

2012 MOTORCYCLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS

1. All motorcycle operators must:

- have a motorcycle instruction **permit or endorsement**. 169.974 subd. 2 (a)
- register their motorcycle and display a **valid license plate**. 169.79 subd. 1, 3
- carry **liability insurance**. 65B.48 subd. 5
- carry **proof of insurance** when riding. 169.791 subd. 2
- wear **eye protection**: face shield, goggles or glasses. Windshields do not meet legal requirements. 169.974 subd. 4 (a)

2. Motorcycle permit operators:

- must wear a **DOT-approved helmet**. 169.974 subd. 2 (c)
- may not carry **passengers**. 169.974 subd. 2 (c)
- may not ride on **Interstate freeways**. 169.974 subd. 2 (c)
- may not ride at **night**. 169.974 subd. 2 (c)
Motorcycle permits are valid for one year.

3. Operators under the age of 18 must:

- wear a **DOT-approved helmet**. 169.974 subd. 4 (a)

4. Trike (3-wheel) and sidecar operators:

- must have a motorcycle instruction permit, **motorcycle endorsement**, or "also valid for 3 wheel motorcycle" under restrictions. 169.974 subd. 2 (a)

MOTORCYCLE EQUIPMENT

For street-legal motorcycles:

- The **headlight must be on** at all times when riding. 169.974 subd. 5 (i)
- Motorcycles are required to have at least one, **but not more than two, headlights** with both high and low beam. 169.49 (b)
- **Headlight modulators are legal**. FMVSS, Title 49, Part 571, Standard 108
- A **red or yellow tail light** and stop lamp are required. 169.57 subd. 1 (a) (b)
- A **blue dot** on the tail light of up to one inch is legal. 169.64 subd. 4 (c)
- At least one **brake** is required, either front or rear, which may be operated by hand or foot. 169.67 subd. 2
- A **rear-view mirror and horn** are required equipment. 169.974 subd. 3 (a)
- If the bike has a passenger seat, it must also have **passenger footrests**. 169.974 subd. 3 (a)
- The **muffler** shall blend the exhaust noise into the overall vehicle noise and the exhaust system shall not emit or produce a sharp popping or crackling sound. 169.69
- The **license plate** must be securely fastened to prevent swinging; displayed horizontally or vertically with letters and numbers facing outward from the vehicle; and in an upright position. 169.79 subd. 3, 7
- Motorcyclists may use **hand signals**. 169.19 subd. 7, 8
- Turn signals **must be visible 100 feet** to the front and rear during daytime and nighttime. 169.57 subd. 2

MOTORCYCLE LAWS

- Motorcyclists are entitled to the full use of their lanes and have all the **rights and duties** of other drivers. *169.974 subd. 5 (f) (g)*
- Motorcyclists are permitted to travel in **high-occupancy vehicle (HOV)** carpool lanes. *Title 23, U.S. Code, Section 166*
- All laws regarding **driving under the influence** of alcohol or drugs apply to motorcyclists as well. *169A*
- **Careless and reckless driving** *169.13* applies to motorcyclists as well, and includes "wheelies," "stoppies," standing on the seat, etc. *169.13*
- A motorcyclist may only ride on a **permanent seat**. Passengers may ride on a passenger seat or in a sidecar. *169.974 subd. 5 (a)*
- **Passengers under the age of 18** must wear a DOT-approved helmet. *169.974 subd. 4 (a)*
- Passengers **must be able to reach both footrests** while seated on the passenger seat. *169.974 subd. 5 (b)*
- Operators and passengers **must face forward** with one leg on each side of the motorcycle. *169.974 subd. 5 (c)*
- Motorcyclists must not carry anything that **interferes with holding onto the handlebars**. *169.974 subd. 5 (d)*
- **Splitting traffic is illegal**. No one except on-duty police officers may ride between lanes of traffic or in the same lane with another vehicle. It is legal for two motorcyclists to ride side-by-side if both riders agree to it. *169.974 subd. 5 (e)*
- Motorcyclists are provided with an affirmative defense when proceeding through an **unchanging red light** that has shown red for an unreasonable time if no vehicle or pedestrian is approaching the street. *169.06 subd. 9*
- **Headphones/earphones:** one ear only. *169.471 subd. 2 (a)*

MOPEDS

- Mopeds are registered and plated as a moped; have a piston displacement of **50cc or less**, a maximum of **2 horse power**, and a maximum speed of **30 mph** on a flat surface. *169.011 subd. 45*
- Moped operators are required to have a **moped permit**, moped operators license, or a valid class D drivers license. *169.223 subd. 2; 171.02 subd. 3*
- Moped operators and passengers **under age 18 must wear a helmet:** either a bicycle helmet meeting ANSI Z90.4-1984 or a DOT-approved motorcycle helmet. *169.223 subd. 1*
- Moped operators **under age 16 may drive at night** if the moped is equipped with a proper headlight and taillight. *169.223 subd. 2 (b) (2)*
- Moped operators **under age 16 may not carry passengers** except for a parent or guardian. *169.223 subd. 2 (b)*



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