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Motorcycle safety involves proper training and equipment

Proper training and preparation will help ensure motorcyclists have a safe and enjoyable experience this summer.

Because of their low-crash protection and high-performance capabilities, motorcycles are more likely than other vehicles to be involved in severe collisions. Between 2004 and 2008, 6,083 collisions involving motorcycles resulted in 152 fatalities and 4,001 injuries. These statistics are particularly alarming considering Albertans ride their motorcycles about six months of the year.

You can acquire the skills needed to avoid collisions through training, experience and by repeatedly performing the basics. Before you venture out on the road for the first time on a motorcycle, take proper training, just as you would to learn how to drive a car. In Alberta, [motorcycle-training programs](#) are available through various organizations. A [Class 6 driver's licence](#) is required to operate a motorcycle and the minimum age is 16.

Although some factors are out of the motorcyclist's control, having the right equipment can increase safety significantly. In addition to an approved motorcycle helmet, every rider should wear the following gear: shatter-proof eye protection; a durable, brightly coloured jacket; long pants; leather footwear that protects the ankles; full fingered non-slip gloves; and rain and cold weather riding clothes where appropriate.

Here are some [safe driving tips](#) for motorcycle operators and other vehicle drivers:

For motorcycle operators:

1. Stay out of blind spots! Make sure other drivers see you.
2. Be alert at intersections. Make eye contact with other drivers/riders before making your move.
3. Protect yourself with the right gear and an approved motorcycle helmet.
4. Be aware that other drivers can be easily misjudge your speed.
5. Ride defensively and make every effort to enhance your visibility.
6. Be aware of what is going on behind you to avoid deadly rear-end collisions.

For drivers of other vehicles:

1. Share the road - look twice for motorcyclists at intersections or when changing lanes.
2. Never underestimate the speed of a motorcycle. Their size makes their speed deceptive.

As part of the Traffic Safety Plan Calendar, motorcycles are in the spotlight in July.

For more information on how to obtain a motorcycle licence, visit www.transportation.alberta.ca ,

or call Driver Programs and Licensing Standards at 780-427-8901. For more information on traffic safety, contact the Office of Traffic Safety at 780-422-8839, or visit www.saferoads.com

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