

Image Credit: Canva Pro

Summer is prime time for wheels…and helmets.

Summer is prime time for wheels. Whether you are coasting on a bicycle, zipping on a kick scooter, or tearing up trails on an ATV, the right gear and road smarts make all the difference.

One summer afternoon, I was scooting down a paved side street on my new electric scooter, totally distracted by the cool wind and the music in my ears. As I went to zoom past a hidden driveway, a delivery van suddenly backed out. I had to slam my brakes so hard I nearly skidded off the deck. I barely avoided a crash. I wasn't wearing a helmet and the scare stayed with me.

From then on, no matter what I was riding, I always followed a few straightforward habits:

- Strap in the Armor: I started wearing a snug, safety-certified bicycle helmet on every single ride. When I eventually hopped on an ATV, I upgraded to a full-face motorcycle helmet and shatterproof goggles.
- Watch Your Surroundings: I stopped wearing earbuds while riding. Bikes, scooters, and ATVs move quickly, and you need to be able to hear cars, honks, and other riders.
- Play by the Rules: I treated scooters and bikes like real vehicles by stopping at all stop signs and riding with traffic. On the ATV, I always stuck to designated off-road trails and kept my heavy-duty, over-the-ankle boots on.

Wheels are about feeling free and having fun, but the right safety practices are exactly what let you enjoy tomorrow's ride.

Although the above story was generated with AI, it demonstrates how quickly an incident could have escalated to an emergency. Wearing proper safety gear can make all the difference.

Bikes, Skateboards, Scooters

With school out and summer here, your kids may be biking, skateboarding, or riding a scooter to the park or to see friends.

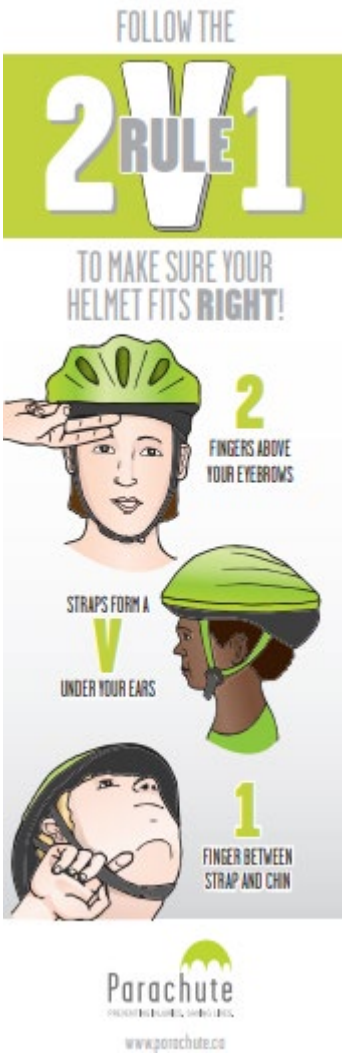
The most important way to keep them safe is to make sure they wear a helmet. Falls and crashes can happen, especially at higher speeds. While cuts, bruises, and broken bones can heal, head and brain injuries can be much more serious.

In Manitoba, anyone under the age of 18 must wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet when cycling. The law also applies to children under 18 when they are passengers on a bicycle or anything attached to or towed by a bicycle. It is also strongly recommended that cyclists of all ages wear helmets.

Helmets can make a difference.

Using bicycle helmets reduces head injuries by more than 40 per cent, serious head injuries by 60 per cent and traumatic brain injury by more than 50 per cent. Helmet use reduces the total number of killed or seriously injured cyclists by almost 34 per cent.

Helmets should have an approved safety label, be appropriate for the activity, fit snugly, and have the straps secured. For information on helmet fitting, including the 2V1 fit rule, visit Helmets for bicycles, inline skating, scooter riding and skateboarding – Parachute. Bike helmets should be replaced every 5 years or when one has been in a crash.



Choose the right helmet for the activity.

Each helmet is designed to protect you in a different way. For example, skateboard helmets cover more of the back of the head than bicycle helmets, because you are more likely to fall backward while skateboarding than while biking.

A multi-sport helmet meets safety standards for more than one activity. Be sure to check for which activities your multi-sport helmet can be used and use it for only those activities. When using a skateboard, rollerblades, and non-motorized scooter it is recommended to use a certified multi-sport helmet.

Helmets may also be single-impact or multi-impact use. Single-impact helmets are designed to protect you from one major hit. They must be replaced after an impact, even if there is no visible damage. Examples

include bike helmets and ski or snowboard helmets. Multi-impact helmets are designed to absorb repeated impacts safely. They can withstand more than one hit but must be replaced if there is any damage visible. Examples include baseball, football, lacrosse, skateboarding and hockey helmets.

Did you know? Helmets are **not** recommended for use on playgrounds, climbing structures, monkey bars, or slides because of the potential for straps or the helmet to snag on equipment.

Powered Vehicles

Manitobans want to make the most of their summer and they use a variety of powered vehicles to get around. Whether you use an ATV, a personal mobility device or personal electric vehicle, read on for a brief overview of styles, rules, and helmet requirements.

Off-Road Vehicles

Snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, dune buggies and dirt bikes are examples of off-road vehicles. While there are some exceptions, users must comply with the following rules: To ride legally on designated trails the vehicle must be registered through Manitoba Public Insurance. These vehicles are not permitted to travel on public roadways or sidewalks. An operator with a valid driver's license is permitted to cross roads while yielding to traffic. Operators under 14 require adult supervision and those 14-15 years old are restricted from road crossings. The same impaired driving laws that apply to motor vehicles also apply to off-road vehicles. Because these vehicles travel at higher speeds, rollovers and impacts with branches and debris can be a problem. The user is required to wear an approved safety helmet designed for these vehicles. For more details, visit MPI ORV Brochure.pdf .



Image Credit: Canva Pro

Low-Speed Vehicles

Lawn mowers, lawn tractors and garden tractors under 25 horsepower are not legally permitted to drive on a roadway and must be trailered to move them from one job site to another.

Golf carts do not meet safety standards, cannot be registered for regular traffic use, and are not permitted on public roadways.



Image Credit: Canva Pro

Personal Mobility Devices



Image Credit: Canva Pro

Personal mobility devices, like motorized wheelchairs and medical scooters, do not require registration or vehicle insurance. People using medical scooters are treated as pedestrians. If no sidewalk is available for their use, operators should travel, like pedestrians, on the left edge of the roadway or shoulder, **facing traffic**.

Mopeds and Motorcycles

A moped can be a two or three-wheeled vehicle with optional pedals and an engine up to 50cc with a maximum speed of not more than 50 km/hr. The operator needs to have a class 5 (regular) driver's licence, but they do not need a motorcycle driver's licence. Users are required to wear a helmet approved for motorcycles and other motorized vehicles.



Image Credit: Canva Pro

The if the engine capacity exceeds 50 cc and can travel faster than 50 km/hr, it is considered a motorcycle. A motorcycle licence is required to operate a motorcycle. Motorcycle users are also required to wear an approved motorcycle helmet.

Personal Electric Vehicles

The new class of personal electric vehicles includes power-assisted bicycles or e-bikes, electric kick scooters, electric skateboards, electric hoverboards, Segways, and more. They present an eco-friendly way to get around. Until recently, across Manitoba some of these vehicles have been in a regulatory grey zone with local municipal bodies making local rules. Riders needed to check with each municipality for bylaws regulating use.

Bill 43, the recent Manitoba Highway Traffic Act Amendment, has updated language from "power-assisted bicycle" to "personal electric vehicle," which now includes all of these vehicles. Rules regarding use were also amended.

Power-Assisted E-Bicycles

Under the Highway Traffic Act, power-assisted bicycles are considered bicycles. A power-assisted bicycle must have the following: fully functional pedals; travel on not more than three wheels; can be propelled by muscle power applied to the pedals; has an electric motor of 500 watts or less; cannot travel faster than 32km/hr; and the motor shuts off when the break is applied.



Image Credit: Canva Pro

They can be ridden on most roadways, paved highway shoulders, and designated multi-use pathways and are generally prohibited on sidewalks. A driver's licence is not required; however, the operator must be at least 14 years old. Unlike with bicycles, where adults do not need to wear a helmet, ALL users must wear a helmet at all times, properly adjusted and securely fastened. For those who ride the e-bike at fast speeds in heavy traffic or over long distances, some safety organizations are now recommending upgraded helmets for e-bikes, because they cover more area and are tested for higher-speed impacts. A good point to know is that an e-bike with a higher power output is no longer classified as a bicycle; it is now considered a moped.

Micro-Mobility Devices



Image Credit: Canva Pro

Electric kick scooters, electric skateboards, electric hoverboards, and Segways are part of the micromobility device craze. With the exception of e-bikes, these personal electric vehicles have a maximum allowable speed of 25 km/hr and the operator must be at least 16 years old. These vehicles are not allowed to be used on roads, where the speed limit is more than 50 km/hr, or on sidewalks. Helmets are required and passengers are not permitted.

E-Scooters are one of the more common mini personal electric vehicles. According to Parachute, e-scooter injuries are on the rise across Canada. Between 2023 and 2024, the number of hospital visits related to e-scooters increased by 32 per cent.



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Wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by 85% and brain injury by 88%. Knowing when to wear them can help your kids learn to ride safely.

This information is provided as a general guideline. Make sure your knowledge is up to date by talking to local authorities where you are planning to ride.



Image Credit: Canva Pro

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For more information, visit:

Helmets for bicycles, inline skating, scooter riding and skateboarding – Parachute

Parachute - Which Helmet For Which Activity?

MPI Cycling 101

Bike Helmets 101 Video

Bike helmets for children and youth | Caring for kids

MPI ORV Brochure.pdf

The Highway Traffic Act

Bill 43 Highway Traffic Act Amendment

Helmet Safety - Sport Medicine & Science Council of Manitoba

E-Bike Helmet Guide | NTA-8776 Certified Safety by Bern – Bern Helmets