

# How to Choose a Scooter



While having a scooter can be very helpful, try to remain independent from your scooter when you can.

With developing technology, lighter scooters can travel farther while using less battery power. The battery is the heaviest part of a scooter. Speak to your retailer about battery pack options.

**Consider power.** Some power sources are located at the steering wheel, while others are located beneath the seat, which may require you to get out of the scooter, bend down and search underneath for the plug.

**Need for speed.** Some scooter batteries are equipped to travel up to five miles, while others can travel up to 24 miles. There are also different speed options, ranging from three to 30 miles per hour. Consider where you will be using this machine.

**Think long-term.** The typical lifespan of a scooter ranges from 10 to 15 years. Most come with a 5-year warranty. Ask your retailer about the upgrade policy. Some retailers will trade in your old scooter or offer buy-back money if you decide to upgrade before your scooter's lifespan has expired.

**Cover yourself.** Some Medicare providers will cover the cost of your scooter, depending on your diagnosis. Check to see if you are eligible. Don't forget to purchase liability insurance. Also, be sure to speak with facility administration before purchasing your scooter. Some homes have a capacity limit on scooters per facility.

**Look at the extras.** Take advantage of extra

features—they will be more useful in the future than you think. A light helps you use your scooter at night, a horn warns people when turning a corner and an umbrella shields you from sun and rain.

**Work out the kinks.** The tires on your scooter should be replaced as frequently as those on a car. Batteries can also be replaced, as it is typically the first part of the scooter to need repair. Handle bar and seat parts are also sold separately, if needed.

**Usage tips.** No one starts off operating a scooter perfectly. Take the time to test out your scooter in a safe place. Always start on the slowest speed and work your way up as necessary. Have someone set up cones in an empty parking lot or outdoor space with a flat surface, and practice turning and maneuvering your scooter around the cones.

Also be aware of poor weather conditions when using your scooter. If it is extremely dark, do not go out unsupervised in case there is an emergency. If it is raining, don't run through puddles; water can damage the electrical circuits and do irreversible damage to your scooter.

Lastly, make sure to do daily exercises and stretches to maintain function in your feet and legs. Sitting too long will cause stiffness in your joints and muscles. Walk short distances if possible, and reserve your scooter for longer distances.

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*Elizabeth Schuda is a freelance writer.*

Choosing a scooter is more than just picking out stylish colors and extra features. There are more technical aspects of the machine, like comfort, width, durability, battery life and adjustability. The first step is to make a list of scooter features that are essential to improving your lifestyle. Then consider the following points.

**Four wheels are better than three.** A four-wheel scooter provides extra stability, especially outdoors, and more evenly distributes wear and tear.

**Watch your weight.** While a heavier scooter is more durable and less likely to tip, it is harder to transport. Keep in mind that it will take a few people to lift a 250-pound scooter into a car.

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