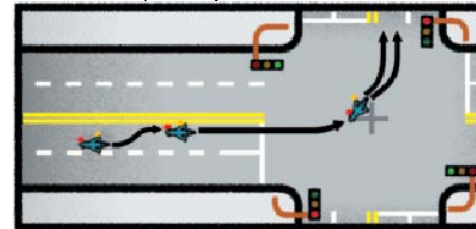
- Multiple lane changes may be made in a single, continuous movement after one clear signal and check.
- When changing from one tire track to the next within the same lane you are required to shoulder check prior to moving.

Turns

The turning guidelines below will:

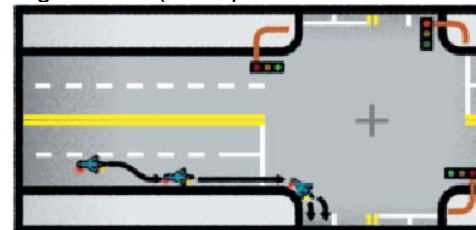
- Help communicate to other drivers that you intend to turn.
- Force you to slow down for the corner (higher speed turns are tempting if you were to turn from the opposite tire track).

Left Turns (excerpt from MB DDVL Motorcycle Handbook)



When turning left, turn from the left tire track of the left lane, and turn left of the centre of the intersection, onto either track of the left lane.

Right Turns (excerpt from MB DDVL Motorcycle Handbook)



When turning right, turn from the right tire-track of the right lane onto either tire-track of the right lane of the other road.