



This is the cheapest maxi-scooter you can buy, and that's what you would expect from Lexmoto, the best-selling Chinese brand of them all. The Chieftain (named after the Exeter Chiefs rugby team) is its first tilt at the maxi-scooter market. 'Maxis' have a longer wheelbase than traditional scoots, giving the rider more space to stretch out plus extra luggage and pillion space – that's the theory.



## Price

At £1999.99 (all right, £2000) the Chieftain costs a whopping £900 less than a Honda PCX and saves nearly £1700 over a Suzuki Burgman 125. It doesn't have the build quality, power or (probably) resale value of either of those rivals, but it's still a bargain.

## Power and torque

There's a puzzling thing here. This is Lexmoto's most expensive, flagship scooter, and at 146kg it weighs more than the average small 125 scooter. Yet they've given it a fairly basic engine which doesn't produce much power. Acceleration is acceptable in town, but lags behind some 125cc scooters. The Chieftain will wind up to an indicated 55-65mph on the flat, but the engine's clearly working hard most of the time. It's actually typical budget 125 performance, but we'd expect more from a supposedly upmarket bike.



### Engine and transmission

As a budget scooter, the Chieftain has a budget engine, and Lexmoto says a more potent power unit would add too much to the price, which is clearly a selling point. As it is, the scooter's motor is a simple fan-cooled two-valve unit offering 7.7bhp at 7300rpm – by comparison a Honda PCX has 11.7bhp. It is fuel injected, but so are all other new 125s now, to pass Euro 4 emissions regulations. At least the twist & go transmission works well, so it's an easy two-wheeler to ride.



## **Economy**

We don't have official fuel figures for the Chieftain, but most 125cc scooters can average 90-100mpg if not ridden flat out all the time. The Lexmoto should manage that, given more gentle use. It's also got a usefully large 13-litre fuel tank, enough for many days of commuting.

## **Handling, suspension, chassis and weight**

One of the benefits of maxi-scooters over their smaller brethren is the long wheelbase and often bigger wheels into the bargain, giving greater stability. The Chieftain is no exception – its 14-inch front and 13-inch rear tyres grip the tarmac well (at least in the dry) and what it loses in short wheelbase agility, it gains in stable progress round corners and on dual-carriageways. The suspension is fairly basic, but the twin rear shocks do have five position pre-load adjustment, good news if you're planning to carry a passenger. The Chieftain might be heavier than a typical 125cc scoot, but carries its weight low down, so this isn't a problem.



## Brakes

Another Euro 4 requirement for 125s is that front and rear brakes are linked if they don't have ABS, which most don't. The Lexmoto follows standard practice of having the left-hand lever control both front and rear discs. It's a good system, easily strong enough for the scooter's performance.

## Comfort

Maxi-scooters usually have enough space for a proper feet-forward riding position, but despite its long wheelbase, the Chieftain doesn't. It's a glaring omission, as this is a key attraction of the type. The seat's also very wide, which put me on tip-toes (30-inch legs) while waiting at the lights. The short screen does keep some of the wind off though, and pillions look like they get a better deal – big seat, substantial backrest and proper fold-out footpegs.



## Equipment

The most vital piece of equipment on any scooter is its luggage room, and here the Chieftain scores. There's enough room under the seat for a full-face lid, with plenty to spare, and two lockable cubbies are in the front apron. It's just a pity that the seat only hinges up to 45 degrees, making access awkward – Lexmoto says a better hinge is on the way. That apart, the dash is pretty comprehensive and later bikes will also have a USB port.



## Styling

The Chieftain looks pretty imposing in a maxi-scooter sort of way, backed up by look-at-me blue and white graphics – the alternative is red and grey. So it's got some presence on the road, which could be just the thing if you don't like the idea of being perched on a tiddly scooter.

## Verdict

I can forgive the Chieftain its average performance, because it's so much cheaper than the opposition, but the lack of room to stretch out – the whole point of a maxi-scooter – is a tad disappointing. It's a straight choice between this and a two-year-old Burgman.

## Three things I loved about the Lexmoto Chieftain...

- Looks imposing
- Decent luggage room
- Low price

## Three things that I didn't...

- Lacklustre performance
- Budget engine

- No feet-forward position



### Lexmoto Chieftain 125 (2018) Specification

Engine and Transmission	
Type	Air cooled 2-valve SOHC single
Capacity	125cc
Max power	7.7bhp @7300rpm
Fuel system	Electronic injection
Transmission	CVT belt drive
Chassis	

Frame	Pressed steel
Front tyre	120/80-14
Rear tyre	130/60-13
Front suspension	Telescopic forks, non-adj
Rear suspension	Twin shocks, pre-load adj
Brakes	Linked system, discs front and rear
Instrument display	Speedo, rev counter, fuel gauge, clock, mileometer, trip
Dimensions and weights	
Length	2205mm
Width	770mm
Height	1260mm
Seat Height	780mm
Wheelbase	1615mm
Weight	146kg
Fuel tank	13 litres
Emissions	Euro 4
Standard equipment	Alloy wheels, linked brakes, underseat space