



## **The case for Motor Scooter usage in America: Waste in Vehicular Transportation**

*Style, economy, practicality -- the motor scooter deserves to be considered by anyone with frequent commuting to do.*

([PRWEB](#)) December 27, 2005 -- The vast bulk of energy used in vehicles is wasted! Public transportation entirely aside, the private vehicle transportation of people from one location to another could be accomplished using only a few percent of the fuel expenditure generally used to accomplish this in the US. This waste stems primarily from two causes:

1. How much extraneous and unnecessary weight we choose to shunt about (much too much).
2. What we do with the kinetic energy once it a vehicle is put in motion (we simply throw it away).

The second of these can only be solved with a fundamental change in fuels and braking design. The first, on the other hand, is something solvable to a large extent by the use of lighter, more efficient vehicles – motor scooters, for example.

Every cruising SUV or minivan driven by a single driver involves repeatedly accelerating thousands of pounds of steel and sundry other materials in order to convey its 100-300 lb. driver from point A to point B. The 10 (plus or minus) miles per gallon common to such vehicles is only finally causing consternation in some after gasoline in the US topped \$3 a gallon.

### The Superior Scooter Ratio

A scooter, on the other hand, commonly weighs less than its driver – certainly less than its driver and a passenger, and gets probably something in excess of 80 miles per gallon (See Scooter Economy). Reducing fuel usage by nearly a factor of 10 is a very significant savings in natural resources and emissions, as well as cost (Besides -- they're cute).

### Scooter Safety

Safety is always an issue but scooters have some significant advantages relative to motorcycles. See Motor Scooter Advantages.

### A World Phenomenon

In Asia and Europe, gas and electric powered scooters fill the streets. They have become the predominant form of transportation in many places. It is really only in America that large, heavy automobiles are used for even the smallest errands. Scooters have several advantages over cars and motorcycles in both efficiency and convenience, but the American commuter has yet to embrace these advantages.

## Economy

Fuel prices in Europe have always been higher than in the U.S. and have therefore always been more of a factor there. Recently, though, with gasoline exceeding \$3 a gallon, this factor is gaining recognition even on the streets of America. Filling the 1 1/2 gallon gas tank of most scooters is barely significant in contrast with that of gassing up an SUV, minivan, or even a car, and the other peripheral costs of keeping scooters in running order are also negligible compared to automobiles. Even the higher end scooters on the market today are dramatically less expensive than motorcycles and economy cars. See Scooter Economy. Insurance requirements for scooters are usually more flexible than equivalent liability coverage for cars and motorcycles as scooters simply aren't capable of inflicting damage on the same scale as cars and even motorcycles.

## Ease of Use

With the manual gearing of motorcycles -- clutch in the left hand and the gear shift operated by foot -- the learning curve for riding a motorcycle is daunting for many. Nearly all modern scooters, on the other hand, use stepless automatic transmissions which require no attention at all from the driver -- traffic, throttle and brake are the only concerns of a scooter driver. Commuting, shopping (short of multiple 12 packs and watermelons), visiting, most simple errands lend themselves easily to a scooter solution.

## Cargo Storage

Unlike most motorcycles, scooters generally have a lockable storage compartment under the seat. My TANK also has a lockable glove box in the front and a lockable factory "trunk" that bolts onto the storage rack in back. With room for picnic blanket, helmets, jackets, chessboard, emergency frisbee, and an ever-useful jar of pickled onions, one is equipped for the unexpected contingency, and, as compartments are lockable, one needn't carry one's equipment into and out of department stores, airport terminals, and pubs guarded by humourless unimaginative goons named Eustace. See Motor Scooter Cargo Storage Issues

## Comfort

Many find scooters more comfortable than motorcycles, at least the small ones. The simple step-in step-out feature also makes them more convenient, especially when one has a large trunk attached over which one would otherwise have to swing one's leg.

## Scooter Storage and Parking

Bollards only block cars -- it's as though the parking lot were reserved for us

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Depending upon local regulations, it may be legal to park scooters in city-sponsored bicycle racks or secured with chains to trees or bollards on the sidewalk. Thus scooter owners can frequently find suitable parking almost anywhere and are less likely to need to walk long distances to and from parking locations. Also, as scooters can maintain city traffic speeds, there does not exist the velocity differential which separates vehicular traffic and bicycles or pedestrians.

## Motorscooter/Motorcycle Safety Issues

An expert and experienced motorcycle rider is so comfortable with the complex gear-shifting tasks of his/her vehicle that they probably pose no serious distraction hazards and safety issues. However, this is a level of skill

acquired only after much practice. During that practice time required to achieve that skill level, that driver is on the road, fumbling to a greater or lesser extent with the gearing. This fact in itself renders the motorcycle more dangerous to drive, and less likely to be driven on a regular basis by an overwhelming number of people. Driving a motorscooter, on the other hand, requires very little attention from its driver from the very first day of operation. It is much easier to and safer to become an expert and experienced motorscooter rider than a motorcyclist.

Much of the engine and mechanism of a motorcycle is exposed, both exposing the driver to potential contact with hot engine parts and exposing the engine itself to sun, rain, wind, mud, and other environmental hazards such as geese pecking at wires, fuel lines and, cables (yes -- personal experience). The scooter, enclosed with panels as it is, not only minimizes these problems, but presents a cleaner more aesthetic image to the onlooker. The scooter image differs greatly from that of the motorcycle -- in many ways they are antitheses (see motorscooter image).

Another significant advantage of the scooter is the fact that one's legs which, on a motorcycle straddle the vehicle, rest on the floor of the scooter and are entirely within the body of the machine. Unlike on a motorcycle, they are not the first thing to be struck in the event of a collision and one's leg does not necessarily end up underneath the vehicle if it falls over. Of course, injury is still a danger not to be discounted, but scooters have some advantages.

From: <http://abacus-es.net/motorscooter>

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