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For More Information

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How to Choose a Bicycle Helmet for Your Child

Standards

Buy only cycling helmets that meet one of the following standards:

- ANSI
- ASTM
- CPSC
- CSA
- Snell

Helmets certified only for cycling are not to be used for multiple impact activities such as ice skating.

Helmets certified for cycling are meant to protect only from one impact and then need to be replaced.

Type

Approved helmets come in three types:

- **Thin Shell**
Has a thin layer of plastic over the foam liner and is lighter than a hard shell helmet.
- **Hard Shell**
Has a thick hard covering over the foam liner and may prevent a sharp object from puncturing the helmet.
- **Multi-purpose**
The standards for biking and in-line skating are identical, so a bike helmet can be used for both activities. Some helmets certified for multi-purpose use can be used for both bicycling and multiple impact activities such as skateboarding.



When to replace a helmet

- When it has been involved in a crash.
- After the lining is cracked.
- After 3-5 years due to wear and tear.
- Replace the buckle if it cracks or if any piece of it comes off.

Always wear an approved bicycle helmet.



The Proper Fit

Fit

Let your child pick out the helmet. Your child will more likely to wear it. Have your child try on several helmets to get the best fit.

To ensure a good fit:

- Wear the helmet squarely on top of your head.
- The front of your helmet should be 2 finger-widths above your eyebrows.
- Only one finger should fit between your chin and chin strap.
- When the chin strap is done up, you should not be able to take your helmet off your head.
- Your helmet should fit snugly on your head with little movement from side to side or front to back.

To ensure helmet use:

- Start the helmet habit early. When your child begins to ride a tricycle, a helmet should be worn.
- As your child grows, the helmet can be adjusted for proper fit. Your child's helmet should be replaced within 3-5 years if it is not damaged.
- Do not wear other head gear such as ball caps, toques or barrettes under the helmet.
- Explain how a bicycle helmet can protect your child's brain.
- Encourage parents in your neighborhood to buy helmets for their children.
- Parents need protection too. Be a role model for your child. Wear a helmet!
- Make a rule – wear a helmet "EVERY RIDE, EVERY TIME."



The front of your helmet should be 2 finger-widths above your eyebrows.



The straps should form a "Y" around the ear.



You should only be able to fit one finger between your chin and chin strap.