# Do you need a motorcycle licence to rent a scooter in Greece?

## Understanding licence requirements for scooter hire in Santorini

If you are planning a trip to Santorini and thinking about renting a scooter, the first question that usually comes to mind is: do you need a motorcycle licence to rent a scooter in Greece? The short answer is that it depends on the scooter's engine size. For small scooters, often called mopeds, a standard car driving licence can be enough. For larger scooters, a proper motorcycle licence is required. This article explains the rules clearly, so you know what to expect when you look into santorini scooter hire.

Greek law treats scooters and motorcycles differently based on their engine capacity and maximum speed. A moped, which typically has an engine of 50cc or less and a top speed of around 45 km/h, can be driven with a category AM licence. In most European countries, that licence is included in a standard car driving licence (category B). So if you hold a valid car licence from an EU country, you can legally ride a 50cc scooter in Greece without needing a separate motorcycle test. For visitors from outside the EU, the situation may be different, and you should check if your home licence is recognised or if you need an International Driving Permit (IDP).

For scooters larger than 50cc, such as 125cc or more, you need a full motorcycle licence. The licence categories are A1 (light motorcycle up to 125cc), A2 (motorcycle up to 35kW), and A (unrestricted). Without one of these, you cannot legally hire or ride a bigger scooter. Rental companies in Santorini, including easyride-santorini.com, will check your licence before handing over the keys. They have a legal duty to ensure you are properly licensed, and they face penalties if they rent to someone who is not.

### What about an International Driving Permit?

An International Driving Permit (IDP) is a translation of your domestic driving licence. It is not a licence in itself. For visitors from countries outside the EU, an IDP is often required alongside your home licence to rent any motor vehicle in Greece. This applies to cars, scooters, and ATVs. Even if your home licence already shows the categories, the IDP helps the rental company and local authorities read the information. It is a good idea to get an IDP before you travel, as you cannot obtain one in Greece. Check with your national motoring organisation or equivalent authority.

For travellers from the United States, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, the general recommendation is to carry an IDP. However, some rental companies may accept a valid car

licence alone for a 50cc scooter, especially if you are from a country where the licence categories are similar. But this is not guaranteed, and local police may have a different view. To avoid any hassle, the safest approach is to bring both your home licence and an IDP. The same applies if you are from a non-EU European country.

### Age requirements for scooter hire

Age is another factor. In Greece, you must be at least 18 years old to hold an AM licence and ride a 50cc scooter. For larger scooters, the minimum age matches the licence category: 16 for A1, 18 for A2, and 20 for A (or 24 if you go through direct access). Rental companies may set their own minimum age, often 21 or 25, for insurance reasons. Always check the age policy of the specific hire company. If you are under 21, you might still be able to rent a 50cc scooter, but you may need to pay a young driver supplement.

For anyone planning santorini scooter hire, knowing these age and licence rules helps you choose the right vehicle. If you only have a car licence and no motorcycle licence, a 50cc moped is your option. If you want something with more power, you will need to have taken and passed a motorcycle test. There is no legal way around this in Greece; the police do check, and riding without the correct licence can lead to fines, impoundment of the vehicle, and invalidation of your travel insurance.

### What to expect at the rental counter

When you visit a rental outlet in Santorini, the staff will ask to see your driving licence. They will check the categories printed on it. For a 50cc scooter, they look for category B (car) or AM. For anything bigger, they look for A1, A2, or A. They may also ask for your passport or ID card, and they will take a copy for their records. Some companies require a deposit or a credit card pre-authorisation. The process is straightforward, but it helps to have your documents ready and to know what you are eligible for.

One common mistake is assuming that a scooter with pedals (a motorised bicycle) is always a moped. In Greece, the legal definition is based on engine size and speed, not appearance. A scooter that looks like a bicycle but has an engine above 50cc is treated as a motorcycle. So check the vehicle's registration document or ask the rental company directly. They must tell you the engine capacity and the licence required. If they say anything vague, ask for clarification.

### Riding without a licence: the risks

Driving without a valid licence is a criminal offence in Greece. If you are caught, you could face a fine of up to 200 euros or more, and your vehicle may be confiscated. Your insurance will not cover you, so any accident becomes your personal financial responsibility. This can be very

expensive, especially if you cause damage to property or injure someone. The legal process can also delay your travel plans significantly. It is simply not worth the risk.

If you are an experienced motorcyclist from home but your licence does not cover the category you want to ride in Greece, you cannot rely on experience alone. The law is strict. However, if you hold a valid motorcycle licence from your home country that is recognised in Greece, you are good to go. For most EU countries, mutual recognition applies. For non-EU countries, check with the Greek consulate or the rental company beforehand.

### Practical tips for a smooth hire

- Bring your full, unexpired driving licence. If it is a paper licence or has any restrictions, take supporting documents.
- Get an International Driving Permit if you are from outside the EU. It costs little and saves trouble.
- Know the engine size you are allowed to ride. A 50cc scooter is fine with a car licence; larger machines need a motorcycle licence.
- Check the rental company's age policy. Some require you to be 21 or older, even for a 50cc scooter.
- Ask about insurance coverage. Third-party liability is the minimum, but consider extra cover for damage or theft.

These steps are simple but they prevent misunderstandings. When you research santorini scooter hire, look for companies that clearly state their licence requirements. Reputable operators, such as easyride-santorini.com, will have this information on their website or will explain it when you contact them. They want you to have a good experience, and that starts with legal and safe riding.

### Santorini roads and what to expect

Santorini is a small island, but its roads can be challenging. The terrain is hilly, with steep inclines and narrow streets in villages like Pyrgos and Perissa. Many roads have sharp bends and uneven surfaces. A 50cc scooter has limited power for climbing steep hills, especially with two people. If you plan to carry a passenger or explore the mountainous parts of the island, consider whether a 50cc scooter is adequate. A larger scooter would be better, but that requires a motorcycle licence.

Weather also plays a role. The summer sun is intense, and sudden gusts of wind can affect stability. Good judgment and defensive riding are essential. If you are not comfortable on two wheels, a four-wheeled ATV might be a better choice. Many rental companies offer those too,

and they often require only a car licence for the smaller models. Again, check the specific licence rules for ATVs, as they are classified differently in Greece.

### Final practicalities

To sum up the licence question: you do not need a motorcycle licence to rent a 50cc scooter in Greece if you hold a valid car driving licence (category B) from an EU country or a recognised non-EU licence with an IDP. For anything larger, you need the appropriate motorcycle licence. The rules exist for safety and legal clarity. Ignoring them can lead to serious consequences.

Before you travel, double-check the latest regulations because laws can change. Contact the Greek embassy or consulate in your country, or look at official government websites. The rental company can also advise, but they are not a legal authority. When you are ready to book, a site like easyride-santorini.com can help you find the right vehicle for your licence and give you local guidance on routes and sights. Enjoy your time on the island, and ride safely.