

Safety Instructions for using a mobility or electric powerchair.

Follow these simple instructions in learning how to drive your scooter safely.

- Make sure you turn your key off when getting into or out of your scooter**
If you try and get in or out of your scooter and accidentally touch the throttle while the scooter is still switched on, it can start moving when you are not in a safe place. So always make sure the ignition switch is off if you are not seated in the scooter

- Make sure your seat and tiller are fully engaged in the correct position**
You need to make sure that both the seat and tiller are in a firm fixed position so that they do not move when you are driving the scooter. If not, any stopping or cornering may cause the seat or tiller to move and this could make the scooter unsafe. See the Owner's Manual for how to ensure your seat is in the correct position.

- Accelerate slowly when starting off and slow down when cornering or turning**
Always slow down when you are not going in a straight line. At least half speed is needed for cornering, and when you accelerate from zero, it's best to do it gradually, especially on hill starts.

- Lean forward when attempting a hill start on slopes, and then accelerate slowly**
Hill starts can be the most dangerous operation if you do not lean forward and accelerate gradually, especially when it is a steep hill. Even though there are safety wheels at the back to prevent a roll-over, you must still exercise extreme care when starting off on a hill. If possible, it's always best not to stop on a steep hill so that you don't have to do a hill start (see right).

- Do not attempt to turn when on a steep slope - go straight up or straight down**
Always drive perpendicular to any slope, both up and down. Don't try to turn on a slope, especially going down the hill. If this is unavoidable, turn very slowly and lean sideways towards the top of the hill.

- Stay on the footpath when possible and avoid hazards, especially potholes.**
Remember, the rules for scooter use are the same as for pedestrians. So if there is a suitable footpath, then you must use it. Using a scooter on the road is not illegal, but extreme care must be taken if you need to use the road because of inadequate footpaths. It always pays to write to the local council and point out the problems that you are experiencing with poor footpaths and ramps. They will often act to remedy the situation.

- Approach gutters, ramps and slopes straight on - ie perpendicular to the slope.**
Just as it is important to go straight up and down hills, this is also the case with other sloped surfaces such as gutters and ramps. Always go straight up and down these ramps, avoid cutting the corners, and don't try to go across the slope. (see right)

- Drive slowly in areas where there are pedestrians, and on rough surfaces.**
You should only drive at under 6 kph when in areas where there is heavy pedestrian traffic. This is to protect both you and the pedestrians. Remember, scooters are very quiet and people often do not know that you are approaching them, especially from behind.

- Take care when passing gates, doorways, or driveways - watch for reversing cars**
This is one of the most common causes of accidents – cars reversing out of driveways and not noticing you, and pedestrians stepping out of a shop just as you are driving past. These problems can be partly solved by making sure you have a flag on your scooter, as this raises your visible height.

- Cross roads at pedestrian crossings or traffic lights, when possible.**
If you can access safe pedestrian crossings, this is the best place to cross roads, especially if they are busy. Don't risk getting across a road quickly if you think you need to. It's best to wait for less traffic or choose a crossing or traffic lights.

- Give way to pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles**
You are a pedestrian on wheels. So, like a good pedestrian, make sure you give way to vehicles of all descriptions, and take care with pedestrians, as a collision with any of them will cause both parties to suffer.

- Use a high visibility flag – and watch out for overhanging trees and other obstacles**
Flags give you added height and visibility. While not compulsory at this time, they are nevertheless a valuable piece of safety equipment. And make sure you choose a route that avoids low hanging obstacles like trees (see right).

- In an emergency "LET GO" of the throttle, and use the hand brake if fitted**
The quickest way to stop is to "Let Go" of the throttle, because the scooter has automatic brakes. It's the opposite to a car where you are required to "push hard" on the brake pedal. Practice letting go, not squeezing tight. It's even OK to take your hands right off the steering, *if you are in an emergency*, as the scooter will stop in not much more than its own length from full speed. Just remember not to squeeze if you are in a panic situation. If your scooter is fitted with an emergency brake, use it, but only in emergencies, and definitely not when you are still using the throttle.

- Have your scooter regularly serviced by a Scooters Australia technician**
To keep your scooter in good safe working order, make sure you have your scooter serviced at least once every 12 months, by an authorised Scooters Australia service technician. If you are not close to an authorised dealer, ring our help line and we will investigate alternatives.

- Charge your scooter each day after use for a minimum of 8 hours**
Your batteries will last longer if you charge them after every day the scooter has been used. If you have not used your scooter for more than 2 weeks, then it should be charged.

Remember - the road rules for a scooter or powerchair are the same as for a pedestrian.