

March 2023

## Traffic Safety Newsletter Motorcyclist Safety



Taking just a few extra seconds to look twice could save a life. In 2020, there were 5,579 motorcyclists killed in traffic crashes in the United States. Motorcyclist deaths accounted for 14% of the total highway fatalities that year. In fact, in 2020, per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclists were about 28 times more likely than passenger vehicle occupants to die in a motor vehicle crash and were four times more likely to be injured.

For Delaware:

- In 2022, there were a total of 22 motorcycle fatalities.
- 10 out of those 22 motorcyclists killed were not wearing a DOT

approved helmet.

- There were a total of 223 motorcycle involved crashes in 2022.
- In 2022, 53.8% of motorcyclists killed in crashes did not have a motorcycle endorsement and 61.5% had not completed a motorcycle safety course.

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## Tips For Motorists

**FOUR  
WHEELS**

**VS**

**TWO  
WHEELS**

**NEVER A FAIR MATCH**

MOTORCYCLES ARE SMALLER, HARDER TO SEE,  
AND MORE VULNERABLE IN A CRASH.

ALWAYS LOOK TWICE. YOU COULD SAVE A RIDER'S LIFE.

 **SEE & BE SEEN. ARRIVE ALIVE DE** | [ArriveAliveDE.com](https://www.ArriveAliveDE.com)

As a motorist, you could save a life by following these tips:

- Always allow a greater following distance — beyond three to four seconds — when behind a motorcycle. This gives them more time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.
- Forty percent of a vehicle driver's view is obstructed by blind spots. Check all mirrors and blind spots, and then check again, for motorcycles before changing lanes or merging with traffic.
- Remember, motorcycles are smaller than most vehicles and difficult to see. Their size can also cause other drivers to misjudge the speed and distance of an approaching motorcycle. Move forward in your seat to get a better look around the blind spots of your vehicle windows.
- Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width. Though it may seem as

if there is enough room in a single lane for a motor vehicle and a motorcycle, looks can be deceiving. Share the road, but not the lane: A motorcyclist needs room to maneuver safely.

- Make sure to look twice before making a turn. Many fatal crashes happen when a car tries to turn left in front of a motorcycle approaching in the opposite direction.
- Remember: YOUR CAR CAN KILL. More than half of all fatal motorcycle crashes involve another vehicle.

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## Tips for Motorcyclists



Enjoy the ride! Stay safe on your motorcycle by following these tips:

- Always complete rider education courses and ride with a current motorcycle license.
  - Beginning riders should complete a DMV approved rider safety course. As you gain experience, it is best to take the advanced rider safety courses to continue to gain maneuvering techniques to assist in preventing a crash on the ever-changing Delaware roads.
  - Nationally, in 2020, 36% of motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes were riding without a valid motorcycle license. Click on the image above to test your "biker brain" and take our motorcycle safety quiz.
- Wear a DOT-compliant helmet with a "FMVSS No. 218 Certified" label and other personal protective gear. Click on the "Learn More" button below to learn how to identify a safe,

DOT-compliant helmet.

- Be on the lookout for potential hazards. Drain covers, grass, leaves, and gravel can cause a fall.
- Remember that all rules of the road apply to you. Stay in your lane and only change lanes when it is completely safe to do so.
- Wear clothing with fluorescent/reflective bands and always use your headlight. You are smaller and harder to see than other vehicles on the road.
- When riding in a group, have a safety plan laid out and designate a safety champion to review the plan and general safety tips with the entire group prior to each ride.

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## Pre-Ride Checklists



Each ride should begin with two checklists: one for the bike and one for yourself. For the bike, you need to remember is TCLOCS, which stands for:

- Tires - Check air pressure, wheels, brakes, and spokes.
- Controls - Check levers, hoses cables, and throttle.
- Lights and Electrical Switches - Make sure all are working properly.
- Oil and Fluids - Check oil, coolant, and hydraulics. Look for leaks.
- Chassis - Check drive train, chain, and suspension. If you add a passenger, adjust accordingly.
- Side stand - Make sure spring and stand operate reliably.

As for yourself, you need to dress for the crash, not for the ride. Remember HOGS:

- Helmet - Always wear a DOT compliant helmet. The DOT requires that all motorcycle helmets sold in the United States

meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 218, which outlines basic helmet safety requirements.

- Outerwear - Wear long pants every ride, as well as a sturdy jacket. These items should be made from leather, sturdy denim, or fabric reinforced with padding.
- Glasses - Wear protective goggles, riding glasses, or a face shield for every ride.
- Shoes - Motorcycle-type or heavy work boots are a better choice of footwear than sneakers. Sneakers are unstable and put the rider at risk for ankle, foot, and toe injuries.

Click on the image above to see how our motorcycle gear model transforms from everyday clothing to full motorcycle gear.

Visit us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) and follow **#ArriveAlive** and **#RespectTheRide**.

## The Guardian Bell



Legend has it that Evil Road Spirits have been latching themselves onto motorcycles as long as there have been bikes on the road. These Evil Road Spirits are responsible for mechanical problems and bad luck along a journey. Legend goes on to say that by attaching a small bell to your bike, the Evil Road Spirits will become trapped inside the bell where the constant ringing drives them insane, making them lose their grip until they fall to the ground. Legend also has it that the Guardian Bell carries twice as much power when it is purchased by a friend or loved one and given as a gift.

# Traffic Safety Spotlight

No one knows the joys and understands the dangers of motorcycle riding more than Andrea Jonaitis, a Rider Coach for the DMV's Motorcycle Safety Classes. Watch her full story and learn why all motorists must be vigilant and look for vulnerable road users like motorcycle riders, who are 28 times more likely to die in a crash than motor vehicle drivers.



## Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles Motorcycle Rider Education Courses

Motorcycle Rider Education Courses are crucial to being a safe operator of a motorcycle. Click on the buttons below for more information about each course.

**Novice Motorcycle  
Rider Training Course**

**Experienced Motorcycle  
Rider Training Course**

**Advanced Motorcycle  
Rider Course**

**Basic Bike Bonding  
Course**

**Motorcycle Rider Coach**

**Ultimate Bike Bonding**



So you think you're an awesome rider? Are you willing to teach others to make them excellent riders? The DMV is always looking for talented and experienced riders to teach motorcycle safety courses and become a rider/coach. Click the button above to learn more about the Rider Coach Prep Course.

## Thank You

The Delaware Office of Highway Safety would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to all of our corporate partners! We would love to highlight partners who share our traffic safety mission or have a similar traffic safety mission. Who are we missing? Share groups that we need to connect with to [aubrey.klick@delaware.gov](mailto:aubrey.klick@delaware.gov).

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For more information and tools, please visit [arrivealivede.com](http://arrivealivede.com) or call our office at 302-744-2740.

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