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BICYCLE HELMET

The single most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes is a helmet.

Proper Fit

- The helmet should fit snugly and feel comfortable. It should be positioned to cover as much of the head as possible, including the forehead. Always buckle the chin straps. Look for D-rings or a quality buckle that cannot be opened or easily bent or broken. Use the dial turn ring or foam pads that come with the helmet to insure a proper fit.
- Children should always wear a helmet when riding. Children's heads vary widely in shape and size; pay attention to fit and use the foam pads as needed. A properly fitted helmet should rest level on the top of the head. The rim must be level from front to back. It should fit securely when the strap is fastened, with enough space to put one finger between the child's chin and the helmet buckle.

Where Do I Purchase a Helmet?

- Most bicycle shops carry a supply of helmets for adults and children. The dealer can select the right type of helmet for your needs. To enhance visibility, the helmet should include reflective tape. It should not interfere with your hearing or vision. The helmet should be approved by the Snell Memorial Foundation (SNELL) or American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), certifying that it is safe for cyclists. All helmets must also be approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

Safety Tips

- Always wear a helmet.
- Obey traffic signs and signals.
- Ride on the right, with the flow of traffic.
- Be alert for road hazards.
- Use hand signals.
- Lock your bike.
- Don't allow children to ride at night.
- Watch for cars in driveways and alleys.
- Use caution in wet weather and fog conditions.
- Maintain your bike.
- Be considerate to other bicyclists, pedestrians and motorized vehicles.

Helmet Care



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- Be careful of using paint and stickers on a helmet. They may damage your helmet.
- Clean your helmet with gentle soap and water. Don't use abrasive cleaners.
- Replace any helmet after you crash. Impact may crush the styrofoam. Replace the buckle if it cracks or if any pieces break off.

Misconceptions

- *It doesn't matter what kind of helmet I wear.*
An ASTM, SNELL or CPSC approved helmet has passed crash testing, certifying it will protect the bicyclist in the event of a crash. Don't wear a helmet that hasn't passed the standards.
- *Only children need to wear helmets.*
Anyone can be seriously hurt in a bicycle crash, especially adults who are often riding at faster speeds on busy roads. Adults are role models for children. Always wear a helmet no matter how old you are.
- *I ride mostly on paths or trails, so do I need to wear a helmet?*
Most crashes occur on paths and trails. Often, there are people with children, strollers, pets, in-line skaters or other bicyclists riding slower or faster than you on the same path (which is usually 8' or less in width).

Acknowledgments:

Minnesota Community Bicycle Safety Project, U of M

[Safe Kids Worldwide](#)



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