

Drive Aware, We're Out There

Many motorcycle crashes happen because the driver of the vehicle does not see the motorcyclist.

Why doesn't the average driver see a motorcyclist? Motorists tend to look for other cars and trucks. Also, because it is smaller than a car, a motorcycle is harder to see.

Motorcyclists move differently than cars do. Motorcyclists shift positions to react to traffic, weather and road conditions. Motorcyclists and other drivers can benefit from these simple tips:

- **Look out for motorcyclists.** Be aware that although you may not see any cars or trucks, there may be an unnoticed motorcycle.
- **Anticipate a motorcyclist's maneuver.** Motorcyclists may change positions within a lane to respond to road conditions, weather or other factors.
- **Signal your intentions.** Even if you don't see cars in front or behind you, look carefully in all directions for approaching motorcyclists.
- **Respect a motorcycle.** Treat motorcycles as a full-sized vehicle with equal rights to the road. Give motorcycles a full lane.
- **Allow plenty of space when following a motorcycle.** The slightest contact can mean a spill and/or injury for the rider.

You can **DRIVE AWARE** of motorcyclists and the situations where crashes are likely to occur.





Drivers also contribute to motorcycle crashes where the motorcycle never makes contact with the car. Drivers who unintentionally pull out in front of a motorcycle often force the rider to over-brake, slide and fall.

Crashes are most likely to occur in these high-risk situation:

- **Left Turns** – The most common type of crash involving a car and a motorcycle is at an intersection when the automobile driver is making a left turn in front of a motorcycle.
- **Car's Blind Spot** – Motorcyclists riding alongside a lane of cars are often out of view of the automobile driver. An unsuspecting driver may collide with a motorcyclist as the driver tries to change lanes.
- **Hazardous Road Conditions** – Motorcyclists have to be much more concerned about road surfaces than drivers do. A motorcyclist may have to slow down or change lanes to avoid road obstructions such as potholes and road debris.
- **Weather Conditions** – When the road surface is wet or icy, a motorcycle's braking and handling are impaired. A strong gust of wind can move a motorcycle across an entire lane if the rider isn't prepared for it. Wind gusts from large trucks in the other lane can also be a real hazard.
- **Large Vehicles** – A large vehicle, such as an SUV or truck, can block a motorcycle from a driver's view. The motorcyclist may seem to suddenly appear from nowhere.

If you **DRIVE AWARE** of motorcyclists in these situations, you can help make the streets and roads safer for everyone.