

# Motorized Vehicle Safety

## E-Scooter & E-Bike Safety: What Parents Need to Know

Electric scooters (e-scooters) and electric bikes (e-bikes) are becoming more popular, but so are the injuries associated with them. Pediatric trauma centers across the country are reporting a rapid increase in related

injuries, with head injuries being the most common and often the most serious. In many cases, these injuries are severe enough to require hospitalization, highlighting the growing safety concerns surrounding these devices.



## E-Scooters: Important Age Recommendation

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under the age of 16 should not use e-scooters. In addition to this safety guidance, some cities have laws in place that make it illegal for kids under 16 to ride e-scooters, reinforcing the importance of age-appropriate use for these devices.

## E-Scooter Safety Rules

- No riders under 16.
- Always wear a helmet (most important protection against head injury).
- Wear closed-toe shoes.
- Use protective gear (elbow pads, knee pads).
- Start slow and learn the controls.
- No texting while riding.
- Keep both hands on the scooter.
- No earbuds.
- Stay aware of surroundings.
- Use bike lanes when possible; otherwise ride on the right side of the road.
- Do NOT ride on sidewalks, parks, or crowded paths.
- Never ride under the influence (alcohol, drugs, or certain medications).

## Extra caution:

Many accidents involve cars. Be especially careful on busy streets.

### E-Bikes: Know the Law

E-bikes are grouped into three classes based on how they operate and their maximum speed. Class 1 e-bikes are pedal-assist only and can reach speeds up to 20 mph. Class 2 e-bikes include a throttle and can also go up to 20 mph without pedaling. Class 3 e-bikes are pedal-assist and can reach speeds up to 28 mph, but they come with additional requirements—these bikes must have a speedometer, riders must be at least 14 years old, and helmet use is required for safety. Learn more about Virginia E-bike laws.

### Helmet Safety

Helmets are essential for all riders and play a critical role in preventing serious injuries, especially head injuries. Standard bike helmets are designed to provide protection at speeds up to 20 mph, but for higher-speed riding (20+ mph), a DOT-certified helmet is recommended for added protection. It's also important to ensure that helmets fit properly and are worn correctly every time to provide the best possible safety.

### E-Scooter and E-Bike Safety Tips

Staying safe on an e-scooter or e-bike starts with smart, consistent habits. Always wear a helmet, and make yourself visible to others by using lights, reflectors, and bright clothing. Stay alert at all times by avoiding distractions like phones or headphones, and be sure to follow the rules of the road. Ride predictably by signaling your movements and avoiding weaving between traffic. Never carry extra passengers, and steer clear of risky behaviors like stunts, speeding, or reckless riding. Regularly check your equipment to make sure brakes, tires, and lights are all in good working condition before heading out.

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