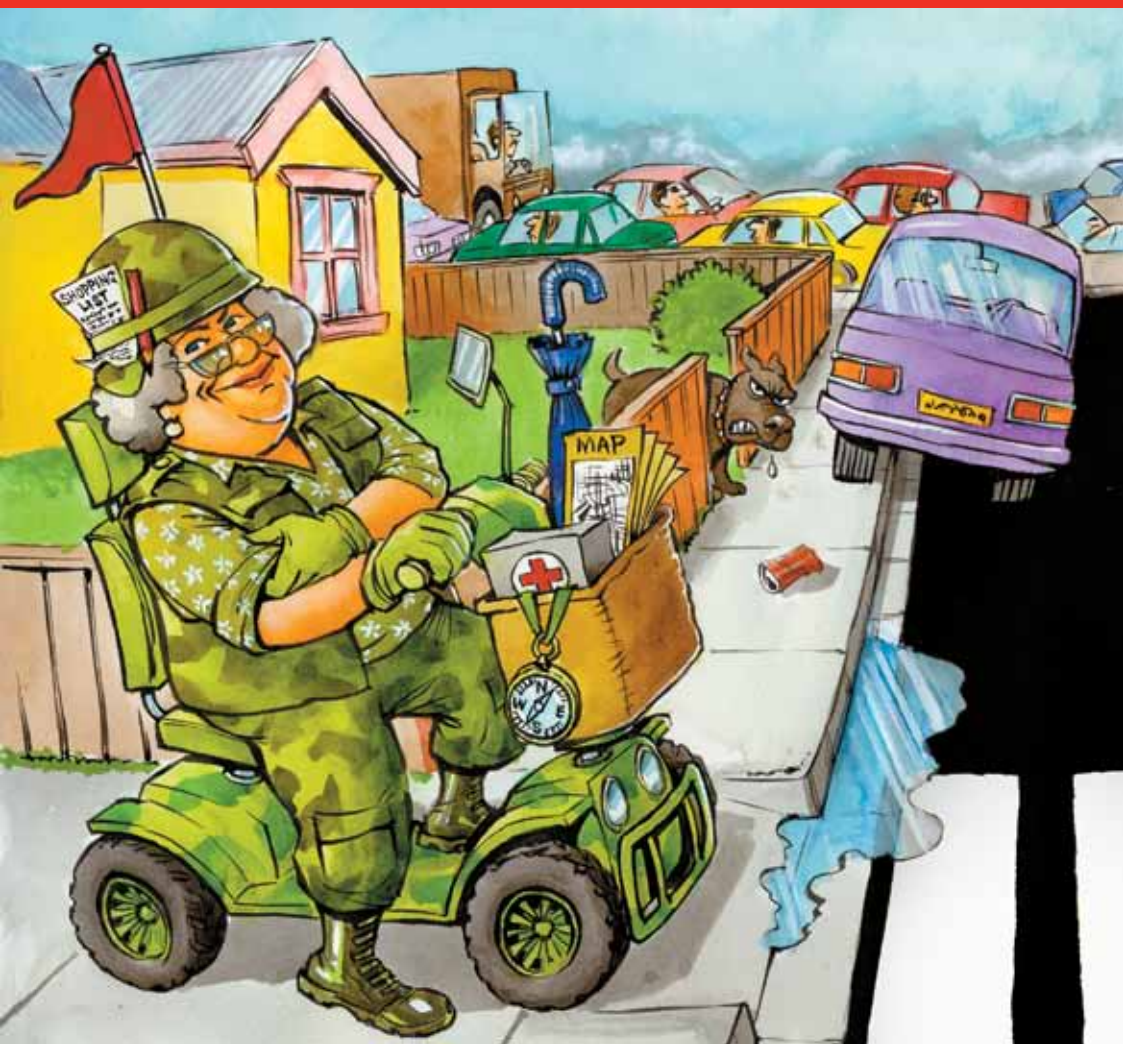




SCOOTER SURVIVAL GUIDE



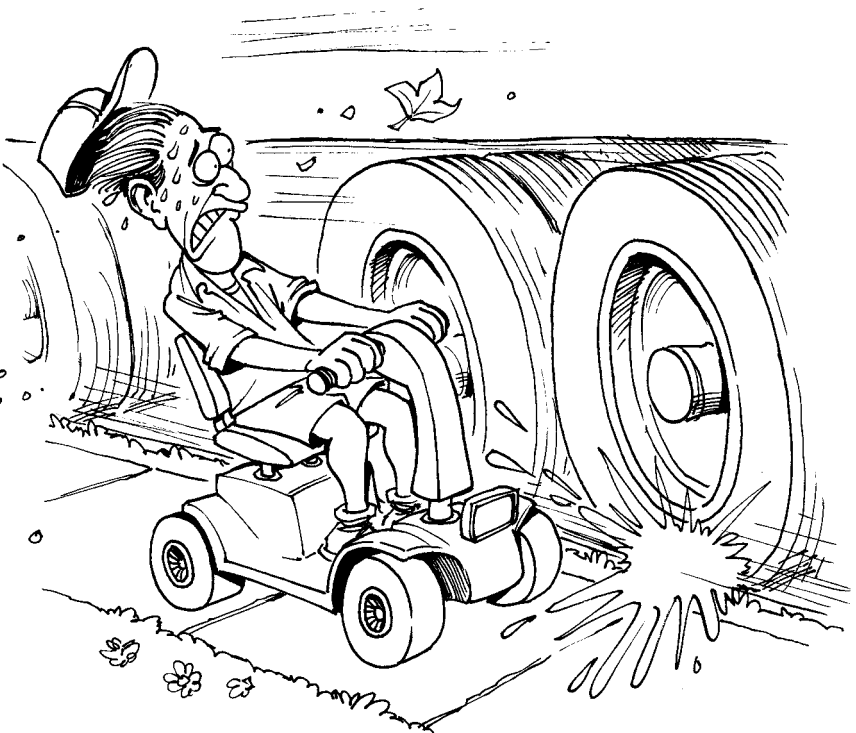
Your Safety is Important

This booklet gives road safety advice to users of Mobility Scooters. These can have three or four wheels and must not travel at more than 10km per hour on level ground, with a maximum unladen weight of 110kg.

Mobility Scooters are referred to as motorised wheelchairs in the Australian Road Rules, and are classified as PEDESTRIANS.

Mobility Scooters - are primarily designed for use by people with a 'disability that substantially impairs their mobility'. They are not for use by able bodied people.

An average of 500 people a year suffer serious head and limb injuries after experiencing a Mobility Scooter accident. 71 Australians (mostly over 70 years of age) have died from Mobility Scooter accidents since 2000. This makes it imperative that these mobility aids are not used on road unless necessary.



Is it for me?

If you have problems or deficiencies in any of the following areas a Mobility Scooter may not be suitable for you.

- Hearing
- Muscle or joint stiffness
- Concentration
- Perception
- Vision
- Ability to plan your trip
- Reaction time
- Balance or dizziness

The following are essential skills required for the safe use of your Mobility Scooter. If you answer “no” to any questions, check with your Occupational Therapist who may be able to advise you if adaptations or modifications can be made to your Mobility Scooter to compensate for these skills, or if another mobility option would be more suitable.

Co-ordination and Strength

- Can I manipulate the controls eg turn the key, adjust the dials, use the accelerator?
- Can I steer and turn in tight corners?
- Can I turn my head to look to both sides, or behind if reversing?

Physical Balance & Endurance

- Can I keep my balance when travelling over rough or uneven ground?
- Can I adjust my body position when travelling up or down slopes?
- Can I stay seated for extended periods of time?
- Can I stand or walk short distances?

Vision

- Can I see and move around obstacles in my field of vision?
- Can I see moving objects and avoid collisions?
- Can I see objects in the periphery of my vision eg motor vehicles or pedestrians around me?

Hearing

- Can I hear approaching traffic and warning sounds such as horns?

Perception

- Can I judge distances correctly?
- Can I judge the speed of my own Mobility Scooter and other vehicles and pedestrians?

Thought Process and Memory

- Can I remember all the safety procedures?
- Can I concentrate for lengthy periods?
- Can I react quickly for stopping or turning?

Feelings & Judgement

- Can I stay calm in difficult situations?
- Can I be patient with other people?
- Can I make good judgements in protecting my own safety and the safety of others?

Medications Note

If you take prescription or over the counter medications, you need to check with your GP or Pharmacist as these could have side effects that impact on your ability to control your Mobility Scooter.

Registration & Insurance

Q. Do I need any type of licence or registration to use my Mobility Scooter?

- A. As a Mobility Scooter user, you are considered to be a pedestrian under the Australian Road Rules and do not require a licence or registration. The road rules that apply to pedestrians are available on the RTA's website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

Q. Do I need Insurance?

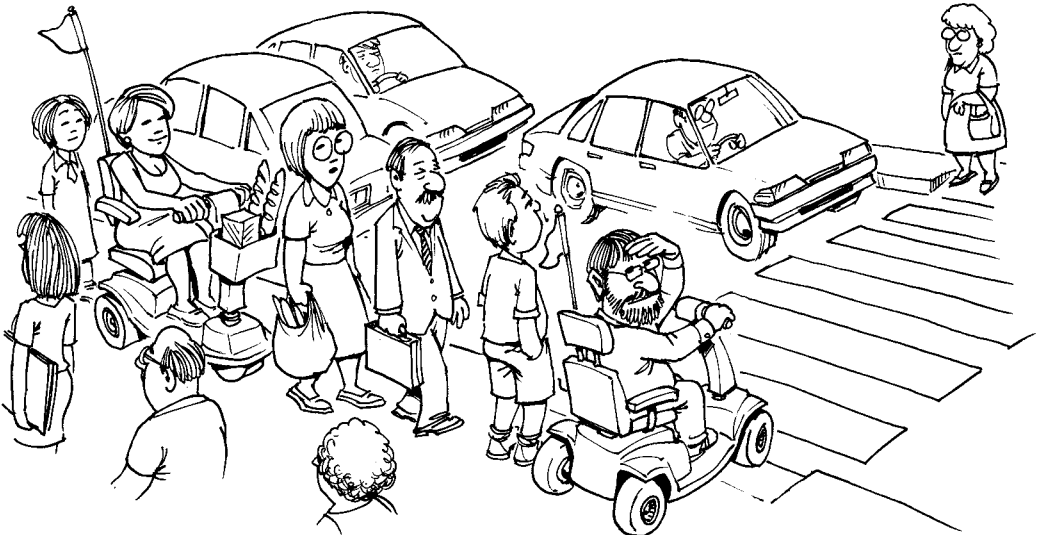
- A. A Mobility Scooter is not required to have compulsory third party insurance, however, it is recommended.

It is also recommended that you arrange insurance cover to ensure that you, your Mobility Scooter and other parties are all covered in case of an accident or theft.

Where to Travel

Q. Where should I use my Mobility Scooter?

- A.
- Mobility Scooter users are classified as pedestrians according to the Australian Road Rules. For your own safety you should remain on the footpath whenever possible.
 - A Mobility Scooter is permitted on the road where it is impractical to travel along the footpath or nature strip at the side of the road. The road should only be used as a last resort.
 - If using a Mobility Scooter on the road, you must travel facing the oncoming traffic and keep as far to the left or right hand side of the road/shoulder as possible. You must then return to the footpath as soon as practicable.
 - Be aware that traffic will not expect you to be on the road, and that this puts you at greater risk.



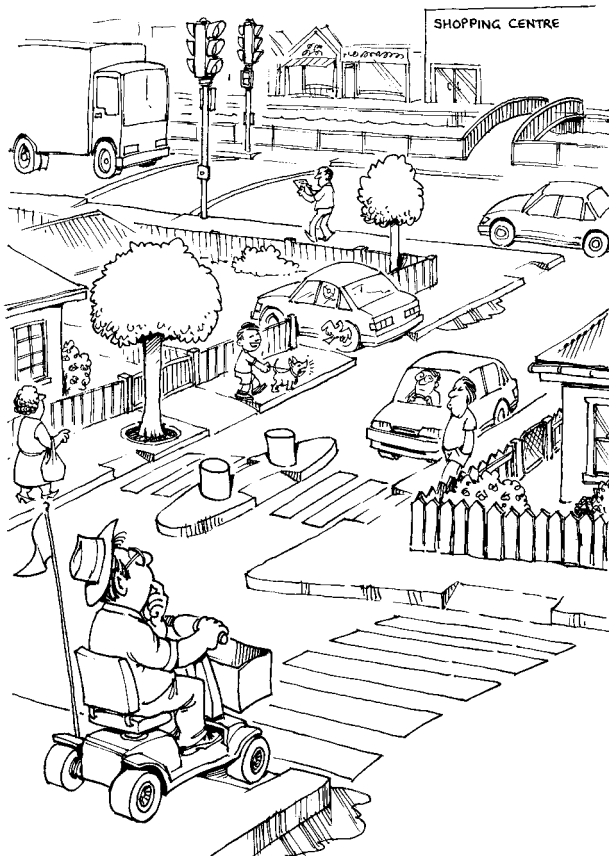
- Avoid highways, high-speed roads and high traffic volume and heavy vehicle areas unless you can travel off-road for the whole of your journey.

Q. How should I use the footpath?

- A.
- Keep to the left side of the footpath or shared cyclepath whenever possible.
 - Consider the safety of other pedestrians and children on bikes, scooters or skateboards.
 - Travel at the same speed as other pedestrians.
 - Be careful when passing driveways and watch out for reversing vehicles.
 - Mobility Scooters move quickly and quietly. Warn others when you are approaching them from behind or changing direction, by means of a bell or a horn.

Q. How should I cross a road?

- A.
- Use a marked crossing or other pedestrian facility if available.
 - STOP first before you cross.
 - LOOK for traffic in all directions.
 - LISTEN - sometimes you can hear approaching traffic even if you cannot see it.
 - Make sure that you can SEE approaching traffic and that they have SEEN you.
 - If you are not sure that you can cross safely - WAIT.
 - WHEN SAFE - cross promptly and where possible, go straight towards the opposite kerb.



Plan a Safe Route

Q. How do I plan a safe route?

- A.
- Plan a route that allows you to remain on the footpath for the majority of your journey.
 - Use pedestrian facilities where available.
 - If there are no adequate pedestrian facilities and you have to go on-road, travel along quieter streets even if it means a longer journey.
 - Avoid roundabouts and busy intersections.
 - Investigate a new route beforehand, to make sure it is accessible for your Mobility Scooter.
 - Make sure that you select a route that allows you to BE SEEN by road users.
 - Be aware of other hazards likely to cause problems for you such as railway lines, drive ways, pot holes, drains, trees or foliage obstructions, difficult slopes and uneven surfaces.

Q. What situations should I avoid?

- A.
- Crossing the road where your clear view of the road is affected and approaching drivers may not see you. Examples include between parked or stationary vehicles, close to the crest of a hill, a bend in the road or where glare may reduce driver vision.
 - Situations where you are more at risk of injury for example: mixing with traffic in travelling lanes, turning lanes or on roundabouts.
 - Going on-road at night even if you have lights and reflectors fitted is not recommended.

Operating Tips

- Do:**
- Adjust the seat before moving.
 - Keep your feet on the floor pad whilst in motion.
 - Attach rear view mirrors to your scooter for checking behind you.
 - Check that the rear view mirror hasn't been knocked or moved before moving.
 - Check rear view mirrors before moving.
 - Go straight up or down ramps or kerbs, not at an angle.
 - Use caution and travel slowly in congested areas such as busy streets, shopping areas, parking areas and shopping centres.
 - Adjust your driving for the conditions for example: near pedestrians, rough terrain and weather etc.
 - STOP and LOOK for traffic before moving off the footpath or attempting to cross roads.
 - Organise parcels or shopping so that they do not interfere with the safe operation of your Mobility Scooter.
 - Consider wearing a safety helmet and high visibility clothing.
 - Carry a mobile phone, but do not operate while moving.
 - Watch out for doors opening when passing parked cars.
 - Turn the key to the OFF position when stopped or when getting on or off your Mobility Scooter.

Don't:

- Travel on the roadway for longer than is necessary.
- Make sharp turns at full speed.
- Ride on steep slopes that are beyond the capacity of your Mobility Scooter.
- Stop on a slope to rest or dismount. Use level ground for this purpose.
- Drink alcohol prior to using your Mobility Scooter.

Be seen by others

To improve your safety you should:

- Wear light coloured clothing.
- Use a high visibility vest or seat cover (especially if you have to travel on-road).
- Attach a fluorescent flag to your Mobility Scooter as this will help to highlight your position to others.
- Use lights and reflectors to aid visibility.
- Be aware that your seated position is lower than other pedestrians, this makes it more difficult for drivers to see you.



Maintenance and Care

- Carefully read the instruction manual from the manufacturer of your Mobility Scooter before use.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use and maintenance.
- Discuss and arrange a maintenance schedule with the supplier of your Mobility Scooter.
- Do not make modifications to your Mobility Scooter, as changes may create safety and/or legal problems.
- Recharge the battery after each use, but do not recharge in a confined space.

Weekly Checks

- Check tyre pressure and horn.
- Check battery terminals.

Useful Contacts

Independent Living Centre Ph:1800 800 523

Can help you choose the most appropriate mobility aid for your circumstances.

Occupational Therapists - Contact your GP or Area Health Service

Can help you with an assessment of your capabilities.

Roads and Traffic Authority - Ph: 1300 060607

Web: www.rta.nsw.gov.au

For road rules and safety advice.

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