

A Highway Code

for

Mobility Scooter Users



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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Introduction

A mobility scooter could cause considerable damage to the user or to other people if it collided with someone or something.

We have written this highway code to protect the safety of people who use electric mobility scooters and the safety of other road users and pedestrians. If you ride a scooter, you must follow this highway code whether you ride on the pavement, footpath or on the road.

You are responsible for your own, and other people's, safety.



If you are using a powered vehicle for the first time, or if it a while since you have driven on the road, you are strongly advised to seek training. For details of courses, contact your local **Disabled Living Centre, Mobility Centre** or your **Local Authority Road Safety Unit**.



Definitions

Three types of 'invalid carriage' are defined in 'The Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988'.

Class 1 – manual wheelchairs.

These wheelchairs are not electrically powered. You use your arms to move the wheelchair forward, or you are pushed by another person.

Class 2 – powered wheelchairs and scooters.

These are only suitable for riding on pavements or footpaths, and have a top speed of 4 miles an hour (6 kilometres an hour).



Class 3 – powered wheelchairs and other outdoor powered vehicles, including scooters.

These are suitable for riding on roads, and have a top speed of 8 miles an hour (12 kilometres an hour) and have an unladen weight that must not exceed 150 kilograms. These also have a switch to limit the top speed to 4 miles an hour (6 kilometres an hour) on pavements or footpaths.

A Class 3 vehicle is not legally defined as a motor vehicle and the user does not have to have a driving licence or take a driving test.

However, a Class 3 vehicle can only be used by a disabled person aged 14 or over, or by an able-bodied person who is demonstrating a vehicle before selling it, training a disabled user, or taking a vehicle to or from a place for maintenance or repair.



Registration

Class 1 and **Class 2** invalid carriages are not required to be registered.

A **Class 3** vehicle is required to be registered for road use with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). It must be licensed in the disabled taxation class and display a nil duty tax disc. There is no fee to pay and the vehicle is not required to display registration plates. However, you are required to renew your tax disc annually.

To register and license a **Class 3** vehicle you should complete form **V55/4** (for new vehicles) or **V55/5** (for used vehicles) and take or send it to your nearest DVLA local office, not to DVLA Headquarters in Swansea.

Guidance on completing the forms is given in leaflets **INF210** and **INF211** respectively. The address of your local office can be found at **www.direct.gov/motoring**; in the **V100** information leaflet available from post offices that issue tax discs; or by telephoning **0870 243 0444**.



Important basic advice

- 1 Make sure that you get a scooter that is appropriate for your needs. Get professional advice before buying a mobility scooter. This could mean getting an assessment and advice from your local occupational therapist or a reputable dealer.



- 2 Make sure that you know what all the switches and levers on your scooter do, and that you can control it properly before you go out on it.
- 3 Make sure that the scooter is properly maintained. Have it thoroughly checked (the manufacturer's handbook will tell you how often to do this).

- 4 Keep the battery fully charged and get to know how far your scooter can go before it will need recharging. Remember that the distance you can travel will depend on the condition of the battery, the weight you have on the scooter and the kind of route you follow. Cold weather, travelling on rough surfaces and travelling up hills will use more power and reduce the distance you can travel.

Insurance

- 5 Although you do not have to be insured by law, we strongly recommend that you have at least third-party cover. It is also a good idea to be covered for fire, theft, and damage.

Plan your journey

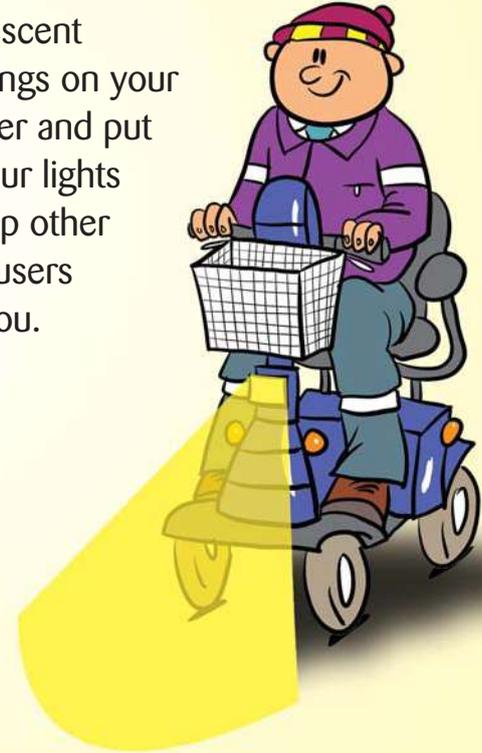
- 6 The most direct or the shortest route will not always be the best route to take. Steep hills, high kerbs or other obstructions may make it impossible to tackle certain routes.



- 7** You may take a Class 1 wheelchair on some buses and trains but always check that this service is available for both your outward and return journeys before you set off.

Out and about

- 8** Do not use your scooter if you have been drinking alcohol or taking drugs. Check the patient information on any medication your doctor prescribes or which you buy over the counter. If the information says the medication could cause drowsiness, don't use the scooter.
- 9** See and be seen! If you are using anything to protect you from the weather, make sure that it does not restrict your vision. Wear fluorescent materials or have fluorescent markings on your scooter and put on your lights to help other road users see you.



- 10** Do not wear loose-fitting clothes. Make sure any belts or scarves are tucked away so they can't catch in one of the wheels.



- 11** Do not carry another person (child or adult) with you on the scooter.

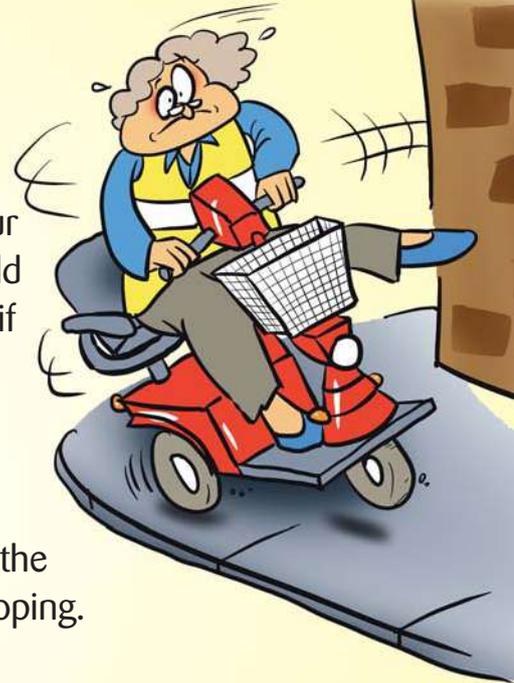


- 12** Do not carry or lead a pet while you are on your scooter. Even trained and well-behaved animals can be unpredictable and cause crashes.
- 13** Don't overload your scooter with shopping or other goods as this could make the vehicle unstable. Do not have anything hanging from the handlebars as this will make it more difficult to control the scooter.

On the move

- 14** Be careful when going up and down kerbs. Always approach at right angles and do not go up or down kerbs higher than recommended for the type and size of your wheels (look in the manufacturer's handbook for guidance). Wherever possible, cross roads where there is a dropped kerb.
- 15** Take extra care when you cannot see clearly ahead, for example, when you are approaching a corner where there is a wall or hedge restricting your view.

- 16** Take great care when going round corners. Your scooter could topple over if you go round a corner too quickly, especially if the ground is sloping.



- 17** Be very careful when you are approaching corners or junctions on loose gravel, on a slippery surface or downhill.

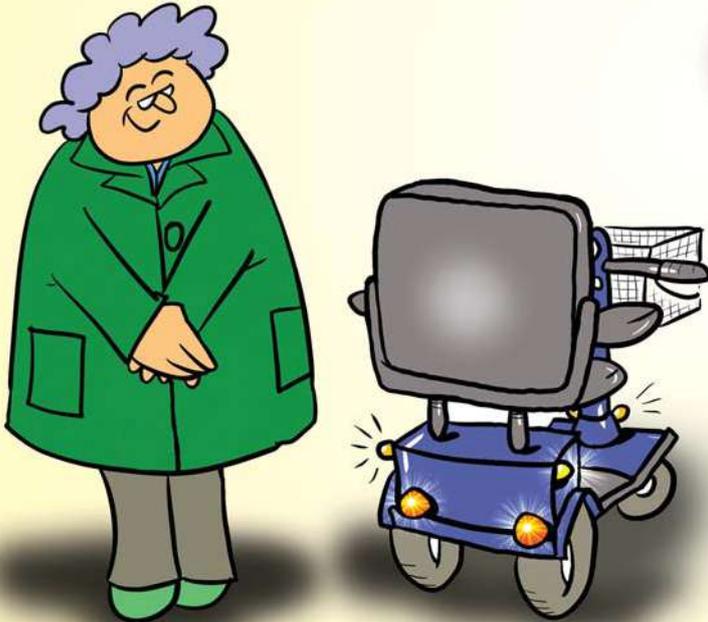
- 18 Slow down in plenty of time. There may be a delay in braking on some scooters.
- 19 Always be aware of pedestrians and road users. Pedestrians may not see or hear you approaching them, especially from behind. Look carefully before you move off or change direction.

On the pavement

- 20 Some scooters are designed only to be driven safely on pavements or footpaths, except when you are crossing roads.
- 21 If you are riding a Class 3 vehicle, you must switch over to the 4 miles an hour (6 kilometres an hour) setting when you are using it on a pavement or footpath.
- 22 **Pedestrians have right of way!**
If you are riding your scooter on a pavement or footpath, give way to pedestrians. The top speed allowed on pavements or footpaths is 4 miles an hour, but even this is too fast where there are pedestrians about.
- 23 In a crowded area, such as a shopping precinct or shop, you must make sure that you do not run into anyone or cause any damage with your scooter.

On the road

24 To drive on the road you need a vehicle that can travel at up to 8 miles an hour (12 kilometres an hour). It must also have headlights, rear lights, flashing indicators and a horn.



- 25** Remember that you are not driving a car but a very small and slow vehicle, which is very vulnerable. It is wise to avoid using busy roads.
- 26** When on the road, you must follow the same rules as other traffic.
- 27** You must keep to the left.

- 28** You must obey traffic lights and all other road signals and instructions, including stop signs, give-way signs and signs for one-way streets.
- 29** You must give way to pedestrians on crossings.
- 30** At night, you must have your headlights and rear lights on.
- 31** Although it is not recommended, you can use dual carriageways if you have an extra flashing amber warning light.
- 32** You must not use your scooter on motorways.
- 33** You are not allowed to use bus lanes or cycle tracks.
- 34** Always indicate before pulling out or turning left or right.
- 35** When you are passing parked cars, look out for doors opening.



- 36** Remember that other vehicles are almost certainly moving much faster than you are and may reach you before you expect them to. Be sure that you have plenty of time to carry out your actions.
- 37** Don't rely on your mirror. It may give a false impression of distance.
- 38** To turn right, it may be safer to turn on to the pavement and use a pedestrian crossing to cross the road. If there is no pavement, it may be safer to stop on the left and wait for a safe gap in the traffic.
- 39** Use your hazard lights if you cannot move for any reason, or if you are in a difficult or dangerous situation. Do not drive with them on unnecessarily.
- 40** Do not park your scooter where it would cause an obstruction and make it difficult for others to use the pavement or footpath.

For more information about buying and using mobility scooters, please contact
**The National Federation of Shopmobility,
The Hawkins Suite, Enham Place,
Enham Alamein, Andover,
Hants, SP11 6JS.
Phone: 08456 442 446**