Is it an e-bike?

Know before you buy! Know before you ride!

The purpose of this guide is to help parents and consumers make informed decisions before purchasing an e-bike for your family and to provide other safety tips.

An e-bike is defined in Vermont law 23VSA§4(46). Any device that does NOT meet that definition is NOT an e-bike as recognized by Vermont law, regardless of how they are advertised online. While devices may be marketed or look the same online, these differences are important for who can ride them and where they can be legally operated.

✅ It's an e-bike	❌ Nah?
✓ Motor under 750 watts ✓ Real, functional pedals ✓ Motor assist (throttle or pedal) stops at up 28 mph or below* (depending on the class of the e-bike) ✓ Permanent Class 1,2 or 3 e-bike label ✓ Meet the definition of an e-bike under Vermont Law 23VSA§4(46)[i] In Vermont, e-bikes are recognized in Class 1, 2 or 3. VT law[ii] treats e-bikes as a safe and legal bicycle: there are currently no requirements for licenses, registration, plates, or insurance. **What are the 3 e-bike classifications?** **Class 1:** Assists only when the rider is pedaling; motor assist stops at 20 mph. **Class 2:** Can be pedaled or operated solely on its electric motor via the throttle; motor assist stops at 20 mph. **Class 3:** Assists only when the rider is pedaling, motor assist stops at 28 mph; operators of Class 3 e-bikes must be at least 16 years of age.	If a device does not fit into one of the 3 e-bike classifications, it is NOT considered an e-bike in Vermont, regardless of how it is advertised. Be wary of purchasing a device that does not fit into one of Vermont's 3 e-bike classifications. Often referred to as **"e-motos"**, these devices may be an **electric motorcycle, motor-driven cycle, electric dirtbike** or something else.** Some devices, like **electric dirtbikes**, may be restricted to private land or "off road use only". *Use of "e-motos" on public land & public roads without following the proper laws could mean fines and/or impoundment of the device. **motorcycles and motorized bicycles are regulated by law[iii, iv] Motorcycle Law 23 VSA § 4 (18) Motorized bicycle Law 23VSA§4(45)(B)
E-bikes can typically go where bicycles go, but may be restricted by local ordinances.	These devices and other motor vehicles are NOT allowed on sidewalks, bike/ multi-use paths, or trails, unless noted otherwise.

What about e-scooters, e-skateboards, and one-wheels?	Many e-micromobility devices, such as e-scooters, e-skateboards, and "one-wheels" are not specifically defined in Vermont Law. They often fall into a **regulatory "grey area"** regarding where and how they may be operated in public spaces including on the road, sidewalks, paths or trails.

Whether you're walking or riding on roads, sidewalks, or shared-use paths, it is everyone's responsibility to walk/ride safely and respectfully.

Slow down. Move over. Share the road. Drive Well, Vermont.

Recommendations

Wear a helmet, every ride.

Every rider should wear a properly fitted helmet and appropriate safety gear every ride. Consider an **e-bike (NTA 8776) specific helmet** that is designed to be safer and provide more protection at higher speeds.

Develop strong biking skills first

Turning, braking, traffic awareness and judgement can all be learned on a traditional pedal bicycle, before trying out an e-bike. Are they ready? Make sure that all riders are ready and have strong biking skills before moving up to a faster and heavier e-bike.

Class 1 is a great place to start

Class 1 pedal assist e-bikes (without a throttle) handle more like traditional pedal bicycles and only assist up to 20 MPH. Class 1 e-bikes can be a good place to start for teen riders who are ready.

E-bikes and e-scooters are NOT safe for younger kids.

Set family expectations before the first ride

Family agreements can support setting expectations for a safer ride before the first ride. Agreements should include how to ride and consequences for unsafe riding. Download American Academy of Pediatrics sample family agreement.

For more information, please visit: https://www.uvmhealth.org/injuryprevention or

https://www.vermonthighwaysafety.org/

[i] E-bikes 23 V.S.A. § 4 (46)
[ii] E-bikes 23 VSA § 1136a
[iii] Motorcycles 23 VSA § 4 (18)
[iv] Motorized bicycles 23VSA§4(45)(B)