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*Safety, Service, & Security*

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## Mini-Motorcycles (Pocket Bikes) - Regulations and Frequently Asked Questions

In response to concerns relating to the increased operation of mini-motorcycles (pocket bikes) on California's streets and highways, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) provides the following guidelines with the intent to enhance public safety on all roadways and to obtain compliance with the California Vehicle Code (VC) ([www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html)).

These mini-motorcycles or "pocket bikes" are not manufactured with a conforming 17-digit vehicle identification number (VIN), indicating the manufacturers intended they be operated on private property (with owner's permission) and not for use on a highway.

Since they are not manufactured with a 17-digit VIN, they cannot get registered as a legal motor vehicle or as an off-highway vehicle, which makes them **illegal for use on the highways or as an off-highway vehicle**.

### *Definition of Highway*

- "Highway" as defined in Section 360 VC "is a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained and open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. Highway includes street."

### **Gasoline-Powered Mini-Motorcycles**

A gasoline-powered mini-motorcycle is a "motor-driven cycle" pursuant to Section 405 VC. As such, it is subject to all vehicle equipment, registration, driver license (M1 endorsement), and helmet requirements stated in the VC.

### **Electric-Powered Mini-Motorcycles**

An electric-powered mini-motorcycle is a "motorized bicycle" pursuant to Section 406(a) VC. As such, it is subject to all vehicle equipment, driver license (M2 endorsement), and helmet requirements stated in the VC.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

*What if my pocket bike's engine is less than 50cc's? I've heard that they are not required to be registered and are street legal.*

This is incorrect information. There is nothing in the vehicle code that allows a motor-driven cycle to be operated on the highway that is less than 50cc's. Any motor-driven cycle less than 150cc's is required to be registered, meet the equipment standards of a motorcycle, and the operator must have an M1 driver license.

*What will happen if I'm stopped by the CHP while riding my pocket bike on the streets?*

If a person is stopped by a CHP officer while operating a mini-motorcycle (pocket bike) on a highway, that person may be cited for no driver's license or lack of proper motorcycle endorsement, unsafe vehicle, or helmet use, and the bike may be impounded which would require tow and storage fees be paid by the violator.

*My pocket bike was advertised as a toy, so wouldn't that make them legal to ride?*

No. These vehicles can travel at high speeds (20 to 50 mph) and **ARE NOT TOYS**. They are motor-driven cycles.

*I thought my pocket bike was a motorized scooter.*

No. Pocket bikes meet the definition of motor-driven cycles and within the definition of "motorized scooter", Section 407.5 VC, it states that ". . . for the purposes of this section, . . . a motor-driven cycle, as defined in Section 405 VC, . . . is not a motorized scooter."

*Where can I legally ride my pocket bike?*

The pocket bikes were manufactured for paved closed circuit racing courses. They may only be operated on private property with the owner's permission.

*Can my 10-year old child ride a motorized scooter?*

The operator of a motorized scooter must be at least 16 years of age even if the motorized scooter is powered by electric energy.

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