

The following information on scooter tips and safety has been provided by Berwick Retirement Comox Valley.

Choosing a Scooter

It is a good idea to check with an occupational therapist or physiotherapist to ensure that the model you choose best meets your needs. Shop at a location where you can try out a number of different sizes and models. Things to consider when making a purchase are:

Size and ease of operation; turning ability, wheel size for the terrain you will be travelling on, how easy is it to maneuver into elevators, around hallways, in and out of doors.

Power: how far can you travel before the battery will need re-charging; braking – how quickly does the scooter stop?

Parking/Storage: will it fit in the space you have available? Is it accessible to an electrical outlet?

Comfort: check out the seating, upholstery, backrest, etc.

Scooter Safety

By law, when you are on your scooter you are still considered to be a “pedestrian”, therefore you must obey all rules for pedestrians.

Use sidewalks wherever possible; if there are no sidewalks, travel on the far left side of the road facing traffic.

Cross at pedestrian crosswalks. Wait for traffic to stop before crossing.

Make eye contact with motorists and other pedestrians before crossing their path to confirm their intention to stop or give way to you.

Obey all traffic signs and devices.

Operation of scooters in bicycle lanes is prohibited.

Don't leave your personal belongings (e.g. purse, wallet, identification) unattended in your scooter basket if you are away from your scooter. Always park your scooter in such a way that it does not impede other pedestrians or traffic.

Scooter Courtesy

Slow down when travelling close to other pedestrians, and do not travel too closely behind them.

Keep to the right on sidewalks and politely ask people to let you pass. It is rude just to honk at them.

Do not block the sidewalk with your scooter; if you need to stop, pull to the side to allow others to pass.

Use caution when travelling past store fronts or doorways so that you don't collide with someone exiting a building.

Watch your speed, the more people you are around, the slower you should travel. Remember, the combined weight of you and your scooter can do extensive damage to people and things if you hit them.

Make sure you are insured. Your household policy can cover you for liability if you have an accident on your scooter and are responsible for damage or injury. Check with your insurance agent to make sure you are adequately covered. Car insurance does not cover your scooter.

Be Visible

When you are on your scooter you are at a height disadvantage, so make sure you are as visible as possible:

Wear brightly colored clothing

Have a light on both the front and back of your scooter, as well as reflective strips on the sides, front and back.

Add a fluorescent orange bike flag to the back of your scooter

Be Prepared for the Unexpected

Carry a cell phone with you, or enough change to make calls from a pay telephone. Make sure you carry identification, and a list of emergency phone numbers in case you encounter unexpected circumstances.