

## Riding in Vietnam

### General riding

- It is the law to wear a helmet.
- It is smart to wear a helmet and preferably one that has an international safety standard rating. There are many very cheap helmets available in Vietnam that is completely useless.
- Ride on the right-hand side of the road.
- Ride with confidence. Indecision is a killer.
- Ride slowly and expect the unexpected at all times.
- Bring your drive license, passport and [Vietnam visa](#) with.
- Your horn is essential, use it when overtaking, going through an intersection or around a blind corner. There is no road rage in Vietnam and your horn won't annoy anyone.
- If it is bigger than you it will win every time. Give way to trucks, buses, cars and large animals as they almost certainly won't give way to you.
- When making a turn into a side street or across traffic, signal with your arms. Do not rely solely on your blinkers as Vietnamese generally don't pay any attention to them!
- While on the road, show all respect and courteousness to the people you meet and pass.
- If someone waves at you, smile and wave back.
- If there is a problem, assume that you are the one who is most likely in the wrong.
- Unless you crash or do something stupid the police will take no interest in you.
- Never, never, never drink and ride.

### While in city traffic

- Do not make any sudden directional or speed changes. Ride consistently and slowly and Vietnamese people will know what you're doing.
- Always keep your eyes forward and slow down at every intersection.
- The law states a maximum of two people per bike.
- Watch for people running red lights.
- The law states that you can't turn right when the light is red.
- If someone is crossing a busy street slow down a bit and go behind them. This enables them to keep moving forward instead of having to stop. This rule applies to other backs and vehicles as well and is the real reason why Vietnamese traffic flows the way it does.
- If crossing a busy intersection then move into the 'down traffic' side of another vehicle. The guy's 'traffic shadow' will buffer you against other traffic and you can then cross no problems. Otherwise do what the Vietnamese do, which is to cross right in the middle of it.
- Remember that larger, moving vehicles can often hide other bikes behind them.
- Remember that if you are behind a larger vehicle, people in front of it can't see you. Do not make any sudden overtaking maneuvers.
- When you're turning make a long, curved turn – never slow down to an 'almost' stop and then turn sharply – you'll be taken out.
- Slow down when passing a school. Children will walk or blindly ride bicycles out on to the road.

- Never, never, never drink and ride.

On the open road or in the country side

- Assume a large vehicle will come around every bend and drive in anticipation of it. Never drive wide!
- The scenery will usually be either beautiful or extremely interesting. Do not daydream.
- If the roads are wet, slow down and keep big distances between you and other obstacles. Be very careful if there is a light shower as this is when the roads are the slipperiest.
- Assume the condition of the road surface can change at any moment.
- Try to avoid driving after dark whenever possible. You are likely to encounter locals riding drunk or with no lights or both!
- Be aware that large animals can appear at any time. Slow down when you see them.
- Do not honk your horn at cattle as this can spook them.
- Do not swerve to avoid chickens or you will hit them every time.
- Never, never, never drink and ride.

Source: [Vietnam Visa on Arrival](#)