

Do I Need Walkie-talkies When Motorcycling?

When riding in groups, you need to chat and keep in contact. But talking while riding is like finding a needle in a haystack. You can expect that all your conversations will be lost in the wind. So how else can riders talk to each other?

Using a walkie-talkie is a cost-effective way to stay in touch with your riding group or pillion passenger. Even when you are far apart, a walkie-talkie with a good signal range can still support clear communication.

Why do you need a walkie-talkie when motorcycling?



Communicating with a group of riders when motorcycling can prove impossible because other riders may be far away from you. And even when they are not, noise makes talking impractical.

You can use mobile phones, but they are too expensive for non-top communication. On the other hand, walkie-talkies are more practical and less expensive. You don't need to make any payments besides the upfront payment for the walkie-talkie.

When connected to a headset, you can talk to other riders or a pillion passenger who's also using a walkie-talkie. You can also communicate with a base station using handhelds.

What to look out for in walkie-talkies for motorcycling



1. Range

The distance between you and other riders will often be significant because motorcycles travel fast. When one rider is stuck on the road, it will increase the communication distance. Hence, range is a critical factor when choosing a walkie-talkie for your motorcycle.

You need a two-way radio with a frequency that can travel long distances, over 10 miles. This will allow you to communicate while on the road effectively.

2. Two-way radio headset support

You need to pay full attention to the road while riding. So, your eyes will be on the road, and both hands on the handlebars. At the same time, you need to communicate, which is why you need headsets.

A two-way radio headset lets you use your radio hands-free. Before purchasing a walkie-talkie, look for one that is compatible with a headset. Also, ensure that the headset fits well into your helmet.

3. Two-way radio battery life

You might be on the road for hours, and you will need to communicate. Hence, you need a two-way radio that has a long battery life.

Still, there might be situations where you need to recharge your walkie-talkie, but finding a charging station is difficult. You will also need to delay your journey to do so. Thus, you should also seek walkie-talkie models with replaceable AA batteries. This way, you can carry a battery pack along with you.

4. Access to NOAA Weather channels

Keeping track of the weather situation as you ride can save you the pain of getting caught up in a rainstorm. You can achieve this through NOAA channels.

The [NOAA \(National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration\)](#) is a government agency that broadcasts weather reports. Some walkie-talkie models incorporate these weather channels.

Choosing a walkie-talkie that features NOAA channels will keep you updated on every weather change. Hence, you can combat the unpredictability of the weather.

5. Speaker quality

Although a walkie-talkie can help you communicate, you need a quality speaker to communicate loud and clear. A two-way radio with poor speaker quality will make communication difficult. It can also be very frustrating. Thus, you need a radio with excellent speaker quality to carry your message.

6. Water & Dust proof

Walkie-talkies that have [dust and water protection](#) are the ideal choice for motorcycling. Your walkie-talkie might come into contact with water or dust. If it has no protection, the elements will destroy it. To check whether the two-way radio is dust- and water-resistant, look for an IP rating.

The IP rating is usually two digits (IPxx). The first digit is for dust ingress (0-6), while the second is for water ingress (0-8). The higher the number, the higher the protection.

VHF or UHF walkie-talkies? Which is better for motorcycling?

When motorcycling with a group of riders, you will often have to communicate over a long distance. Hence, you need a walkie-talkie with a long range of coverage.

VHF walkie-talkie signals can travel longer distances than UHF walkie-talkie signals. However, obstructions like trees and buildings can block VHF frequencies. But, since there are fewer obstructions on the highway, you should be able to communicate well with a VHF transceiver.

MURS (Multi-Use Radio Service) uses channels in the 151–154 MHz frequency range. The MURS walkie-talkie is a license-free VHF radio used in the U.S. So you can consider the MURS radio if you prefer a license-free VHF two-way radio.

Regardless, UHF-licensed walkie-talkies still offer long-range coverage. Getting an [Ofcom](#) license in the UK will allow you to use licensable frequencies that have a longer range. For US riders, the GMRS-licensed walkie-talkie provides up to 5 watts of power, offering a longer range.

How to use a walkie-talkie when motorcycling

You can use a walkie-talkie to talk to another rider or a group of riders. But you all need to operate on the same frequency channel to communicate.

Also, other users will need to set their walkie-talkies to the same privacy code to communicate with you if you use one.

Another way to use walkie-talkies is to splice them into a motorcycle intercom system. But different intercom brands cannot communicate with each other. Hence, riders using different brands will be unable to talk to each other.

To resolve this problem, you can use a walkie-talkie as an intermediary. You can all communicate when you connect your walkie-talkie to your intercom system.

This works because when you talk to your Bluetooth intercom system, your Bluetooth hub receives it. The Bluetooth hub will send your transmission to your two-way radio.

The other rider's Bluetooth hub will pick up the signal. Then, the Bluetooth hub will transmit it to their intercom system, and they can hear you.

Unfortunately, you cannot connect all Bluetooth intercom systems to a two-way radio. Hence, you need to find brands you can connect to your walkie-talkie.

Final words

You can use walkie-talkies to talk to other riders and communicate with a base station or a pillion passenger. You can communicate hands-free over a long range when connected to a headset. A group of riders with different Bluetooth intercom brands can also use two-way radios to communicate.

When selecting a walkie-talkie, look for one with long-range, excellent battery life, and headset support. Other things to consider are speaker quality, availability of NOAA channels, and IP rating.

