

# Bicycle Helmets

A few facts and hints about helmets.

1. Helmets come in various sizes, just like hats.
2. It may take some time to ensure a proper fit. It is easier if you have someone help you adjust the straps.
3. To select and properly fit a bicycle helmet, follow the helmet fitting instructions in this flyer.
4. Helmets should be worn by all riders and passengers, even children being transported in a trailer or riding on the back of a bike being driven by someone else.
5. Replace any helmet when you or your child crashes in it. Impact may crush some of the foam.
6. Bike helmets are not for all other sports. Be sure it meets the ASTM F1447 - 06 Standard Specification for Helmets Used in Recreational Bicycling or Roller Skating.



**A bicycle helmet can protect your head and brain ONLY if you wear it properly each time you ride.**

A bicycle crash can happen at any time. A properly fitted bicycle helmet reduces the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent and the risk of brain injury by as much as 88 percent.

More children ages 5 to 14 go to hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with bicycles than with any other sport. Many of these injuries involve the head.

Be sure to wear a helmet that is appropriate for the particular activity you're involved in. Different activities require different helmets. Check the manufacturers' labels inside each helmet for more specific information.

Many states and local jurisdictions have bicycle helmet laws; please refer to your state or local jurisdiction. To find this information go to [www.helmets.org/mandator.htm](http://www.helmets.org/mandator.htm)

For more information about bicycle safety and helmets, visit:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

Or

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

# Easy Steps to Properly Fit a Helmet



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

**Community Health Section  
Division of Injury Prevention  
and Control**

**600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 301**

**Bismarck, ND 58505-0200**

**701.328.4537**

**800.472.2286 1**

# The Proper Helmet Fit

## Step 1 Size:

Measure your head for approximate size. Try the helmet on to ensure it fits snugly. While it is sitting flat on top of your head, make sure the helmet doesn't rock side to side. Sizing pads come with new helmets; use the pads to securely fit to your head. Mix or match the sizing pads for the greatest comfort. In your child's helmet, remove the padding when your child's head grows. If the helmet has a universal fit ring instead of sizing pads, adjust the ring size to fit the head.



## Step 2 Position:

The helmet should sit level on your head and low on your forehead - one or two finger widths above your eyebrow.

## Step 3 Buckles:

Center the left buckle under the chin. On most helmets, the straps can be pulled from the back of the helmet to lengthen or shorten the chin straps. This task is easier if you take the helmet off to make these adjustments.



## Step 4 Side Straps:

Adjust the slider on both straps to form a "V" shape under and slightly in front of the ears. Lock the slider if possible.



## Step 5 Chin Strap:

Buckle your chin strap. Tighten the strap until it is snug, so that no more than one or two fingers fit under the strap.

## Step 6 Final Fitting:

a. Does your helmet fit right? Open your mouth wide ... big yawn! The helmet should pull down on the head. If not, refer back to step 5 and tighten the chin strap.

b. Does your helmet rock back more than two fingers above the eyebrows? If so, unbuckle and shorten the front strap by moving the slider forward. Buckle, retighten the chin strap and test again.

c. Does your helmet rock forward into your eyes? If so, unbuckle and tighten the back strap by moving the slider back toward the ear. Buckle, retighten the chin strap and test again.

d. Roll the rubber band down to the buckle. All four straps must go through the rubber band and be close to the buckle to prevent the buckle from slipping.



**It's not enough to simply buy a bicycle helmet – it should be properly fitted, adjusted, and worn each time you ride.**



## The Helmet Should Be Comfortable.

If it feels small, put in the thinner sizing pads or purchase a larger helmet. Ideally, select a helmet brand and size that fits well prior to any adjustments. If you buy a helmet that you find comfortable and attractive, you are more likely to wear it.



## The Helmet Must Cover Your Forehead.



## The Chin Strap Must Be Tight and Properly Adjusted.



## The Helmet Should Not Rock Forward or Backward on Your Head.

If it does, see step 6.



## The Helmet Should Fit Now.

Buy a helmet that fits your head now, not a helmet to "grow into."

***Replace any helmet that has been outgrown.***



## When To Replace a Helmet.

Replace any helmet that has been involved in a crash or is damaged.