



Owning and Operating a Small Vehicle in Alberta

Rules and regulations applying to power bicycles, mopeds, off-highway vehicles, motorcycles, mobility aids and prohibited miniature vehicles

Operating a small vehicle is a high-risk activity. These vehicles are lighter, less stable, and more vulnerable in a crash than other vehicles on the road. New riders are at the greatest risk of having a collision because they are unfamiliar with the controls and handling characteristics of small vehicles.

This fact sheet highlights the rules and regulations applying to small vehicles - power bicycles, mopeds, off-highway vehicles, motorcycles, mobility aids and prohibited miniature vehicles. In Alberta, the rules of the road are contained in the *Traffic Safety Act (TSA)* and regulations under the Act such as the *Use of Highway and Rules of the Road Regulation (UHRRR)*. Licensing requirements are contained in the *Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation*. Driver guides and additional information on road safety and low risk driving can be found online at: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/DriversVehicles.htm> or at any Alberta Registry Agent office.

SMALL VEHICLE DEFINITIONS

Mobility Aid: a device used to facilitate the transport, in a normal seated orientation, of a person with a physical disability.

***Moped:** includes a vehicle with an electric motor or one that is propelled by an engine that has a displacement of not more than 50 cc. It has a top speed of 70 km/h and no weight restrictions.

Motorcycle: a motor vehicle, other than a moped, that is mounted on two or three wheels and includes those motor vehicles known in the automotive trade as motorcycles and scooters.

Off-Highway Vehicle: any motorized mode of transportation built for cross-country travel on land, water, snow, ice, marsh or swamp lands, or on other natural terrain.

***Power Bicycle:** has an electric motor with a maximum power of 500 watts, a top speed of 32 km/h, and no weight restriction or allowance to be engine-driven.

Prohibited Miniature Vehicles: motor vehicles as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*, but are considered "miniature vehicles", which are not permitted on a highway in Alberta, including sidewalks along the roadway. They may only be operated on private property.

The definitions of a moped and a power bicycle have been updated within the *UHRRR* to be consistent with federal regulations that define them as a limited speed motorcycle and a power-assisted bicycle (however, they will still be called mopeds and power bicycles in Alberta). The updated regulation came into effect on **July 1, 2009**.

REFERENCE GUIDE FOR SMALL VEHICLES

Small Vehicle	Driver's Licence Required	Minimum Driving Age	Registration Required	Insurance Required	Helmet Required
Power Bicycles	No	12	No	No	Yes
Mopeds	Minimum Class 7	14	Yes	Yes	Yes
Motorcycles	Class 6	16	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mobility Aids	No	N/A	No	No	No
Off-Highway Vehicles	Yes/No (Off-Highway)	14	Yes	Yes	No
Prohibited Miniature Vehicles	IT IS PROHIBITED TO OPERATE THESE VEHICLES ON ROADWAYS OR SIDEWALKS				

OPERATING SMALL VEHICLES

Power Bicycles & Mopeds:



- You must ride on the far right side of a road, unless making a left-hand turn.
- When riding on a one-way street in an urban area, you may operate as near as possible to either curb or edge of the road.
- If you are under the age of 16, you are

prohibited from carrying any passengers on a power bicycle or moped.

- A power bicycle or moped must be equipped with the following gear: headlamp, tail lamp, brake lamp, reflectors, brakes, horn, muffler, and mirror.
- Please also see Owning and Operating a Power Bicycle or Moped in Alberta.

Mobility Aids:

- A mobility aid user is, by definition, considered a pedestrian.
- All rules that apply to pedestrians also apply to individuals operating a mobility aid.
- It is recommended that a mobility aid be operated on sidewalks or pathways, not a roadway.



Prohibited Miniature Vehicles:



- These vehicles are motor vehicles as defined in the *Traffic Safety Act*, however they also meet the definition of "miniature vehicles" which **are not permitted on a highway in Alberta**, including sidewalks alongside the roadway.
- Miniature vehicles may only be operated on private property.
- The only exception to this prohibition is a special permit granting authority to operate on a highway.
- In law, these vehicles meet the definition of a motor vehicle, but they do not fit the definitions of mobility aid, motorcycle, or pedestrian.
- While many of these motorized vehicles will be used in a pedestrian-like manner, the operators of these vehicles do not meet the legal definition of "pedestrian".

- Prohibited miniature vehicles include: personal transporter, pocket bikes, go carts, electric scooters and golf carts.

Motorcycles:



- You may only carry as many passengers as the motorcycle is designed for.
- Passengers must ride on the seat designed for passengers and use foot rests.
- A motorcycle is not permitted to ride beside another cycle in the same lane, except when passing. Motorcycles can't be operated adjacent to another cycle travelling in the same direction.
- Motorcycles must meet the requirements of the *Vehicle Equipment Regulation*.

Off-Highway Vehicles:

- Off-highway vehicles include: 4-wheel drive vehicles, low pressure tire vehicles, motorcycles and related 2-wheel vehicles, amphibious vehicles, all-terrain vehicles, miniature motor vehicles, snow vehicles, minibikes, and any other means of transportation that is propelled by any power other than muscular power or wind (but does not include motorboats).
- An off-highway vehicle may not be operated on a highway, a road or in a ditch unless permission has been expressly granted.
- Off-highway vehicles must be equipped with a headlamp, tail lamp, and muffler.



Helmets:

- Motorcycle helmets are required by riders of power bicycles, mopeds, and motorcycles.
- The rider and passenger must wear an approved motorcycle safety helmet. Helmets must have the mark or label stating it meets one of the following standards: CSA, DOT, BSI or the Snell Memorial Foundation M2000.
- No person shall buy, sell or offer for sale a safety helmet intended for the use of operators or passengers of cycles unless it complies with one of the standards.



Resources for Safely Operating Small Vehicles

- *Traffic Safety Act*: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/525.htm>
- Driver's Guide to Operation, Safety and Licensing: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/531.htm>
- Rider's Guide to Operation, Safety and Licensing: <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/531.htm>
- Traffic Safety in Alberta web site: www.saferoads.com