

Bike helmets

Wearing a good quality, well-fitted bike helmet can save you from serious injury or even death. By law, only helmets that meet the appropriate standards can be used on the road here. That means all helmets will pass a minimum safety test, and any helmet will do its job as long as it is undamaged and fits properly.

The most important thing is the **FIT**. Unless your helmet is fitted and worn properly, it won't give you good protection and may even do more harm than good in a crash.



How to get the **RIGHT** fit



Most helmets have the size range they will fit (in centimetres) on the box

or the label. Get someone to **measure your head** with a tape measure and then try on a few helmets in your size. Everyone has different-shaped heads, and you'll probably find one brand or model of helmet fits better than the others.



To see if a helmet fits properly, put it on and adjust the fitting at the back so that it is snug on your head. **It should sit flat and two finger widths above your eyebrows**, and shouldn't have any areas that dig into your head or are uncomfortable.



Before you do up the straps, try to tip it and rotate it on your head. **Your scalp should move as you move the helmet.** If the helmet tips sideways, backwards or forwards, it's not a good fit.



Sizing pads are for fine tuning and comfort, not to make a big helmet smaller.



Next make sure the straps fit properly. The straps should **run in straight lines from the rim**, with the rear strap and front strap meeting just below and to the front of the earlobe. Adjust the buckle so that the strap is **firm but not tight** under your chin, and not sitting over your jawbone.

6 Things you should **NEVER DO!**



1 Never wear a cap under your helmet. This ruins the proper fit. In an accident, the helmet may not stay on. If you want sun protection, buy a helmet with a visor.



5 Never wear a helmet after it has been in an accident or has been bashed around. Cracks in the cover, cracked or crushed foam and frayed straps all indicate it's time for a new helmet. Even if you can't see any damage, a really good whack will ruin a helmet's protective qualities. That's why kids' helmets should be replaced every couple of years.



2 Never buy a helmet to "grow into". The accident won't wait till the helmet fits.



3 Never wear a helmet with the straps loose. It won't stay in place, and it could catch and strangle you.



4 Never wear the helmet on the back of your head. A helmet worn like this exposes your forehead and face to the road, and also means you risk being strangled by the straps in a crash.

6 Never buy a second-hand helmet. It might look OK, but you have no idea if it has been damaged.

The **right** labelling

For a bike helmet to be legal to wear on the road it must comply with one of the following standards:



AS/NZS 2063:2008, NZS 5436 or AS 2063.2



ASTM F1447-2006



EN 1078



SNELL B90 OR B95

A label stating that the helmet meets the **US Consumer Product Safety Commission's bicycle helmet safety standard** means the helmet is also approved.

For more information visit: www.consumer.org.nz

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