

## Zen of Motorcycle Safety

Written by Admin\_html\_test  
Thursday, 17 June 2010 19:00

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Summer is finally here in Florida, which means riding around with the top down on your car and getting out on your motorcycle. Only in Florida it seems people forget how dangerous riding a motorcycle can be. Florida is the state of flip flops and bikini tops and that is exactly what I see riding out there on their motorcycles with no helmet in an effort to look cool and feel cool.

Now, first you are probably thinking that it is easy to judge when you don't ride yourself. But I will have admit to being a rider (at least on the back of my boyfriend's motorcycle) And we ride by this rule - ATGATT (All The Gear All The Time) for these exact reasons.

1. In the year 2000, 2,862 motorcyclists were killed and an additional 58,000 were injured in traffic crashes in the United States.

2. Per vehicle mile traveled in 1999, motorcyclists were about 18 times as likely as passenger car occupants to die in a motor vehicle traffic crash and 3 times as likely to be injured.

3. In 2000, there were 1,300 two-vehicle fatal crashes involving a motorcycle and another vehicle. In 35 percent (459) of these crashes the other vehicle was turning left while the motorcycle was going straight, passing, or overtaking the vehicle. Both vehicles were going straight in 328 crashes (25 percent).

4. Almost half (45 percent) of all motorcyclist fatalities in 2000 resulted from crashes in seven states: 276 in California, **259 in Florida**, 227 in Texas, 149 in Pennsylvania, 126 in Illinois, 126 in Ohio, and 119 in New York.

5. Nearly one out of seven motorcycle operators (15 percent) involved in fatal crashes in 2000 were operating the vehicle with an invalid license at the time of the collision, while only 12 percent of drivers of passenger vehicles in fatal crashes did not have a valid license.

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6. NHTSA estimates that helmets saved the lives of 631 motorcyclists in 2000. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 382 lives could have been saved.

7. Ear plugs. An hour at highway speeds will subject your ears to enough wind noise to cause some hearing loss.

8. Road Rash is due to sliding the skin across the gravel and rocks on the road. Road rash can easily get infected as it destroys most of the skin's natural defenses to bacteria. Infections can be so dangerous that many people can lose limbs

And there are many more reasons why you should wear your gear. Most people make a living by doing some physical activity. Not wearing gear can greatly increase the recovery time needed for a motorcycle accident.

In a previous life, I worked at a motorcycle dealership and service shop. Almost all of the stories that involved wrecked bikes that came in were from people who just were going down the street to the store or around the block and didn't think they needed to wear proper shoes or gear. One of my favorite customers almost lost his leg due to road rash caused by wearing khaki shorts. And a majority of these customers are very smart individual but just have the mentality that it would never happen to them. Like with everything in life, it happens when you least expect it.

### 1. **Hear is a list of minimum items that you should wear while riding your motorcycle:**

**1. HELMET** - full face helmets are the best as it gives you the most protection from all angles when you hit the ground. And remember, if you drop your helmet, it is deemed ineffective in a crash and you will have to get a new one. So be careful where you put it down.

**2. Jacket** - There are many motorcycle jackets that are available today that offer different layers with appropriate venting to allow for air flow to cool you down while riding. Make sure you have elbow, shoulder, and back plate for protection. Joe Rocket offers great quality jackets at reasonable prices.

**3. Gloves** - When you go down, your hands will instinctively outstretch to protect you. Your hands are what allow us to do all our daily activities. Don't take them for granted! Alpine Stars is a good place to start to find quality gloves.

**4. Pants** - Ideally, you should wear motorcycle pants to help protect you from injury if you were to lay down your bike. But if you are unable to do so, please don't wear shorts! The jeans or khakis might not provide much protection but you will appreciate any degree of help. Scorpion makes great pants, especially for women as it is very hard to find nice fitting pants.

**5. Motorcycle license** - In the state of Florida, you are required to take a class to get your motorcycle license that trains you in how to deal with different situations. This can be very helpful for when a person slams on breaks in front of you. If you have never practiced for these situations, you might not respond appropriately. Life comes at you fast, you better be prepared for it.

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**Motorcycles are meant to be cool and you can still be cool wearing the appropriate gear.**  
*- Facts from US Department of Transportation.*