



Geared 50cc mopeds make up a tiny proportion of the motorcycle market. But if you're sixteen and would rather walk 100 miles than ride a scooter, then they are an option. Geared 50s look just like full-size bikes, but they are restricted to 28mph, just like the scooters, so don't expect motorcycle performance. Reiju and Aprilia offer cool looking 50cc supermotos, while the retro Mash Roadstar 50 is as likely to appeal to 50-somethings as sixteeners. Lexmoto's Hunter is the budget option.



Price

At £1100, the Hunter is by far the cheapest geared 50 you can buy, which is in the Lexmoto tradition of undercutting just about everyone else. If you're really on a budget, it is possible to save a bit more by buying a 50cc scooter, but that's not really the point.

Power and torque

Right then, power hounds, brace yourselves, because the Hunter musters just 2.9bhp at 8500rpm and 1.9lb ft. That's what you'd expect from a moped, but it's still not a lot. Either way, acceleration is feeble, probably slower than that of a 50cc scooter because the engine has to claw its way up through the rev range after every gear shift. Getting away from red lights in heavy traffic can be a fraught experience, and I thought twice about filtering – on a 125, you can nip to the front of the queue and be away when the lights change, but not on this.

Just for the hell of it, I rode the Hunter on a 50-mile round trip from Lexmoto's Exeter base to the top of Dartmoor and back. We were down to first gear and 12mph on the steepest hills, but the little 50 did barrel down the other side at an indicated 45! Exciting stuff.



Engine and transmission

If the Hunter's engine looks familiar, that's because it's a distant relative of the ex-Honda step-through motor, of which millions have been made all over the world. This latest (Chinese) version has an element of electronic control for the carb and a lambda sensor to reduce emissions. But it's basically very low tech for a brand new bike, with a fuel tap, good old-fashioned choke and even a kickstart in addition to the electric. And while you do get gears, there are just four of them.

Economy

We don't have any fuel figures for the Hunter, but as a rule mopeds are no more frugal than 125s, as their tiny little motors are working so hard all the time. Still, I'd expect around 100mpg from this one.



Handling, suspension, chassis and weight

In many ways, the Hunter has a very retro (all right, old fashioned) spec. We've already mentioned the choke, fuel tap and four-speed box, but check out the drum rear brake and twin rear shocks. The shocks and front forks are pretty basic, though the shocks have pre-load adjustment and the suspension copes pretty well. After all, this is a moped which weighs just 95kg and has minimal performance. Within those limitations, the Hunter handles pretty well, and the Yuangxing tyres grip fine in the dry.

Brakes

Euro 4 rules stipulate that 125s have to have ABS or linked brakes, but 50s are still permitted to use the old-time sort. Hence the Hunter's unlinked front disc and rod-operated rear drum. Again, given the bike's performance, they're fine.



Comfort

Surprisingly good. One nice thing about the Hunter is that it looks and feels more like a 125 than a 50. You sit upright on a comfy, lowish seat in a natural riding position, and I didn't feel cramped, though if you're six-foot plus, try one first. What you don't have is the weather protection of a scooter.



Equipment

This bike costs less than the average BMW option pack, so it's not going to be laden with equipment. There is a luggage rack (topbox from around £30 extra), alloy wheels, a rev counter...and that's about it.

Styling

Do you remember the 1980s? Maybe even the '70s? That's what the Hunter evokes. It's a straightforward naked roadster with a round headlight and twin shocks – looks quite neat, actually, though the inclined engine with its exposed air filter detracts a bit.



Verdict

For any geared 50 to make sense, you have to be sixteen and really, really not want a scooter. They are scarily slow away from the lights, but within those constraints, the Lexmoto makes for a good budget option. Otherwise, save until you're seventeen and buy a one-year-old 125.

Three things I loved about the Lexmoto Hunter...

- Looks and feels like a 125
- Comfy to ride
- The price

Three things that I didn't...

- Feeble performance (endemic to 50s)
- Vibes at high revs
- Basic spec

Lexmoto Hunter 50 specification

Type	Air cooled 2-valve SOHC single
Capacity	49cc
Max power	2.9bhp @ 8500rpm
Max torque	1.9lb ft @ 6500rpm
Fuel system	Carburettor with lambda sensor
Transmission	4-speed
Frame	Tubular steel
Front tyre	2.75-18
Rear tyre	90/90-18
Front suspension	Telescopic forks, non-adj
Rear suspension	Twin shocks, pre-load adj
Brakes	Front disc, rear drum, unlinked
Instrument display	Speedo, rev counter, fuel gauge, odometer
Length	2070mm
Width	745mm
Height	1095mm
Seat Height	740mm
Wheelbase	1295mm
Weight	96kg
Fuel tank	12 litres
Emissions	Euro 4
Standard equipment	Luggage rack, alloy wheels

To insure this bike, click here (<https://quotes.bennetts.co.uk/Secure/index.aspx?TGT=F>)

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