

# The I-Spy Book of Moroccan Highways and Byways

## Pedestrians:

### Random roadside nationals:

These can and will be encountered just about anywhere and in any environment. There is no score zone as you will get bored very quickly!

### Roadside Vendors:

All suicidal: **One Point** for each of the following species seen:

- ❖ Geode Sellers (primarily a mountain species)
- ❖ Fossil Fanatics
- ❖ Walnut Boys (a rare localised form)
- ❖ Pottery Peddlers
- ❖ Jewellery Janglers
- ❖ Ski Suppliers (a high altitudinal migrant)

An **extra point** is available **per day** for not running down any of the above. NB: Geode Sellers are particularly persistent and often run to the middle of the road as you round a bend. You have been warned!

**Tour guides:** Relatively scarce but occasionally seen in more remote areas.

- ❖ **Three points** for not 'being taken out in the desert' for near mythical avifauna
- ❖ If you give in then **two points** for haggling for a 'if we see it' and a 'if we don't price'



### Hitch Hikers:

Everyone wants a lift: **One point per day** for resisting politely

### Wheelbarrows and hand barrow handlers:

- ❖ **One point** each time that braking occurs due to the close proximity of a random wheeled barrow.
- ❖ **One point** for causing vendor of hand barrow to lose an orange or two.

### School Children:

Surprisingly common at all times of day. Tends to form volatile flocks.

**Three points** per flock encountered. An **extra point** is available **per day** for not running down any of the little blighters.

### Wild Desert Children:

Big smiles with outstretched palms. Can be bribed with pencils, paper and chocolate.

**One point per day** for not handing over any Dirhams.

## Livestock and Wildlife:

**Dogs: Vaguely Domesticated:** Majority have a death wish.

- ❖ **One point** for any dog that is found wandering into or laying in the middle of the road.
- ❖ **One point** for not running over a tyre biter
- ❖ **No points** for general roadside mutt.

**Dogs: Wild Rabid Packs:** Often encountered around rubbish tips and waste ground; breeds on secluded cliffs. Beware hostile reaction and pack mentality.

- ❖ **Two points** for basic observation.
- ❖ **One point** for getting within 50m whilst out of car
- ❖ **Lose two points** for running away like a big girly.
- ❖ **Two points** for any pack containing over twenty mutts



**Cats:** Surprisingly Scarce. Too sensible to sit in the road.

- ❖ **One point** for each cat found in Marrakech airport terminal building. Car park excluded
- ❖ **One point per day** for not waking up a cat in your hotel room.

**Poultry:** Scarce.

- ❖ **One point** for every narrowly avoided Chicken
- ❖ **Two points** for a Turkey

**Donkeys, Mules and Horses:** A multi-risk family of animals. Points for the following:

- ❖ **One point** for unattended wandering in the middle of the road.



- ❖ **Two points** for being laden with so much vegetation or produce as to become invisible.



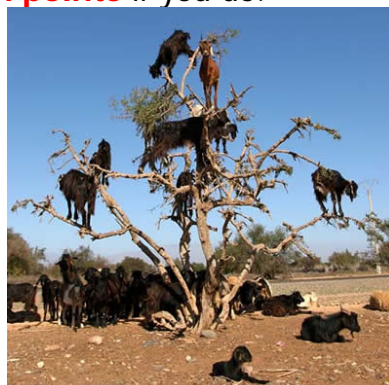
- ❖ **One point** if heavily laden and a rider and a road hazard.
- ❖ Being ridden by more than one Moroccan: **One point** for each additional person and **one point** extra if a mobile phone is also being used.
- ❖ **Five points** available for observing any equine being transported alive on the roof of a vehicle.
- ❖ Donkeys, Mules and Horses towing carts. Many of the above may still apply. Same points system applies.



**Cows:** A scarce Moroccan species. However, most often seen on the roofs of trucks and cars. **Five points** per load. Avoid being in front of any such vehicle in case of sudden breaking.

**Sheep and Goats:** A real hazard. Occurs in all habitats, altitudes and even in town centres. Points available as follows:

- ❖ **Three points** when a flock is seen on a vehicle roof as there is less of a chance of them becoming airborne.
- ❖ **Two points** per flock when being grazed in the central reservation of dual carriageway.
- ❖ **Two points per day** if you manage NOT to collect dinner due to a road crossing Sheep or Goat. **Lose ten points** if you do.



**Pallid Swifts:** Probably a seasonal risk but certainly prone to Kamikaze death dives along the coast road. **One point** for every swift within 3m of the windscreen.

**Camels:** It is worth noting that all the camels encountered were very well behaved. However, **one point** is available for any photographically placed 'wild' looking camel in the desert.

## Public Transport:

**Taxis:** All are Mercedes drivers and all are mad. Points available for:

- ❖ **One point** for each colour of official taxi seen.
- ❖ **Ten points** for getting through entire holiday without getting hit by one.
- ❖ **One point** extra per person for the maximum number of passengers in a taxi. Only one per holiday.
- ❖ **One point** for finding a furry, carpeted Taxi dashboard.
- ❖ **One point** extra for having a passenger warming his/her bare feet on said dashboard.
- ❖ **Two points** for finding a taxi with closed curtains on the back and all four passenger windows.
- ❖ **One point** for seeing a taxi driver indicating.
- ❖ **One point** for a taxi driver with both hands on the wheel
- ❖ **One point** for holding both a mobile phone and a fag whilst driving.

**Buses and Trucks:** Always overloaded with people and goods.

- ❖ **One point per person** for maximum observed on the roof or in the open back of a vehicle.



- ❖ **One point each day** for staying well out of the way of the madly overloaded hay trucks.
- ❖ **Twenty points** for being stupid enough to get so close that the hay overhangs your bonnet. Photo required.



**Inter City Coaches:** Complete loonies. No regard for speed restrictions, traffic, pedestrians, livestock etc.

- ❖ **Two points** for noticing them in enough time to keep out of the way.
- ❖ **One point per vehicle** for the maximum overtaken by a coach in one go.

### Vehicle types and driving style:

Varied and somewhat lacking in finesse but certainly confident. Scoring complex but the following points available.

- ❖ **Three points** for observing a child (as young as two) on the lap of a driver with its hands on the wheel. Extra point for any vehicle that is not a car.
- ❖ Driving at night. Do not do it! **One point** for each vehicle that actually bothers to put its lights on.
- ❖ Agadir and Marrakech rush hour. Do not do it! **Two points** for surviving each crossing of a major conurbation.
- ❖ Paris-Dakar Rally Contestants: Even more deranged than coach drivers. **Two points** for slowing one down.
- ❖ Big, old trucks going down hill: **One point** for getting stuck behind one going down hill at 5mph with accompanying smells of burning brakes and clutch.



- ❖ **Extra single points** for observing slow overtaking by said trucks on a) a blind bend b) a blind summit c) against oncoming traffic
- ❖ **One point** for any vehicle reversing up dual carriageway
- ❖ **One point** for any vehicle stopping to pick up a friend on dual carriageway
- ❖ **Two points** for any vehicle stopping to pick up a cow, donkey, sheep or goat on dual carriageway
- ❖ **Two points** for seeing a car going the wrong way up dual carriageway
- ❖ **Unlimited points** for the most vehicles overtaken at once by a) yourself and b) someone else
- ❖ **One point** for any vehicle carrying a boat
- ❖ **Three points** for accurately aging any ancient Ford truck
- ❖ **One point** per car found coasting downhill with the engine off

**Mopeds:** No rules, no helmets, no test. They are the major hazard on the road. Points available for:

- ❖ **One point** for side saddle riding
- ❖ **One point** for holding hands with another road user.
- ❖ **One point** for deliberate endangerment of another road user. ie pushing them into oncoming traffic
- ❖ **One point** for using a mobile phone

- ❖ **One point** for using a mobile phone and having a fag
- ❖ **One point** per each extra passenger when more than two adults present
- ❖ **Three points** for two adult, baby combo
- ❖ **Three points** for one adult, two child combo
- ❖ **Five points** for one adult, three child combo as this is just bonkers
- ❖ **Three points** for one adult, one goat/sheep combo
- ❖ **Three points** for one adult, one dog combo

The same scoring policy applies to the use of **bicycles** as they are equally dangerous.

- ❖ However, special **two point** bonus for seeing a bicycle (with rider) being towed by a moped user



### Road Conditions:

Varied and subject to sudden change.

**Surface type:** **One point** for each of the habitats crossed in your trusty vehicle

- ❖ Soft sand
- ❖ Wet sand
- ❖ Gravel
- ❖ Tarmac
- ❖ Sticky mud
- ❖ Wet Wadi
- ❖ Dry Wadi
- ❖ Snow & Ice
- ❖ Sudden rock falls

**Bends.** Some roads are mind-bogglingly bendy, others straight as a die for mile after mile.

- ❖ **One point** per bend is available if you can correctly count the number of bends from the summit marker of the Tizi-n-Tichka pass south to Agouim.
- ❖ An extra **five points** if you managed not to vomit.

**Drops:** Big and sometimes lacking barriers.

- ❖ **Ten points** for getting as close as possible to the edge in the car without actually dying. A sharp intake of breath from the passengers should identify if this has occurred. Screaming means you have misjudged the corner.

**Carriageways:** Surface type has already been covered.

- ❖ **Two points** for any real dual carriageway encountered.
- ❖ **Two points** for surviving 1.5 lane carriageway where you get to play chicken at speed with the oncoming traffic and have to bump two wheels into the gravel verge to avoid death.
- ❖ Extra **ten points** each time the oncoming vehicle chickens first. NB: This will not happen unless you have found another tourist. European Camper Van drivers are the exception and drive like the locals.

**Sudden Carriageway Changes:**

- ❖ **Two points** for not driving off the end of a tarmac road when it suddenly ends and drops by several feet. There are two types: a) the road is simply not finished and b) the road has been removed by freak flooding



**Potholes:** A multi-risk phenomenon.

- ❖ Potholes in Morocco are indicated by placing another, often more dangerous object near it. **One point** for each of the following:
  - ❖ Large Rocks
  - ❖ Tyres
  - ❖ Gas canisters
  - ❖ Brushwood
  - ❖ Barbed Wire
  - ❖ Donkey
- ❖ One **extra point** for any newly observed pothole indicator object
- ❖ A traditional pothole is always inconveniently placed and causes a back jarring jolt. **One point** for everyone avoided. Lose **two points** for any you do not miss (unless impossible to do so).



## The Police

A low point scoring zone. The rules:

- ❖ Do not speed, especially in town outskirts.
- ❖ Do not cross solid white lines in the middle of the road to overtake unless you can see no cops at least 2km ahead and there are no oncoming motorists flashing their lights at you. Otherwise expensive.
- ❖ **One point** per day for evading capture
- ❖ **Lose ten points** for each fine
- ❖ **Gain ten points** for negotiating a lower fine.
- ❖ Appearance of a policeman in front of your car does not necessitate a 'tug'. He will wave, you will wave back (whole hand recommended), slow down, pass and smile. Remember he is never alone and has a gun on his hip.



- ❖ Often a policeman stopping someone else is just doing so to say hello to a friend or is asking for lift. Do not hoot to get them off the road (see above).
- ❖ City Traffic Police are very officious. They will blow their little whistle and stop people on roundabouts for unfathomable reasons given the general standard of driving. Traffic chaos ensues. Again no beeping or gesticulating. Remember you want to blend in not stand out. **Two points** for every policed intersection that you navigate without incident and **two extra points** for not running the man in uniform over.

<b>Your holiday points tally chart</b>				
<b>Your final score:</b>				