








E-Bikes, E-Scooters, E-Motorcycles

What Parents Should Know...

							
Type	Bicycle ¹	Class 1 E-Bike ¹	Class 2 E-Bike ¹	Class 3 E-Bike ¹	E-Scooter ²	Moped / Motorized Bicycle	E-Motorcycle
Pedal Operated	Yes	Yes	Optional	Yes	No	Optional	No
Maximum Motor Assisted Speed (MPH)	N/A	20	20	28	15	30	None
Used on Class I Bike Path ³	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Used on Class II Bike Path ⁴	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Minimum Age (Years)	N/A	N/A	N/A	16	15.5	16	16
Driver's License Required	No	No	No	No	Yes ²	Yes + M1 or M2	Yes + M1
License Plate Required	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Electric Motor Power Limit	N/A	750 Watts	750 Watts	750 Watts	No Limit	4 Gross Brake HP (3000W)	No Limit
Headlight/ Taillight Required	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Helmet Required	Under 18	Under 18	Under 18	Yes	Under 18	Yes (DOT Approved)	Yes (DOT Approved)
Vehicle Code Definition	CVC 231	CVC 312.5(a)(1)	CVC 312.5(a)(2)	CVC 312.5(a)(3)	CVC 407.5	CVC 406(a)	CVC 400

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¹E-bikes are subject to the same rules of the road as traditional bicycles, meaning they can generally be operated on most roadways and streets, including in designated bike lanes, regardless of the posted speed limit for motor vehicles. Operators must obey all standard traffic laws and posted speed limits, just as a motorist or a regular cyclist would.

²E-Scooters (Motorized Scooters) use is generally limited to roadways with a posted speed limit of 25 mph or less (Section 21235(b) CVC). Local ordinance may authorize use on public roads with higher speed limits if operated within designated bike lanes. Use requires a driver's license or instruction permit.

³A Class I bikeway is a physically separated, off-street path for cyclists and pedestrians, kept separate from vehicle traffic. It resembles a paved trail, sometimes called a multi-use trail, and is typically found in parks, along rivers, or on former railroad rights-of-way.

⁴A Class II bikeway is a bike lane that runs along the side of a street, marked by a painted line separating it from motor vehicle traffic. It may also be defined by a striped buffer zone or, in some cases, on-street parking, and it includes pavement markings such as bicycle symbols and arrows.

What Parents Should Know...

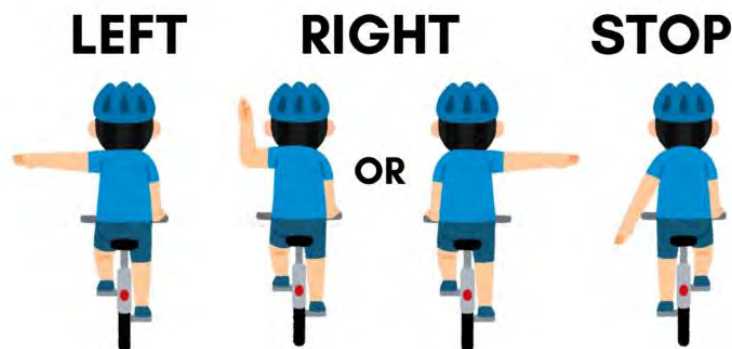
Before letting your child ride an e-bike on the road, make sure they feel confident with these essential skills:

- ✓ Taking turns at intersections after coming to a complete stop.
- ✓ Scanning before merging onto roads and using hand signals to turn, stop, and change lanes safely.
- ✓ Giving pedestrians the right-of-way.
- ✓ Knowing how to stop abruptly and dodge obstacles without swerving into other vehicle lanes.
- ✓ Maneuvering heavy e-bikes traveling at high speeds that take longer to stop.

Safety Tips

The same rules of the road for motorists apply to e-bikes and e-scooters.
(Section §21230 of the California Vehicle Code [CVC]).

- ✓ By law, riders 17 and under **must** wear a helmet.
- ✓ Be seen—wear bright clothing and/or use reflective gear.
- ✓ Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic.
- ✓ Obey all traffic signs and signals, including stop signs and red lights.
- ✓ Use hand signals for turns and stops to communicate with other drivers.
- ✓ Signal your presence before passing others on any shared road, path, or trail.
- ✓ Assume that cars and pedestrians may not see you. Ride defensively.
- ✓ For everyone's safety, slow down when passing pedestrians. What might seem like a slow speed to you may seem fast to others.
- ✓ Going too fast can cause unpredictable reactions, increasing the risk of injury.



LAWS & SAFETY

E-Bikes

If you are under 18 and riding an electric bicycle (aka "e-bike"), you are required by law to wear a helmet. Different classifications and models of e-bikes have different rules regarding general use, minimum age requirements, and where they can be used. Operating any e-bike on a sidewalk is generally prohibited by state law, although individual cities and counties may have specific ordinances that permit it in certain areas. No passengers are allowed on e-bikes unless the e-bike is equipped with a separate seat (Section 21204(b) CVC).

Type 1:

- Pedal-assisted
- 20 mph maximum
- No minimum age
- Allowed wherever regular bicycles are permitted on paved areas and multi-use trails

Type 2:

- Pedal or throttle-assisted
- 20 mph maximum
- No minimum age
- Allowed wherever regular bicycles are allowed on paved areas and multi-use trails

Type 3:

- Pedal-assisted
- This type is a tier below true motorcycles and mopeds
- 28 mph maximum
- **Minimum age 16 years; any operator must wear a helmet**
- Prohibited on multi-use trails unless otherwise specified

Modified E-Bikes

Modifying an e-bike to exceed California's legal limits of 750 watts and the speed limit for its class (20 mph for Class 1/2, 28 mph for Class 3) is **illegal** (Section 24016(d) CVC). This is a key part of recent updates to California's e-bike laws, which also prohibit tampering with speed limiters, including those controlled by smartphone apps, and specify that removing pedals is illegal. Furthermore, modifying an e-bike to reach speeds of 30 mph or more will change the vehicle's legal classification and subject the rider to driver's license requirements and DMV registration.

LAWS & SAFETY

E-Scooters

If you are under 18 years of age and riding an electric scooter (also known as an "e-scooter" or "motorized scooter"), **you are required by law to wear a helmet**. You must be at least 15.5 years of age to operate an e-scooter (Section 21235 CVC).

Additionally:

- The maximum speed allowed is 15 mph.
- Use is generally limited to roadways with a posted speed limit of 25 mph or lower.
- Motorized scooters cannot be operated on a sidewalk except when necessary to enter or exit a property.
- Other than the operator, no passengers are permitted on a motorized scooter.
- **Any operator of a motorized scooter must have a learner's permit or license.**

Electrically Motorized Boards



An Electrically Motorized Board (EMB) is a wheeled device with a floorboard designed to be stood on while riding, powered by an electric propulsion system (<1,000 watts) that does not exceed 20 mph (Section 313.5 CVC).

Additionally (Sections 21291 – 21294 CVC):

- **Must be at least 16 years old to operate.**
- **Any operator is required by law to wear a bicycle helmet**, regardless of age.
- 15 mph is the legal speed limit for an EMB on any public road, bike path, or trail.
- May not be operated on a highway with a speed limit above 35 mph unless it is operated within a Class II or IV bikeway.
- When riding after dark, the device or operator must be equipped with a white front lamp, a red rear reflector, and white or yellow side reflectors.

LAWS & SAFETY

E-Motorcycles

Any self-propelled device, whether gasoline- or electric-powered, that travels faster than 30 miles per hour is considered a motorcycle, a motor-driven cycle, or a pocket bicycle. Due to their self-propelled nature, they are subject to the California Vehicle Code and must be registered with the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

Only e-motorcycles registered with the DMV may be ridden on roads or at off-highway vehicle (OHV) parks. These vehicles may not be ridden on trails, bike lanes, or sidewalks. They must have a DMV-issued license plate to be driven on the street. Riders must have a California Driver's License with an M1 endorsement, and drivers must carry insurance. Riders and passengers, regardless of age, must wear a DOT-approved helmet. These vehicles are subject to Sections 400(a)/(b), 405, and 473(a) CVC.

Visit the CHP Electric Bicycle Safety and Training and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety pages **to learn more!**

