

# Recognizing the challenges faced by Older Motorcycle Riders!

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For many motorcyclists, riding is a lifelong passion. As we riders age, however, we face increasing challenges to riding our motorcycle. Understanding these physical challenges and proactively addressing them can help aging riders stay safe. Here, we'll take a look at those challenges faced by older motorcycle enthusiasts to help you, hopefully, stay safer on the roads.

More safety concerns exist for the aging motorcyclists than younger ones. Riding beyond our growing limitations can prove serious or even fatal. Aged riders is defined as a motorcyclists 40 years old or older and the average age of motorcycle fatalities in the United States is 43 years old. Motorcyclists over the age of 40 are the most likely to die in a motorcycle accident, accounting for more than half of all motorcycle fatalities.

Aging brings natural physical changes that can impact motorcycle riding. Reduced strength, flexibility, vision, hearing, reflexes, and stamina are common as we get older. As a result, activities like riding our motorcycles that were once easy become more difficult and hazardous on our motorcycles.

For motorcycle riders, **diminished vision** can make it harder to spot road hazards and read signs. **Hearing loss** may prevent riders from noticing important sounds like emergency sirens. **Reflexes and reaction times** become slower, which can make it harder to [respond quickly](#) to changing road conditions. **Reduced strength and flexibility** can affect their control of the motorcycle. Older riders may struggle with tasks like lifting a heavy bike, looking over their shoulder, or braking hard in an emergency stop.

These are some of the areas of particular concern for aging motorcyclists.

## Vision

Aging causes eyesight changes like experiencing eye floaters which are small specks, threads, or clumps that drift across your vision. Cataract replacements are common now which can lead to a reduced ability to read. With glasses with a progressive prescription, you may still be able to see far but not be able to read your instruments. Night riding can become dangerous. Your pupils get smaller and your retinas change both affecting your ability to see at night. With slower reaction times and impaired vision an aged rider can find night riding especially dangerous

**Reaction and Reflexes** get impaired as we age. Reaction times grow and reflexes slow more and more. In road situations where fast actions are needed, you may not react quickly enough to avoid collisions and other unsafe situations.

Older motorcyclists have slower reaction times and are more vulnerable to everyday riding worries like overheating, dehydration, and variability of blood sugar. All these factors together mean that even though older motorcyclists are generally much more careful than young people, they're also prone to encountering potential limitations and vulnerabilities as they age,

## Physical Changes

Decreased vision, hearing and body strength are common changes. Stamina and growing periods of fatigue can make riding more hazardous. Worsening balance can happen too. Chronic conditions like arthritis, back pain, and neuropathy can hamper riding abilities. Medications taken for these and other age-related conditions may cause side effects like drowsiness, dizziness, or blurred vision that impair riding safety.

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As we age, our bodies can develop other physical conditions requiring medication. High blood pressure and cholesterol, heart conditions, diabetes and other issues that need constant monitoring and medications to manage will affect your riding. Always consult with and follow your doctor's recommendations and follow them.

All these factors together mean that even though older motorcyclists are generally much more careful than young people, they're also face more challenges to riding as they age. There is no reason that, with care, caution and adjustments, we can keep on keeping on and continue riding well into our senior years.