

Choose only a road legal e-bike

Road legal e-bikes in the UK are officially called 'electrically assisted pedal cycles' or EAPCs.

EAPCs don't need to be registered, taxed or insured, and anyone aged 14 or over can ride one under the same rules as riding a normal bicycle.

But to qualify as a road legal EAPC, the e-bike must comply with strict official rules, as set out below.

Use this 3-point checklist to work out if an electrically-powered cycle is an EAPC.



If you can answer 'yes' to **ALL three questions**, it's an 'electrically assisted pedal cycle' (EAPC), or road legal e-bike.

If the answer to any question is **no**, the vehicle is classed as an e-motorcycle or e-scooter, and if it can be used legally on road at all this will only be possible when additional official requirements are met, as set out opposite.

	E-bike (EAPC)
1. Does it have pedals, which you need to turn to make it go?	Yes ✓ An e-bike must have working pedals and must normally be 'pedal assisted' - you need to turn the pedals to activate the electric motor assistance*.
2. Is the power of the motor 250 W or less?	Yes ✓ EAPCs must have a rated motor power of 250 W or less.
3. Does the electric assist cut out at 15.5 mph?	Yes ✓ An e-bike motor must not assist the rider when travelling at over 15.5 mph.

* EAPCs are permitted to have a "walk assist" mode, operated by a button or throttle-type control, in which the motor can operate without the rider pedalling, but this can operate only at walking pace (up to 4 mph).

Motor operation without pedalling at above 4 mph is permitted for an EAPC only if it was sold before 2016 or if it has undergone an official DVLA inspection for "type approval". Type approval must be obtained by the seller before sale.

E-bikes and e-scooters

What is road legal?

This guidance was developed for the UK cycle industry by the Bicycle Association with the support of the Association of Cycle Traders.



	Road legal e-bike (EAPC)	Illegal e-bike or e-motorcycle	Road legal e-moped or e-motorcycle	E-scooter (privately owned)	E-scooter (rental trial scheme)
Can I ride it legally on a public road?	Yes You must be 14 years of age or over, but apart from that, EAPCs can be ridden under the same rules as non-electric pedal cycles.	No These vehicles do not qualify as EAPCs and generally do not satisfy the official technical requirements to be registered as road legal mopeds or motorbikes. Without registration, they cannot be used legally on road. If you use such a vehicle illegally, you could face a fine and penalty points on your licence, and the vehicle could be impounded. You are also unlikely to be covered by any insurance.	Yes It will need to be registered, taxed and insured. You must have a driving licence and wear an approved motorbike helmet.	No It is currently illegal to ride a privately-owned e-scooter on public roads, pavements or cycle lanes in the UK. If you use an e-scooter illegally, you could face a fine and penalty points on your licence, and the e-scooter could be impounded. You are also unlikely to be covered by any insurance.	Yes You can hire a rental e-scooter and use it legally on roads and cycle paths only in UK locations where these are being trialled.
Do I need a UK driving licence?	No	Not applicable Cannot be ridden legally on public roads.	Yes You need a UK licence suitable for the category of moped or motorcycle you're riding.	Not applicable Cannot be ridden legally on public roads.	Yes To hire a rental e-scooter you need a full or provisional UK licence, with category Q entitlement.
Is it compulsory to wear a helmet?	No	Not applicable Cannot be ridden legally on public roads.	Yes You must wear an approved motorbike helmet.	Not applicable Cannot be ridden legally on public roads.	No
Do I need vehicle registration, road tax and insurance?	No	All would be needed for legal use but cannot usually be obtained Typically these vehicles do not meet the technical requirements for registration as a road legal moped or motorbike. Without registration, they cannot be used legally.	Yes	All would be needed for legal use but cannot be obtained E-scooters cannot meet the technical requirements for registration as a road legal vehicle. Without registration, they cannot be used legally on public roads.	No As the user you don't need to register, tax or insure a rental e-scooter. These aspects are all handled by the rental operator under the Government's special rules for the e-scooter rental trials.
Do I need to be 16+ years old?	No You can ride an EAPC from age 14.	Not applicable Cannot be ridden legally on public roads.	Yes You need a UK license suitable for the category of moped or motorcycle you're riding	Not applicable Cannot be ridden legally on public roads.	Yes You need a full or provisional UK driving licence to hire a rental e-scooter. Some companies require riders to be 18+.