



Motorcycle Laws by State

Remember that while other laws vary from state-to-state, all 50 states require a motorcycle operator's license.

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UPDATED 3/29/10

Safety Helmet Legend

Delaware: requires helmets be worn by riders under 19 and all novice riders. All others must have helmets in their possession. All helmets are required to have reflectorization.

Florida: helmets not required for riders over 21 with a minimum of \$10K in medical insurance.

Kentucky: requires helmets of all instructional permit holders, novice riders & riders under 21.

Maine: requires helmets for all riders under 18, all instructional permit holders, all novice riders & all passengers of operators for whom a helmet is required.

Pennsylvania: helmets not required of riders over 21 with successful completion of rider training or two full years riding experience.

Rhode Island: requires helmets be worn by all novice riders, all riders under 21 & all passengers.

Texas: requires helmets of all riders under 21. Riders 21 & up can forgo helmets if they have successfully completed a motorcycle safety course or carry medical insurance that will cover motorcycle accident injuries.

Rider Ed Legend

* Most states require both a knowledge test and a skills test for licensure.

Eye Protection Legend

● required unless equipped with a windscreen that is at least 15" above handlebars.

◇ required unless equipped with windscreen

PH: required of all permit holders, regardless of equipment

35: required at speeds over 35 mph, regardless of equipment

Daytime Headlight Use Legend

Dates: headlight use required for all vehicles manufactured during or after these dates.

NOTE: modulating headlights are permitted in all 50 states per federal regulation 49 CFR 571.108 S7.9.4

	Safety Helmet	State Funded Rider Ed *	Eye Protection	Daytime Use of Headlight (see legend for date information)
Alabama	Required	available		
Alaska	Under 18 & passengers		●	Use required
Arizona	Under 18	Completion waives skills test	◇	
Arkansas	Under 21		Required	Use required
California	Required	Req. under 21, waives skills test		1978
Colorado	Under 18 & passengers	Completion waives skills test	Required	
Connecticut	Under 18, permit holders	Req. under 18, waives skills test	◇	1980
Delaware	See legend	Req. under 18, waives both tests	Required	
Florida	See legend	1 st time applicants	Required	Use required
Georgia	Required	Waives skills & knowledge tests	◇	Use required
Hawaii	Under 18, with reflectorization	Completion waives skills test	◇	
Idaho	Under 18	Req. under 21, waives skills test		
Illinois	Not required	Req. under 18, waives both tests	◇	Use required
Indiana	Under 18, permit holders	Completion waives skills test	Under 18	after 1/1/1956
Iowa	Not required	Req. under 18, waives skills test		after 4/1/1977
Kansas	Under 18	Waives skills & knowledge tests	◇	1978
Kentucky	See legend	Completion waives skills test	Required	
Louisiana	Required	Completion waives skills test	◇	
Maine	See legend	1 st time applicants, both waived		Use required
Maryland	Required	Req. under 18, waives both tests	◇	
Massachusetts	Required	Completion waives skills test	PH, ◇	
Michigan	Required	Req. under 18, waives skills test	◇, 35	
Minnesota	Under 18, permit holders	Req. under 18, waives skills test	Required	Use required
Mississippi	Required			
Missouri	Required	Completion waives skills test		
Montana	Under 18	Completion waives skills test		Use required
Nebraska	Required	Waives skills & knowledge tests		
Nevada	Required	Waives skills & knowledge tests	◇	
New Hampshire	Under 18	Completion waives skills test	◇	
New Jersey	Req. with reflectorization	Completion waives skills test	PH, ◇	
New Mexico	Under 18 with reflectorization	Req. under 18, waives both tests	◇	
New York	Required	Completion waives skills test	Required	Use required
North Carolina	Required	Req. under 18, waives skills test		Use required
North Dakota	Under 18 with reflectorization	Required under age 16		
Ohio	Under 18 & novice riders	Req. under 18, waives skills test	◇	
Oklahoma	Under 18		◇	Use required
Oregon	Required	Req. under 21, waives both tests		Use required
Pennsylvania	See legend	Waives skills & knowledge tests	Required	after 1973
Rhode Island	See legend	1 st time applicants, both waived	Required	
South Carolina	Under 21, with reflectorization	available	Under 21, ◇	Use required
South Dakota	Under 18	Waives skills & knowledge tests	◇	
Tennessee	Required	Waives skills & knowledge tests	◇	Use required
Texas	See legend	1 st time applicants, waives skills test		after 1974
Utah	Under 18	Completion waives skills test		
Vermont	Req. with reflectorization	Completion waives skills test	◇	
Virginia	Required	Completion waives skills test	◇	
Washington	Required	Req. under 18, waives both tests	◇	Use required
West Virginia	Required	Waives skills & knowledge tests	Required	Use required
Wisconsin	Under 18, permit holders	Req. under 18, waives skills test	●	Use required
Wyoming	Under 18	Completion waives skills test		Use required
Dist. Of Columbia	Req. with reflectorization		◇	
Puerto Rico	Required		Required	Use required
Canada	Required			



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Legend						
	Traffic Actuated Signal (after complete stop)	Passenger Age Restrictions	Helmet Speakers	Mirror- see ● for date information	Periodic Safety Inspection	Turn Signals- see ● for date
● required if manufactured on or after this date.	Alabama			required		
◇ annual emissions inspections required in Maricopa County	Alaska			required	random	
* Pennsylvania requires mirrors of all vehicles manufactured after 4/1/1977. Mirrors are required by inspection regulations.	Arizona			required	◇	
	Arkansas	Permitted with caution	none under 8	required		
	California		single earphone only	required	random	required
	Colorado			required	random	
	Connecticut			required	random	
	Delaware			required	required	
	Florida			required		required
	Georgia		for communication only	required		
	Hawaii		none under 7	required	required	
	Idaho	After one full cycle		required		
	Illinois			required		
	Indiana			after 1/1/56		
	Iowa			required		
	Kansas			required on left	random	after 1973
	Kentucky			required		
	Louisiana		none under 5	required on left	required	required
	Maine			required	required	after 1974
	Maryland		single earphone only	required	upon title transfer	required
	Massachusetts		possession prohibited	required	required	required
	Michigan			required	random	
	Minnesota	Affirmative Defense	single earphone only	required	random	
	Mississippi				required	
	Missouri				required	
	Montana			required		
	Nebraska					
	Nevada			required		after 1973
	New Hampshire			required	required	
	New Jersey			required	required	
	New Mexico			required	random	required
	New York		single earphone only	required	required	after 1985
	North Carolina	After 180 seconds		required	required	
	North Dakota			required		
	Ohio			required	random	after 1968
	Oklahoma			required		
	Oregon			required	random	required
	Pennsylvania		for communication only	* see legend	required	
	Rhode Island		possession prohibited	required	required	
	South Carolina	After 120 seconds		required		
	South Dakota			required		required
	Tennessee	Permitted with caution		required		
	Texas			required	required	
	Utah			required	required	
	Vermont			required	required	required
	Virginia		communication only	required	required	
	Washington		none under 5	required	random	
	West Virginia			required	random	required
	Wisconsin	After 30 seconds		required	random	required
	Wyoming			required		
	Dist. Of Columbia			required	required	
	Puerto Rico			required	required	
	Canada					

TRAFFIC ACTUATED SIGNALS

NOTE: Regarding motorcycles proceeding at traffic controlled red lights when the presence of the vehicle does not cause the light to change, after a complete stop and exercising due caution.

RIDING 2 ABREAST IN SAME LANE

NOTE: Vermont and Virginia are the only states to expressly forbid riding two abreast in the same lane. All other states permit it, either by notation or by lack of reference in administrative code or statutes.

PASSENGER SEATS & FOOTRESTS

NOTE: Mississippi, Missouri & Canada do not show laws requiring passenger seats or footrests. Texas does not require footrests. All other states require both a passenger seat and footrests for any vehicle actively carrying a passenger.