

Motorcycle Mentorship Module 17

Personal Protective Equipment





Warning: Incorrect or inaccurate information could lead to tragic results on the road. If a question arises that is not covered in the guide and you don't know the answer from your own experience and training, simply state, "That is a great question, I'll get back to you with the answer."

Your Service Safety Center will help with these types of questions should they arise. Their numbers are as follows:

US Army Driving Directorate: **334.255.3039**

USMC Safety Division: **703.604.4459**

US Navy Shore Safety: **757.444.3520 x7165**

US Air Force Safety Center: **505.846.0728**

USCG Safety Division: **202.475.5206**



Preface

About: The Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) Motorcycle Mentorship Modules are a set of thirty six (36) facilitation modules designed for the purpose of increasing rider knowledge on various aspects of riding and providing additional capability for self-policing within peer groups. The modules are intended as a mechanism to further decrease motorcycle related mishaps and fatalities within Department of Defense (DoD) by encouraging riders to talk, live, and think about the topic.

Using the Module: The module content enclosed is intended as a facilitation guide to assist you with discussing the topic. However, it is still critical to use your skills and talent to engage participants and develop “buy-in” on this subject from your group. To maximize this, motivate and moderate your participants, control the accuracy of participant feedback, and be mindful of their time.

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2	Facilitation Guide – A brief overview on conducting a facilitated discussion of a topic
3	Module Overview – This section provides the facilitator a synopsis of the topic, learning objectives, and the suggested environment, props, and handouts for conducting the module
4	Module Discussion Introduction – This section provides guidance to the facilitator in opening up the discussion and getting participants talking about the topic and their relevant experiences
5	Discussion Areas – This section provides various discussion topics, sample facilitation questions, and factual information for the facilitator to lead the discussion
14	Wrap-Up – This section provides guidance to the facilitator on wrapping up the topic discussion
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16	Resources – Additional resources and definitions to assist the facilitator in preparing for and conducting the topic facilitation
N/A	Handouts – Figures, pictures, diagrams, etc. to assist the facilitator to better demonstrate a topic idea

Facilitation Guide for DSOC Mentorship Modules

It is recommended that this Mentorship Module be conducted in a facilitation style. Using the information provided in this Mentorship Module, you, as the facilitator, will lead a discussion on the subject. *You should not be conducting a lecture!* The facilitator's role is to help with how the discussion is proceeding. Participants will have much more "buy in" and connectivity with the information if they have input. One of your roles as the facilitator is to control the accuracy of the input and control the time. From the Mentorship Module, generate questions which will lead to group discussion. The more you let the group participate, the more success you will have.

Competencies of a Facilitator:

- Prepare prior to the event
- Make sure everyone gets a chance to participate and help members to express themselves
- Ask rather than tell
- Honor the group, display respect for the members, and acknowledge participant contributions
- Ask for others' opinions
- Listen without interrupting
- Demonstrate professionalism and integrity

The key characteristic distinguishing facilitation from other types of leadership, like scripted training, is that the outcomes are never predetermined in a facilitative setting. Although the background information provided with this Module remains the same, the result will depend on the participants, the knowledge and experience they bring, and the information that they feel they need to take away. The group uses the activities provided by the facilitator to unlock expertise, ensure thorough discussion, stay focused and reach decisions that are better than those any individual could come up with alone.

At the beginning of each Mentorship Event, discuss why the participants are there and what they will receive as a result of participating. Adults have limited time and they want to know "What's in it for me?" A facilitator should make training fun. Encourage humor and laughter in your Mentorship Event.

Principles of Adult Learning:

- ➔ Adult Learners want material that is relevant to them. "What's in it for me?" "What will I get out of this that will make a difference to me?"
- ➔ Adult Learners come to training events with varying amounts of experience. They like to share their experiences. If you have minimal or no motorcycle experience, you can still draw from your group.
- ➔ Even if you have motorcycle experience, you should draw from your group because people tend to remember what "they" said longer than what you said. Information that they "own" is more valuable to them.
- ➔ Facilitators are not always subject matter experts; nor do they need to be. Facilitators may draw on the existing knowledge of the participants and the information provided in these Modules.

Section I: Module Overview

Time Frame: One 30-45 minute facilitator-led discussion

Level of Prior Knowledge: Participants should, at a minimum, have basic riding experience or familiarization with riding motorcycles.

Synopsis: While all personnel are aware of their Command's requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE), discussion should be directed to the importance of PPE as a part of the whole motorcycling experience. Just as each service has a required uniform for the performance of their official duties, proper and effective PPE should be considered the required uniform for motorcycling. Once one is in the habit of suiting up for a ride, it will take no more thought than fastening a seat belt.

Discussions will be directed to the different types of helmets, gloves, boots and riding gear available, as well as some examples of instances where wearing the proper equipment saved the user from potential injury, thus reinforcing the All The Gear - All the Time (ATGATT) principle. Another discussion is directed to the importance of conspicuity for riders to keep them from blending in with their backgrounds.

Learning Objectives:

- ➔ Participants will identify motorcycle specific personal protective equipment (PPE) for riding.
- ➔ Participants may share their different riding experiences, use or familiarity of PPE, and explain how different situations determine the type of protective gear used by motorcyclists.
- ➔ Participants will present, in a group setting, the function of PPE and how PPE can reduce injury and increase comfort in different riding environments.

Suggested Environment/Props/Handouts:

A classroom or an informal outdoor setting is suitable for this facilitated discussion.

Section II: Module Discussion

Introduction: Facilitate discussion: Riding motorcycles exposes the rider to more risk as compared to operating a car. Riders are exposed to weather, road debris, and are protected only by the motorcycle riding gear worn. The rider selects what riding gear to wear and it's that decision that determines the rider's comfort and protection level.

Open discussions with participant-focused activities and introductions. Activities should encourage participant interaction and develop camaraderie and peer-relatedness.

Ask for and encourage participants to share their experiences related to the module topic.

Sample questions may include:

- How do you decide what PPE to wear?
- How does your selection of protective riding gear change based on your ride plan (such as the destination(s) or duration of your ride)?
- What PPE is mandated by the Department of Defense or your Service?
- What are the consequences of not wearing required PPE?
- Do you know anyone who has crashed while not wearing proper PPE?
- What were the effects on the rider who crashed?
- How does riding in the rain differ from riding on a normal, dry day?
- How does weather influence the rider's choice in riding gear?
- What other kind of weather effects rider's choice of motorcycle PPE? If you do not have the right gear with you, such as a rain suit or extra layers, what do you often think about when you are riding?
- What are you not thinking about when you are distracted; thinking about being wet and cold? What about when you are overly hot?
- If you had the gift of vision to know where and when your next crash will occur—what would you wear on that ride?
- Do you know of any incident where the vehicle's tire in front of you picked up and threw a rock or piece of debris? What could be the consequences of this type of incident?

Suggested Discussion Areas:

Discussion Area 1: Helmets

Facilitation Questions:

- What types of helmets are always required while operating a motorcycle?
- What is a Department of Transportation compliant helmet?
- What are possible injuries prevented by helmet usage?
- What are the different types of helmets (Full Faced, $\frac{3}{4}$ Helmet, $\frac{1}{2}$ helmet, Modular Helmet)? Which is safer and why?
- What helmets are technically DOT compliant but provide less protection to the rider?
- Are there other helmet standards that are equal or comparable to DOT standards?
- What are helmets designed to protect?

Facilitator notes:

The value of motorcycle helmets in reducing deaths and serious injuries has been documented for more than 40 years. Motorcycle helmets are the best-evaluated way to reduce motorcycle-related deaths and injuries. In 2006, the most recent year for which definitive statistics are available, 4,810 motorcyclists died in crashes and 88,000 were injured in the United States. Approximately 41 percent (1,957) of those killed were not wearing a helmet.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that helmets saved the lives of 1,658 motorcyclists in 2006. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 752 lives could have been saved. Helmets are estimated to be 37 percent effective in preventing fatal injuries to motorcyclists. This means for every 100 motorcyclists killed in crashes while not wearing a helmet, 37 of them could have avoided fatal head and brain injuries had all 100 worn helmets.

Reported helmet use rates in 2011 were 66 percent for all motorcyclists, compared with 54 percent in 2010 and a low of 48 percent in 2005.

A Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System study found that motorcycle helmets are 67 percent effective in preventing brain injuries and that unhelmeted motorcyclists involved in crashes were three times more likely to suffer brain injuries than those wearing helmets.

The facts are very clear, head injuries are a leading cause of deaths in motorcycle crashes. The most important step riders and passengers can take in terms of protecting themselves and staying alive is to wear a DOT- compliant helmet every time they ride.

There are two well-known types of standards in the U.S. that are relevant for motorcycle helmets.

- The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) standard, designated Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard no. 218 (FMVSS 218) is the mandatory standard for **all** motorcycle helmets sold in the United States. The federal standard defines minimum levels of performance that helmets must meet to protect the head and brain in the event of a crash.

- The second type of standard is issued by private, non-profit organizations such as the Snell Memorial Foundation or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These are good indicators that the helmet also meets the Federal safety standard.

A third helmet standard is from the Economic Community of Europe (ECE), and is the most commonly used internationally. The ECE is required by over 50 countries worldwide. ECE qualified helmets meet the demands of the USDOT standard. However, not all USDOT compliant motorcycle helmets will pass the ECE standards.

USDOT Compliant Helmets

USDOT standard is a manufacturer self-certification. Manufacturers conduct the required tests in their laboratories and if a manufacturer certifies that its helmet is compliant with the USDOT standard, then the company can make and sell that helmet with a DOT sticker. Each year, the USDOT conducts compliance testing of a variety of motorcycle helmets to determine whether helmets being sold in the United States meet the Federal safety standard. The USDOT posts these results on its website in a pass/fail form. The results may be found at: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/testing/comply/fmvss218/>.

FMVSS-compliant helmets are of a specific thickness and provide a certain amount of impact protection to riders. Helmets that meet or exceed the minimum requirements of FMVSS No. 218 have been shown to reduce deaths and injuries to motorcycle riders. The USDOT compliant helmets are designed to absorb a significant amount of impact energy, prevent most penetration, and have a fastening system that will withstand significant force.

Identifying USDOT Compliant Helmets

Below are components of USDOT compliant motorcycle helmets:

- **Thick Inner Liner:** Helmets meeting the minimum Federal safety standard have an inner liner usually about one-inch thick of firm polystyrene foam. Sometimes the inner liner will not be visible, but you should still be able to feel its thickness. Unsafe helmets normally contain only soft foam padding or a bare plastic shell with no padding at all.
- **Sturdy Chin Strap and Rivets:** Helmets meeting the USDOT safety standard have sturdy chinstraps with solid rivets.
- **Weight of Helmet:** Depending on design, unsafe helmets weigh only one pound or less. Helmets meeting FMVSS 218 generally weigh about three pounds. These helmets provide a more substantial feel.
- **Design/Style of Helmet:** The USDOT safety standard does not allow anything to extend further than two-tenths of an inch from the surface of a helmet. For example, while visor fasteners are allowed, a spike or other protruding decorations indicate an unsafe helmet. Unsafe helmets are noticeably smaller in diameter and thinner than ones meeting the USDOT standard.
- **DOT Sticker:** Helmets that meet FMVSS 218 must have a sticker on the outside back of the helmet with the letters "DOT," which certifies that the helmet meets or exceeds FMVSS 218. It is important to note that some novelty helmet sellers provide DOT stickers separately for motorcyclists to place on non-complying helmets. In this case, the DOT sticker is invalid and does not certify compliance.
- **Snell or ANSI Label:** In addition to the DOT sticker, labels located inside the helmet showing that a helmet meets the standards of private, non-profit organizations are good indicators that the helmet also meets the Federal safety standard.

- **Manufacturer's labeling:** Manufacturers are required under FMVSS 218 to place a label on or inside the helmet stating the manufacturer's name, model, size, month and year of manufacture, construction materials, and owner's information. A helmet that does not meet the Federal safety standard usually does not have such labeling. Remember that a DOT sticker on the back of the helmet and proper inside labeling do not necessarily indicate that a helmet meets all DOT requirements. Many helmets have counterfeit DOT stickers and a limited few also have manufacturer's labeling. But the design and weight of a helmet, thickness of the inner liner, and the quality of the chin strap and rivets are extra clues to help distinguish safe helmets from non-complying ones.

Unsafe Motorcycle Helmets

Because helmets add such a critical margin of safety for motorcycle riders, many States have laws requiring use of helmets that meet FMVSS 218 requirements. Some motorcycle riders violate these State laws by wearing unsafe helmets that do not meet the federal standard. Most of these helmets are sold as novelty items and circumvent FMVSS 218's requirements. In some cases, motorcyclists purchase these helmets in the mistaken belief that they offer protection. However, some riders who wear these novelty helmets know that they are unsafe – but wear them anyway.

Novelty helmets performed significantly worse when tested than any helmet that complies with FMVSS No. 218. In general, noncompliant novelty helmets will not protect riders during motorcycle crashes from either impact or penetration threats, and will not remain on a riders' head during a crash. Novelty helmets present motorcycle riders with a higher risk for skull fracture and brain injury when compared to certified helmets. Motorcycle riders who wear novelty helmets prefer them because they are less bulky and look sportier. Some riders believe that "something is better than nothing" and have a false sense of security regarding the protection afforded them by helmets not designed or manufactured to comply with FMVSS No. 218.

Motorcycle Helmet Sizing, Shapes and Comfort

When choosing a motorcycle helmet, it is critical that it is USDOT compliant, but there are other important considerations, too, regarding fit and comfort. Although safety is the primary reason for wearing a motorcycle helmet, an important factor to consider when purchasing a new helmet is comfort. The protection that a helmet provides is of no value if it is too uncomfortable to wear.

Various brands of helmets or even different models within the same brand can have a completely different fit and feel. Experienced riders advise those shopping for helmets that it's almost impossible to find the "perfect" fit or even an acceptable fit without trying on at least several different helmets and wearing each one for an extended period of time. Even a helmet that feels fine in the store may not be comfortable after only a few minutes on a motorcycle. Some stores encourage the rider to wear a selected helmet in the store for at least 30 minutes—enough time for the buyer to experience pressure points caused by ill-fitted helmets.

Do Motorcycle Helmets Interfere With the Vision and Hearing of Riders?

No. Opponents of mandatory motorcycle helmet laws have suggested that although a helmet can be effective in reducing injuries when a crash occurs, wearing a helmet may increase a rider's risk of crashing by interfering with the ability to see and hear surrounding traffic. Studies don't support these claims. A study to assess the impact of a motorcycle helmet on vision and hearing capabilities found that helmet use neither reduced the ability of riders to see traffic nor increased the time needed to visually check for nearby traffic. Helmet use also did not make a difference in a rider's ability to hear surrounding traffic sounds.

Helmets Do Not Obscure Vision

Less than three percent of peripheral vision is limited by a motorcycle helmet, according to a study conducted to investigate helmets and vision. All helmets provide a field of vision of more than 210 degrees—well above the 140 degree standard that state driver licensing agencies use to identify vision problems. Most helmeted motorcycle riders simply turn their heads a little more, if necessary, in order to check traffic.

Helmets Do Not Impair Hearing

A motorcyclist out on the road will hear just as well or even better with a helmet as without one, according to the USDOT. For someone without a helmet, the wind and sound of the engine are very loud, and any other important sounds must be even louder to be heard over all that noise. With a helmet properly worn, surrounding sounds are quieter, but in equal proportions. This means that what can be heard over wind and engine noise without a helmet can also be heard in the same way with a helmet since wind and engine noise will also be reduced. The signal to noise ratio stays the same.

There is a critical need for the use of a protective helmet by every motorcycle rider. The helmet provides a significant reduction of head and neck injuries without any adverse effect on vision, hearing, or vulnerability for other injury. By cutting down on wind noise, helmets help riders hear other sounds better. By reducing fatigue from the wind, they keep riders more alert and by protecting a rider's eyes from the wind, they allow better vision.

Finding Inexpensive Helmets

It is possible to buy a less expensive motorcycle helmet that will protect a rider as well as the most expensive styles currently available. Less expensive helmets that meet the USDOT standard can be found for about \$100 going up to \$600-800 for the top of the line models. The difference between the protection offered by a “novelty” helmet that does not meet any standards and the protection provided by an inexpensive DOT motorcycle helmet is well worth the money.

Former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters is on-record as having urged motorcycle manufacturers to provide free or discounted DOT compliant helmets or rider safety training with the purchase of every new motorcycle. Correspondingly, many motorcycle dealerships will include a DOT compliant helmet in the deal, if asked, when a customer purchases a new motorcycle.

“Helmets and proper training are just as important as brakes or headlights when it comes to the well-being of motorcyclists,” former secretary Peters said. “We shouldn’t be letting any customer take a bike out of the store without a helmet as part of the package. Safety shouldn’t have to be an option when purchasing a motorcycle.”

Discussion Area 2: Outer Garments

Facilitation Questions:

- How do motorcycle jackets and pants provide comfort and increase safety?
- Are you familiar with anyone who has experienced a mishap while not wearing protective outer garments?
- What is comfort?
- How do we increase protective safety?
- What type of riding gear is best?
- What are the differences between textile and natural fiber materials?
- Do brightly colored helmets and outer garments help increase visibility or 'conspicuity' of motorcycle riders?

Facilitator notes:

Pants

There is much more to your body than simply head, hands, and feet and it pays to protect the rest of it as well. Your legs will be at risk, as they are so close to the bike, so proper pants can help protect them.

Finding a pair of riding pants that look good, are comfortable to wear in any season and still provide enough protection if you should find yourself sliding across the road is difficult. It really all comes down to making good choices based on what type of riding you'll be doing and the weather. For the riskier, cooler rides, leather or Kevlar padded riding pants are probably your best bet. These usually come with extra armor on exposed areas like the knees and hips which can be bulky, but do offer extra protection. For hot summer rides take advantage of modern mesh textiles fabrics with armor built in. You can even wear shorts under some designs. These mesh fabrics offer air flow and impact protection in critical areas.

For more informal rides, there are now jeans with Kevlar fiber panels woven into them that provide extra protection should you crash your bike. Other options include leather pants and motocross pants, both of which could be quite hot in warmer weather. You may also opt for leather chaps, which cover and protect the legs, but allow for maximum movement.

Jackets

A good jacket is also very important. This is what will keep your torso and arms protected. You'll find that there are two main options: textile and leather. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

Leather jackets tend to be well built and last for a long time, decades even. They are the classic protective wear associated with motorcycles; so many more traditional motorcyclists prefer leather. These tend to be quite protective and are made more so by protective pads (or armor) sewn to the inside of the jackets. However, they aren't very reliable in the rain and tend not to protect as well as a well made textile jacket in the cold. The darker colors of leather tend to prevent visibility, which can be an added danger, particularly in the evening. Some leather jackets are perforated to provide some air flow with maximum protection.

Textile jackets vary in price and depending on the design can offer a similar level of protection. While they tend to be more versatile, they tend to wear out faster than leather and can usually only handle one crash.

High-tech, breathable fibers and an effective liner (insulative and waterproof liners are available) make these jackets comfortable in a variety of weather conditions. This is a major bonus if you are planning on a long trip through a wide range of temperatures. As an added feature, synthetic materials can also be manufactured in brighter colors than leather goods and they hold their color longer.

Riding Gear In General

Choosing your protective gear for motorcycle riding is one of the most important steps you can take toward staying safe. Make sure that you take the time to do the research and try the various types of protective gear. Everything should fit well (proper fit is on the snug side – no baggy) and be comfortable, but still offer the highest level of protection possible. Remember, sweat wipes off – road rash does not.

No one wants to think about being involved in a crash, but these things do happen and with a motorcycle, you simply don't have the same protection around you as you would in a more substantial vehicle. That doesn't mean taking unnecessary risks is required, however. There is plenty of gear that can be used to keep your body and skin intact as you enjoy riding.

High-visibility garments and helmets contribute significantly to motorcyclist's conspicuity and may improve perception of rider presence by other roadway users. High-visibility colors including: High-Visibility Lime Yellow, International Safety Fluorescent Orange, and Fluorescent Red are very visible under most light conditions. Retro-reflective material helps with being seen in very low light conditions when other vehicles are employing their lights. Riders must understand increased conspicuity does not guarantee detection and perception by other roadway users—the safe rider uses increased conspicuity as a supplementary safety strategy. Rider safety attitudes, crash avoidance strategies, and protective motorcycle riding gear better serve the motorcyclist.

Discussion Area 3: Gloves

Facilitation Questions:

- How important are your hands and fingers?
- Do you know anyone who has had a crash on pavement while not wearing protective gloves?
- What is a common reaction when falling?
- What do you normally do that require your hands?
- What is it like to lose the function of just one finger?
- What type of activities or tasks requires full use of your fingers and hands?

Facilitator notes:

Hands are so important in daily life it's unthinkable to leave them unprotected on a ride. Almost anything is better than going barehanded, but look for gloves that cover your hands completely and are built for motorcycle riding (e.g. snowboarding gloves are no good). It's our instinct to stick our hands out when we fall, so get something that looks like it'll survive being dragged on the pavement. Many gloves have reinforced palms and knuckles; gauntlet-style gloves feature a full wrist enclosure for even more protection.

Consider this, you are driving down the highway at 60 or 70 miles per hour, your palms are sweaty, and you are not wearing motorcycle gloves. You decide to change lanes. You tighten the hold on the grips and move to adjust your handlebars in the direction of the move. Suddenly, you find your hands slipping off the grips causing you to go careening either into the median and heading into oncoming traffic, or into a ditch. Either way, the simple decision not to wear motorcycle gloves that day, could cost you your life along with the possibility of taking others with you.

From the time a person is very small, the first instinct when falling is to put the hands out in front to brace the fall. It doesn't change as we get older. When you watch someone falling, even if they are falling backward their hands try to break the fall. When you ride a motorcycle, this doesn't change. When you see a fall coming, your hands go out in front of you, trying to brace yourself for the fall. Without motorcycle gloves, your hands could get broken, bruised, bloodied or a serious road rash, depending on how bad the accident is.

Anyone who has had cold fingers and tries typing on a computer or doing something with the hands that needs great dexterity knows how hard it is to type or grip something when the hands are cold. This same concept applies to motorcycles. Motorcycle gloves can keep the hands and fingers warm. This seems so obvious, but many people don't understand the importance of warm hands when you're at the controls of a heavy piece of machinery.

Loss of control of your motorcycle can mean loss of life. Motorcycle gloves can mean the difference between a minor mistake like hitting the wrong button with your numb thumb or causing an accident because you did not signal your intentions correctly. It can mean not applying the brakes smoothly enough to avoid a skid because without the motorcycle gloves you can't feel the amount of pressure on the hand controls. Cold hands mean numb fingers, and numb fingers are an accident waiting to happen. Motorcycle gloves aren't just made to look cool. They are designed with additional material in critical areas and are often double folded and triple stitched to protect you in the event of a crash.

Discussion Area 4: Footwear

Facilitation Questions:

- How does traffic affect you riding a motorcycle?
- How can improper footwear make your ride MORE dangerous?
- What are some characteristics of good riding boots?
- What is the main purpose of motorcycle boots?
- Do you have knowledge of someone who crashed while wearing improper footwear?
- Are there different types of boots? Why? How do they differ?
- How do you choose which type to wear?

Facilitator notes:

Good motorcycle boots offer things regular shoes don't:

- Sturdy closure using straps or Velcro instead of laces, or a device for tucking laces away. Loose laces can get tangled in the foot controls or other parts.

- Non-slip soles so your feet don't go out from under you while supporting your bike or trying to move it.
- Molded ankle and heel protection in case your bike goes down with your leg caught underneath it.
- Reinforcement on the top of the left foot to prevent wear from the shifter.

It's important for your boots to fit right, feel comfortable and keep you comfortable mile after mile. If they're not comfortable, they can become a distraction. And when you're riding a motorcycle, distractions can be dangerous. Comfortable motorcycle riding boots help you stay focused on your ride and the risk factors around you.

While your boots can be stylish and look good, the main purpose of motorcycle boots is to protect your feet and ankles when you ride. A good pair of boots is your primary defense against rocks, bottles, branches, broken tire treads, car parts and other debris that may fly at you or obstruct your path.

A good pair of boots will protect you from wet and cold weather and if you have a motorcycle accident, a pair of well-designed, purpose-built motorcycle boots can give you a fighting chance to avoid serious injuries such as abrasions, bruises, cuts or broken bones in your feet, ankles or shins.

Even if your boots have thick soles, are insulated for cold-weather riding, or they're armored for high-speed or off-road riding, they should still enable you to operate your motorcycle's foot controls easily. They should help you to apply firm, non-slip pressure to your gear shifter and rear brake pedal.

Your boots should suit your riding style -- when, where and how you like to ride.

So, before considering what kind of boots to buy, first consider:

- The kind of riding you enjoy most -- touring, off-road, cruising, etc.
- Your typical daily travel mileage
- Weather conditions in which you ride
- The seasons when you usually ride
- The types of roads or trails you ride on most
- How laid back or aggressively you ride

If your rides also include some walking or you frequently wear your boots indoors throughout the day, you might want to consider motorcycle boots that are:

- Very flexible for walking
- Designed to blend with clothes other than your cycle riding gear

If you ride in all sorts of weather -- including rain -- you'll do yourself a favor by getting boots lined with a breathable, waterproof material such as Gore Tex.

While motorcycle boot designs, features and capabilities overlap quite a bit, you have essentially these four basic boot styles to choose from:

- Touring/commuting/street bike boots
- Motocross/off-road boots
- Sportbike/racing boots
- Cruiser boots

Touring/commuting/street bike boots

These boots are best suited to riding on streets and highways. That's why they're the footwear of choice for:

- Motorcycle touring enthusiasts
- Motorcycle commuters
- Long distance road warriors
- Multi-season, all-weather riders
- Fair weather riders

They're at least tall enough to cover your ankles -- and often taller. They're, form-fitting and comfortable, and they're built to give you ample protection around the most vulnerable areas of your feet, ankles and shins.

Motocross/off-road motorcycle boots

You should wear a sturdy pair of specialized motocross/off-road boots when taking on dirt trails and rough roads. They're almost knee-high and made with leather, metal, high-tech composites and plastics -- all strategically combined to give you a rugged, form-fitting and very protective boot.

Racing/Sportbike boots

Racing/Sportbike boots are designed specifically for

- Fast, technical riding on pavement
- Maximum flexibility to operate and control a racing motorcycle.
- Impact protection and crush resistance racers need in a crash

The relatively smooth soles on racing boots help you to feel and operate your bike's foot controls. And with these boots you'll find more protection on impact-prone areas than with other boots.

Motorcycle cruiser boots

Cruiser boots are built for comfort, style and easy riding. Most cruiser boot designs provide less overall padding and protection than other styles, but you'll find lots of variety in cruiser boots. Avoid overly chunky designs with big toe boxes that inhibit your movement and ability to shift. You will find you have many designs to choose from to match your riding style and personal preferences.

Final test

Before you buy a particular pair of boots, make sure they feel right when you're on your motorcycle or on a bike that simulates your normal riding position. Are they comfortable in the riding position? Can you feel and work the foot controls with ease? Can you walk around comfortably? If you're satisfied with how they feel and perform on and off the bike, then they're the boots for you.

Wrap-Up:

Brief or discuss the following, as lead by students:

- Selecting rider protective gear requires a lot of thought to what?
- What considerations are important when selecting riding gear and PPE?
- What are the consequences of poor choices in riding gear?
- What factors determine rider comfort?

Ask participants how they would apply the knowledge they gained from this discussion to their ride home or their next ride with friends. What opinions or preconceptions about braking have changed?

Distribute copies of the DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Module Evaluation form to all participants and request that they deliver or mail the completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing.

Remind everyone to ride safe, and see you at the next Mentorship Meeting.

DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Feedback Form

Presenter Name:

Date:

Topic/Title:

Unit Number:

Please review each statement below and check the response that closely matches your experience in the Mentorship Module today:

1. Please rate the presenter's performance:

☐ Prepared ☐ Not Prepared ☐ Engaging ☐ Not Engaging ☐ Led Discussion ☐ Lectured

Comments:

2. I was given opportunities to participate in the module's discussion

☐ Never ☐ Only Once ☐ 2-4 Times ☐ Many Times Throughout Discussion

Comments:

3. With regard to my personal riding experiences, this discussion was:

☐ Relevant ☐ Not Relevant ☐ Interesting ☐ Not Interesting

Comments:

4. This discussion topic has provided me with specific learning points that I can use to be a safer, better informed rider

☐ None ☐ One Idea or Fact ☐ 2-4 Learning Points ☐ 5 or More

Comments:

5. I would be interested in participating in other Motorcycle Mentorship Module discussion topics

☐ Never Again ☐ Willing to Try Another Module ☐ Would Like to Do Modules Regularly

Comments:

Thank you for your participation. Please make note of any other suggestions or comments below (continue on the back if needed):

Deliver or mail this completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing. Please do not return this form directly to the Module Presenter.

Resources

Continued Reading:

Bohner, G., Wanke, M. (2002). Attitudes and Attitude Change. East Sussex UK: Psychology Press

Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, Motorcycle Helmets for All Riders:
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AMA Motorcyclist's Glossary:
<http://www.americanmotorcyclist.com/Riding/Street/GettingStarted/Glossary.aspx>

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http://www.everythingmotorcycle.net/protective_riding_accessories/

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http://www.startriding.com/?page_id=159

3 Reasons to Wear Motorcycle Gloves:
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<http://www.dmv.org/how-to-guides/motorcycle-weather-conditions.php>

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Definitions: *(As defined for purposes of this module.)*

PPE: Personal protective equipment





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This module was developed collaboratively through the Defense Safety Oversight Council's (DSOC) Private Motor Vehicle Accident Reduction Task Force (PMV TF), Service Safety Centers, Line Leaders, Military Riders, National Safety Council, and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. The DSOC wishes to recognize the organizations and the Service Men and Women who made this Motorcycle Mentoring Module possible.

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Dr. Ray Ochs, Motorcycle Safety Foundation
Ms. Karen F. Nelson, Concurrent Technologies Corp.
Mr. Robert A. Gardiner, Concurrent Technologies Corp.
Mr. Steve Kurtiak, Global Support Services
Mr. Zack Sionakides, Cape Fox Professional Services

