

Motorcycle Pillion Questions

What must your motorcycle have to make it legal to carry a passenger?

- The bike must have foot rests and a suitable seat for the passenger. (Seat & Feet)

What should you tell a new pillion passenger?

- To wear a legal motorcycle helmet which must be correctly fastened at all times. Appropriate motorcycle attire/clothing is also recommended.
- To straddle the bike facing forwards with their feet on the foot rests at all times (No side saddle).
- To firmly hold onto the grab rails or around the rider's body.
- To follow the rider's lead and lean with the bike when cornering
- To only get on or off the motorcycle when instructed to do so by the rider.
- To not distract the rider, look around behind them or make any signals at any time.

What would you consider adjusting on your motorcycle if you were going to carry a pillion?

- Tyre Pressure – you may need to adjust the tyre pressure according to the manufacturer's handbook to compensate for the extra weight.
- Suspension – the preload setting of the rear shock may need to be adjusted (increased)
- The headlight – will point higher as the additional weight on the back of the bike will cause the front to raise.
- The mirrors – will change position as additional weight on the back of the bike will cause the front to raise.
- Lubrication of chain – the chain will be working harder due to the extra weight, so ensuring the chain is well lubricated helps reduce the friction.

How will a passenger on the pillion affect the motorcycle?

- Slower Acceleration – because of the extra weight
- Increased/Longer Braking Distance – because of the extra weight
- The passenger will push against the rider during braking, especially when braking strongly and this could affect the rider's stability
- Lighter Steering – the extra weight at the back of the bike cause the front of the bike to raise, resulting in less pressure being applied to the front wheel, which in turn makes the steering lighter. As such, the rider will be less stable whilst riding at slow speeds.
- Bike will lean into corners quicker – because of the extra weight.