

Important Rules of the Road:

- Learn to maintain your bike and keep it in good mechanical shape.
- Ride with traffic.
- Stop and look both ways before entering the street.
- Stop at all intersections, marked and unmarked.
- Before turning, use hand signals and look all ways.
- Children should not ride at dusk or in the dark.
- Parents should not hesitate to enforce bicycle safety rules and restrict or remove riding privileges when rules are broken.

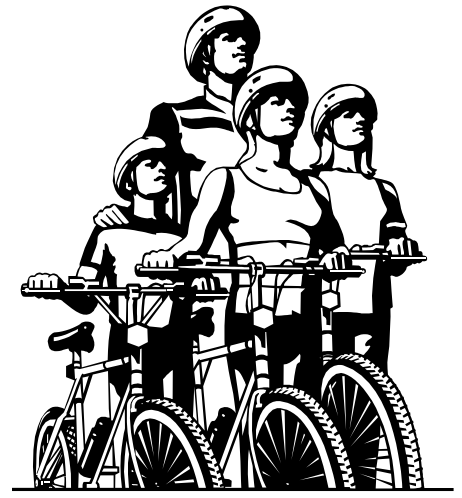


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Bicycle Safety Fact Sheet



Distributed in the interest of Safety by:



General Concerns

Bicycling is now enjoyed by over 100 million people in this country. For some, bicycles are a primary mode of transportation, and for others they provide a great source of recreation and focus for family activity. All can enjoy the cardiovascular benefits of bicycling. The bicycle must, however, be considered a vehicle just like an automobile or motorcycle! With the increased popularity of bicycling has come a dramatic increase in bicycle associated injuries and deaths. Children are, for a number of reasons, quite vulnerable to bicycle crashes. In the U.S., children account for approximately 75% of the bicycle injuries and deaths. The majority of these injuries are to the brain.

Serious head injuries include concussions, skull fractures, brain contusions, hematomas (both surrounding and inside the brain), and the brain swelling that occurs from impacts with hard objects. Depending on the severity of the injury, a child may be left with permanent neurologic disability. Two children are killed each day in the USA while cycling. Many more sustain permanent brain injury. Remember, all national cycling organizations and national level competitive cyclists always require and wear helmets, even on recreational rides. They know how effective helmets are.

About Bike Helmets



How can I tell if a helmet is safe or approved?

You should only use a helmet that meets the bicycle safety helmet standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the Snell Memorial Foundation. All helmets meeting these standards have labels on the inside stating that they meet one or both of them.

Do all helmets meet the standards?

No. The standards are not mandatory. Some helmets are filled with soft padding that will not provide good crash protection. Don't buy or use a helmet unless it has a label stating that it meets the ANSI or Snell standards.

Must helmets meet both of the standards?

No. Because there is no single national testing standard, both ANSI and Snell have devised good crash protection tests for bicycle helmets. A helmet meeting either ANSI or Snell standards is fine. There is no evidence that one standard is more protective than the other.

Can other types of helmets be used?

A bicycle helmet should be worn when biking as it is specially designed to protect the head from a fall or crash involving a bike.

How should a helmet fit?

A helmet should be worn squarely on the top of the head. With the helmet properly adjusted it should not be possible to "roll" the helmet forward or backward very much, nor to remove it from the head without unbuckling the strap. The strap must be buckled for the helmet to work properly on impact.

How long will a helmet fit ?

A helmet should fit for many years. Unlike other parts of the body, your head does not grow quickly beyond age 5 or 6. Most models of helmets have removable fitting pads that can be replaced with thinner ones as your child's head grows.

Can a helmet be used after a fall or crash?

A helmet that has been through a serious impact or crash should not be reused. Many manufacturers will inspect and replace a damaged helmet. If you are uncertain of the extent of the damage, return the helmet to the bike manufacturer for an examination.

Does a cycling helmet need a soft cover ("soft shell") or a hard cover ("hard shell")?

Hard shell or micro thin, hard shelled helmets are recommended especially for children because the hard shell protects the soft, impact absorbing inner liner from the rough treatment by kids. Also, there is some recent evidence that helmets with a hard shell slide better on certain impacts transmitting less energy to the brain.

Be Safe - Not Sorry!