

Motorcyclists: Gear up to ride on.



While all motorcyclists love to ride, some don't love to wear protective gear. But the bottom line is this: Wearing full protective gear for every ride helps you avoid injury so you can keep on riding. These facts tell the story:

- More than **75% of motorcyclists** involved in crashes suffer injuries, some severe.
- Over the past decade, there have been fewer motorcycle crashes **but there has been an increase in fatalities**.
- Riders wearing motorcyclist-specific protective clothing are less **likely to be seriously injured** and less likely to be hospitalized.

Follow the four Cs.

When choosing motorcycle rider protective gear, keep the four Cs in mind:

Covered

Keeping skin and muscles covered by quality gear provides protection from road rash. Built-in armor for shoulders, hands, elbows, hips, and knees can also provide impact protection.

Comfortable

If your gear is comfortable, breathable, and appropriate for weather conditions, you'll be more likely to wear it on every ride.

Conspicuous

Did you know that brightly colored vehicles have a statistically lower crash risk? It's because they are seen more easily. The same principle applies to motorcycle rider gear. The brighter the gear, the easier you are to see.

Contemporary

Just like you upgrade your cell phone and your TV, keep your gear up to date. Newer gear will have the best materials for abrasion and impact resistance.

Don't make a rash decision.

Riding a motorcycle in ordinary clothes like jeans and a T-shirt leaves you vulnerable to road rash — abrasions and scrapes from the road surface. Road rash can be mild, but in severe cases, it can necessitate skin graft surgery and become painfully infected. Choose rider-specific gear to save your skin from road rash.

All the gear, every time you ride.

To stay safe and fully protected on every ride, riders need:



A helmet

Your helmet should be full-face and DOT-compliant, have an integrated face shield for eye protection, and be a light or bright color for added visibility. Head/brain, neck, and face injuries are some of the most serious injuries a motorcyclist can suffer and, in many cases, can cause permanent impairment. Traumatic brain injury is the leading cause of motorcyclist fatalities.



Boots

Boots should be at least over the ankle, but taller is better. Boots made specifically for motorcyclists have been shown to reduce foot, ankle, and lower-leg injuries.



Gloves

Because your natural instinct in a crash is to put your hands out to break your fall, bare hands can suffer severe road rash. Gloves that have “palm sliders” — a reinforced area just above the wrist — can also help prevent broken wrists.



Pants

Pants designed specifically for motorcyclists are abrasion-resistant, giving you the best protection against road rash. Look for pants that also have armor in the hip, knee, and tailbone areas to protect against impact.



A jacket

Choose a jacket that is highly abrasion-resistant, has armor in the shoulder and elbow areas to protect against impact, and has a back protector. Also consider choosing a high-visibility color to increase your chance of being seen. Jackets and pants that zip together are good options because they prevent the exposure of skin in a crash.

Wear the right gear, ride another year.

No protective clothing can guarantee you won't get hurt in a crash. But the right gear can prevent or reduce the severity of abrasions, friction burns, cuts, and lacerations — and keep you out of the hospital. And, if you stay out of the hospital, you can stay on the road.

To learn more about how to choose the best motorcycle rider protective gear, visit Michigan.gov/ProtectiveGear or smarter-usa.org/gear

This material was developed through a project funded by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Catalog No. 6300 • michigan.gov/ohspscatalog • 5-2024