

Cleveland's E-scooters: What you need to know

You've probably seen the new-to-Cleveland electric scooters zipping along city streets or parked on sidewalks in downtown and several other neighborhoods. The city recently approved electric scooters from vendors such as Bird, Lime and Spin for a six-month trial period. To use a scooter, you simply need to download an app on your smart phone and set up an account. Pricing varies, but most charge a small "undocking" fee and a per-minute rate until you end your ride.

Cleveland also revised its ordinances that govern electric scooters, sometimes called "shared mobility devices," and how they should be used. Here are the rules of the road:

- E-scooters may not be used on streets with a posted speed limit over 35 mph, unless in designated bike lanes. You should not use the scooters on the sidewalk. The scooter's maximum speed is electronically set at 12 mph.
- E-scooters may only be used within Cleveland city limits and are "geo-fenced," that is, digitally prevented from traveling outside the city boundaries.
- E-scooters are only available for use between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., so don't get stuck.
- E-scooters must be parked upright and not block pedestrian walkways or doorways. Some vendors offer incentives to park in designated striped areas.
- Car drivers may pass scooters as they would a bike, leaving at least three feet clearance.
- Vendors must provide a helmet if you ask for one, but you may have to pay shipping.

Although Cleveland requires each vendor to obtain liability insurance, it will not cover you if you cause an accident. Your automobile insurance or homeowner's insurance may also not provide coverage. Check it out and remember to ride carefully and share the road.

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