

Language for Driver Manual

Driving is a shared responsibility that is challenging, requires continuous attention, patience, communication, cooperation, and good decision-making. When driving, you interact with a variety of roadway users, including large vehicle drivers, other car drivers, motorcyclists, bicyclists, micro-mobility users (small transportation device operators, e.g., electric bicyclists, electric scooter operators, etc.), and pedestrians. All roadway users you interact with are people with lives, loved ones, and futures. All roadway users have the same responsibilities and access to roadways. Among the roadway users you need to pay particular attention to are two and three-wheeled motorcyclists. On average, fifteen motorcyclists die in crashes every day in the U.S.¹

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As a driver, you need to understand the risks to motorcyclists. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a majority of motorcyclist fatal crashes occur with another motor vehicle.² Motorcyclists have a greater risk of injury in any collision with another vehicle because they have very little protection – no air bags or metal cage – just the gear they wear.³ Motorcycles have different characteristics,

which can put motorcyclists at more risk. Motorcycles:

- Are smaller in size; therefore, it is harder to judge their speed and are more difficult to see in traffic, during bad weather, and various lighting conditions such as at night, during low light, and when there is sun glare.
- May be more unstable because motorcycles operate on two or three wheels
- Can be easily hidden in your blind spots
- Handle very differently than cars
- Have different acceleration and braking capabilities



¹ Adapted from NHTSA Data Visualization Tool for Motorcycles:

https://explore.dot.gov/views/DV_FARS_MC/Home?%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y

² NHTSA Data Visualization Tool for Motorcycles:

https://explore.dot.gov/views/DV_FARS_MC/Home?%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y

³ Shinar, David. Second Edition Traffic Safety and Human Behavior. Bingley, UK, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2017.

Your attention is always divided between searching the road, checking the mirrors, and your dashboard. Traffic environments can be complex, and your brain gives higher priority to what you expect. You may not expect to see a motorcyclist; therefore, actively searching for motorcyclists before turning, changing lanes, passing, or backing up can prevent a crash.

You may not expect to see a motorcyclist, therefore, actively search for motorcyclists all the time.



There are special situations and conditions you need to be aware of so you can safely share the road with motorcyclists:

- **Lane Positioning and Motorcyclists**

- Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width.
- Do not share the lane. The motorcyclist needs space to respond to traffic and road conditions.
- Be aware that motorcyclists frequently adjust their lane position and can accelerate quickly.

- **Searching for Motorcyclists at Intersections and When Turning**

- Motorcyclists can be difficult to see, therefore, always search thoroughly for and expect to see motorcyclists.
- Crashes are most likely to occur with a motorcyclist when the other vehicle is turning left.
- Search for motorcyclists before proceeding through or turning left at an intersection, look left, look right, continue scanning, anticipate motorcyclists, and proceed slowly.
- Never assume a motorcyclist is turning when you see its turn signal flashing. Motorcycle turn signals may not turn off automatically. Motorcyclists may also use hand signals to communicate with other drivers. Proceed with caution until the motorcyclist's intention is clear.

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- **Checking Blind Spots When Changing Lanes Around Motorcyclists**

- Check your blind spots for motorcyclists by looking in your mirrors and over your shoulders.

- **Following Motorcyclists**

- Increase following distance (e.g., at least 5-6 seconds depending on your speed) to assure you have enough time and space to respond to a situation.
- Motorcyclists may stop faster than you expect and following too closely endangers your life and that of the motorcyclist.

- **Passing a Motorcyclist or Group of Motorcyclists**

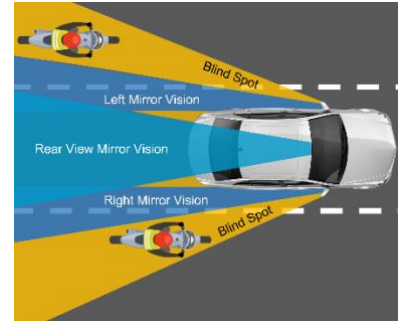
- Check your mirrors and blind spots and move completely into the other lane.
- Avoid breaking up a group of motorcyclists when passing.

- **Being Passed by a Motorcyclist or Group of Motorcyclists**

- Maintain your lane position and speed. Never speed up or interfere with their ability to pass you.

- **Advanced Driver-Assistance Systems (ADAS) Safety Features and Motorcyclists**

- May not detect motorcyclists or motorcycles; therefore, be aware of your surroundings at all times and follow the tips above.



Increase following distance (e.g., at least 5-6 seconds, when following a motorcyclist, depending on your speed) to assure you have enough time and space to respond to a situation.

