

The first 10 minutes or so of a heavy downpour makes the road surface extremely hazardous. Before the rain can wash away the dirt, grime or mud from the road surface, the rainwater combined with these impurities makes the road extremely slippery. Avoid riding during the first 15 minutes of a downpour. In addition, visibility becomes poor when it rains heavily and traction is greatly reduced due to aqua-planing.

The same slippery condition is also created during light rain when there is insufficient rain water to wash away the dirt and grime on the road surface.

ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

201. Rain imposes riding difficulties and as a defensive rider, you should know how it can affect the control of your motorcycle and cause accidents. Rain reduces visibility and therefore affects adversely your perception and judgement of speed and distance. Torrential rain reduces your vision to such a low that you cannot see lane markings or the road edges.

Heavy rain also causes aquaplaning in which the tyres lose friction with the road surface because of water building up between the tyre and the road surface. When this happens, your motorcycle will skid out of control, or be unable to stop in time in an emergency.

Under such adverse weather conditions, you should slow down, so that you can stop in time. Braking distance will increase two-fold and wheels will lock when braking hard, causing the motorcycle to skid. Ride slower in such situations. Be careful of steel plates, manhole covers and painted road markings which are slippery in wet conditions.

If visibility becomes so poor that you cannot see clearly, find a safe place to stop and wait until the condition gets better.

DAYLIGHT AND LOW LIGHT CONDITIONS

202. Too much or too little light can affect our ability to see and be seen. When affected by such conditions, a rider should adjust his riding to suit these conditions.

The glare from the morning and afternoon sun can dazzle a rider and reduce his vision. To overcome this, do the following:

- a) Slow down sufficiently to be able to see objects nearer to you in time to take evasive action; and
- b) Wear tinted goggles or sunglasses to cut down the glare.

Your ability to see is reduced at night because of insufficient light, even with headlights on. A rider should reduce his speed and not ride faster than he can stop safely within the range of the headlights.

Others may not see you clearly at night. Ensure that you switch on the head lights to be easily seen. Make it a habit of wearing bright or light-coloured clothing when riding at night so others can notice your presence better.

In the day, most motorists may not notice you because of the size of your motorcycle. Make yourself more visible by turning on your headlights, even during daytime, to increase your visibility to others.

INTERACTION WITH OTHER ROAD USERS

203. The Highway Code is a code of conduct, which is meant to complement the existing set of traffic laws. It lays stress on the responsibilities of road users towards each other.

Knowledge and compliance to the Highway Code is essential for safe driving. You should watch for tell-tale signs which indicate traffic hazards and react accordingly to prevent accidents. Give other road users ample time and space to complete whatever they are doing.

When travelling forward, be aware of the traffic behind you as well by checking the side mirrors from time to time. Check your blind spots by turning your head to look over your shoulder before switching lanes. Do not swing out, change lane or stop abruptly or at short notice. Show clear and correct signals to inform the vehicle behind of your intentions.