



COMBAT VETERANS MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATION



VETERANS HELPING VETERANS

Safety Tips: Riding with a Passenger

CVMA KY 1-2 Sergeant at Arms





Preparation is the First Step

- Prepare yourself
 - Are you experienced enough to ride two-up?
 - How well do you know the bike you are riding?
- Prepare your motorcycle
 - Are there passenger foot pegs, an adequate seat, backrest, etc.?
 - Need to adjust suspension and/or tire pressure to accommodate extra weight?
- Prepare your passenger
 - Do they have the necessary protective gear?
 - Hand signals, leaning, getting on-and-off the bike, etc.





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Are YOU Ready to Carry a Passenger?

- No two people are the same, so there is no exact formula to describe when someone is ready to transition from solo rider to riding with a passenger
- You should know your motorcycle!
 - Smaller motorcycles tend to be more impacted by passengers than larger ones
 - Cornering is different, especially tight corners and slow-speed maneuvers
- If you are a new(er) rider, take your time learning the skills necessary before adding the extra weight, movement, and risk of a passenger
- You will need to account for the *space* a passenger requires such as longer braking, shared storage, etc.





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State Laws

Each state has its own guidelines. In Kentucky,

- If you only possess a “permit” you are **NOT** allowed to ride with passengers
- If you as operator have had your motorcycle endorsement less than a year, both you and your passenger must wear a helmet
- All passengers under the age of 21 must wear a helmet
- All operators and passengers must wear eye protection
- The motorcycle must have a seat or footrest permanently attached, both being specifically designed to carry passengers in a safe manner
- The Kentucky State Police has oversight of these rules. A copy of the Kentucky Motorcycle Manual can be found at the following link:

http://kentuckystatepolice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/motorcycle_rev_03_13_12_op.pdf





Prepare your Motorcycle

- Check the owner's manual
 - Most manufacturers describe what to do when adding extra weight to the motorcycle such as adjustments to suspension and tire pressure
- TCLOCS
 - This should be a normal part of the routine but more important when you have the responsibility of another person
 - Double check that passenger seats, foot pegs, and other straps are secure
- Add a backrest to your motorcycle
 - It's likely you have never ridden as a passenger on your (or anyone else's for that matter) motorcycle
 - Not only does this add comfort, it adds safety! Ask anyone who has hit a bump and fallen off the back of a bike; bet they will agree

Prepare for emergencies





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Prepare Your Passenger

- Make sure the passenger has the correct safety gear. That is **YOUR** responsibility
- Have a pre-ride briefing; explain route, hand signals, etc.
- Explain how they should get on-and-off of the motorcycle
- Make sure they use their foot pegs and to avoid mufflers
- Build trust with your passenger; take speeds slower at first
- Try to be smooth with all movements
- Make it fun! If you want them to ride again, make it a positive experience.





How to Be a Good Passenger

- First of all, you, the passenger should know that the person who you are riding with has skills and experience necessary to do the job; do so by asking:
 - How long have you been riding?
 - How long have you been riding this motorcycle?
 - How long have you been riding with passengers?
 - Do you have a motorcycle permit and insurance?
- Ask about the type of motorcycle gear you will need for the ride, it is recommended all riders have properly fitted:
 - Helmet
 - Eye Protection
 - Jacket
 - Gloves
 - Long Pants
 - Boots





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How to Be a Good Passenger

- Learn how to get on-and-off the motorcycle
- Know where your feet go during operation – even when stopped
- Do not interfere with arms or shoulders of the rider
- Learn the difference between counter-steering and counter-balancing
- Have a way to communicate using hand signals
- Be prepared for sudden stops or movements!
- Understand how to take a curve
 - Most of the time it is best to remain in a neutral position when going around curves or lean with the rider. Let your rider give you the cues on what is needed
 - If the rider is leaning into a curve, do not lean in the opposite direction

Be careful of the muffler; it will get very hot, very fast

Relax and Have Fun!





Recommended Links

A few recommended links. There are too many sources to list on this topic so you should always search to find a resource that best suits **your** needs.

Kentucky Motorcycle Manual

- http://kentuckystatepolice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/motorcycle_rev_03_13_12_op.pdf

Tips On How To Ride With A Passenger On A Motorcycle

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GltJ62_it0

How to be a Motorcycle Passenger

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeWD_Lx9NWo

