

# 5 Helmet Safety Rules to Protect Your Head

Want to protect your head and brain?<sup>2</sup> Always wear a helmet when there's a risk of injury.

## 1. You should wear a helmet if you...

- Ride a bike, skateboard, scooter, motorcycle, ATV, or horse
- Play baseball, football, or softball
- Rock climb, roller blade, snowboard, white water kayak, or ski (downhill and water)
- Work on a construction job site
- Do anything else where it's normal for helmets to be worn to prevent head injuries

**Hard hats:**  
Know the facts  
[tinyurl.com/yxhvtxza](https://tinyurl.com/yxhvtxza)

## 2. Get the right fit to protect your head

A loose helmet won't protect your head as well as one that fits snugly. Here's how to get the right fit:

- Buy a brand and size that fits well prior to adjustments.
- Use the adjustable straps and/or sizing pads to ensure a snug fit.
- If your helmet has a chin strap (most do), use it. Make sure it's buckled and secure.

**How to:**  
Fit a bicycle helmet  
[tinyurl.com/yxuv7fly](https://tinyurl.com/yxuv7fly)

## 3. Wear it for safety, not style

- Wear the helmet flat atop your head. Do not wear the helmet tilted back at an angle.
- Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not obstruct your field of vision. Remember: you wear a helmet to keep your brain safe, not as a fashion statement.

**Video:**  
Motorcycle helmets: Get your head into it  
[tinyurl.com/y2x2kblh](https://tinyurl.com/y2x2kblh)

## 4. Check your helmet before you go

- Try twisting and pulling on the helmet to see if you can remove it from your head or loosen the buckle on the strap. Check it before you go.

## 5. Know when to replace your helmet

- Most helmets should be replaced every 3 to 5 years. Materials used in the helmet weaken and break down over time. Do not use a helmet after it has been in an accident. Damage to the helmet may not be visible to an untrained eye. Even very small cracks in the helmet may keep it from being as effective in preventing injury.

## Wearing a helmet matters:

**70%** Amount the risk for serious head injury drops when a motorcyclist wears a helmet



**1,000**

Annual number of bike-related deaths in the U.S. caused by head injuries

**\$78,183**

Average medical costs for a work-related head injury



**28**

Number of states that require motorcyclists to wear helmets

**65,000**

Number of work-related head injuries in the U.S. each year



**900,000**

Average number of people who bike to work in the U.S.

**Every 15 Seconds**

Frequency a traumatic brain injury occurs in the U.S. Many brain injuries could be prevented by wearing a helmet.

## Keep your head safe

Thousands of people are injured or killed each year because of head injuries. In many cases, they're not wearing a helmet when they should be. Don't be one of them. Keep your head safe. Wear a helmet. It could save your life.

## References

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- Oliver, J., et al. (2016). Bicycle injuries and helmet use: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 46(1): 278–292. From: <https://tinyurl.com/yxkr3wwn>