

PROPER HELMET STRAP ADJUSTMENT

A properly worn and adjusted helmet is a safer helmet. Helmet straps adjust in several ways:

1. The yoke buckles (plastic pieces connecting front and rear straps) should rest at the corner of your jawbone, below your ears.
2. With the helmet level on your head, the side yoke straps must be taut as you fasten the chin strap.
3. Excess chin strap webbing can be trimmed and the cut edge melted to prevent fraying.

Please visit a local bicycle retailer if you need assistance with strap adjustment or helmet fitting.

ABOUT BICYCLE HELMETS

How can I tell if a helmet will keep my child safe?

You should only buy a helmet that meets the bicycle safety helmet standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), the Snell Memorial Foundation or the American Society of Testing and Measurement. Any helmet meeting these standards is labeled. These standards are not mandatory, so all helmets don't meet them. Helmets filled with soft padding will not provide good crash protection.

Can other types of helmets be used for bicycling?

Each type of helmet is designed for protection in a specific condition and may not offer protection in bike crashes or falls. Bike helmets are very protective in headfirst falls at fairly high speeds, and are light and well ventilated for comfort and acceptability.

Are there helmets for toddlers?

Yes. Helmets are available for children of all ages, however, babies less than one year old have a relatively weak neck structure. Neither helmets nor bike traveling is recommended for them.

How long will a child's helmet fit?

A toddler's or child's helmet should fit for several years. Most models have removable filling pads that can be replaced with thinner ones as the child's head grows.

Where do I get a bicycle helmet?

Helmets meeting appropriate standards are available at bicycle shops, and at some discount, department, and toy stores in adult, toddler, and children's sizes and styles. Lower income families may wish to check their local health department for additional helmet sources.

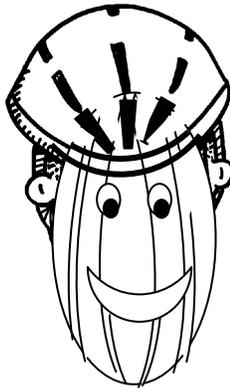
LEVEL HELMETS KEEP KIDS SAFE

A helmet isn't safe if your child doesn't wear it correctly. The most common mistake seen is a helmet that is not level on the head, exposing the forehead, nose and chin to injury in a fall.

The helmet should rest on your child's head so the front rim is just above the eyebrows. All other adjustments should be made without altering this position.

Please be careful when adjusting the straps – it's easy to pinch some skin or pull hair when fastening the chin strap. When children like their helmets, they are more likely to wear them.

Protect Your Child's Melon!



Effective
October 1,
1995

It's the law!

THREE TESTS FOR SECURE HELMET FIT

1. **The shake test.** Shake your helmet from side to side. Fit pads should hold it snugly in place.
2. **The open-mouth test.** When you buckle the chin strap and open your mouth, you should feel the helmet press firmly against the top of your head.
3. **Peel-off test.** If you can "peel" the helmet off your head to the front or the rear when the chin strap is fastened, the straps need to be tightened.

The Maryland Bicycle Helmet Law Fact Sheet

Effective October 1, 1995,

Maryland will have a law requiring all persons under the age of 16 who are riding a bicycle (defined as a vehicle with two or three wheels of which one is more than 14 inches in diameter) or are passengers on a bicycle to wear a helmet that meets or exceeds one of the three standards for helmets: SNELL – Snell Memorial Foundation; ANSI – American National Standards Institute; and ASTM – American Society for Testing and Materials.

The law governs operation of a bicycle on any highway, bicycle way or other property open to the public or used by the public for pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Those who do not obey the law would receive a warning from the police and printed educational information about bicycle helmet use. Failure to wear a bike helmet would be a civil offense. The law does not apply to bicyclists on the Ocean City Boardwalk between the Ocean City Inlet and 27th Street. In addition, the law will not change the existing laws in Montgomery, Howard or Allegany Counties.

How to Wear a Bicycle Helmet



Tips for Getting Your Kids to Wear Bicycle Helmets

Establish the helmet habit early. Have your children wear helmets as soon as they start to ride bikes – even if they are passengers on the back of adults' bikes. If they learn to wear helmets whenever they ride bikes, it will become a habit for a lifetime. It's never too late, however, to get your children into helmets.

Wear a helmet yourself. Kids learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride your bike, put on your helmet. Plan bicycle outings during which all family members wear their helmets to further reinforce the message. The most important factor influencing children to wear helmets is riding with an adult who wears a helmet.

Talk to your kids about why you want them to protect their heads. There are many things you can tell your children to convince them of the importance of helmet use. 1. Bikes are vehicles, not toys. 2. You love them and value them and their intelligence. 3. They can hurt their heads permanently or even die from head injuries. 4. Maryland has a bicycle helmet law for kids under age 16.

Reward your kids for wearing helmets. Praise them; give them special treats or privileges when they wear their helmets without having to be told to.

Don't let children ride their bikes unless they wear helmets. Be consistent. If you allow your children to ride occasionally without their helmets, they won't believe that helmet use is really important. Tell your kids they have to find another way to play, or must walk or take a bus somewhere, if they don't want to use their helmets.

Encourage your children's friends to wear helmets. Peer pressure can be used in a positive way if several families in the neighborhood start making helmet use a regular habit at the same time.

REMEMBER: Crashes causing head injuries

Information for this flyer has been reprinted with permission by the Bicycle Authority, Catalyst Communication, Inc., the American Academy of Pediatrics, MIEMSS, and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

For more information regarding the Maryland Bicycle Helmet Law or bicycle safety, please contact:

Maryland Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene
Division of Injury and Disability
Prevention and Rehabilitation
(877) 463-3464

Maryland Department of Transportation
State Highway Administration
Office of Traffic and Safety
(888) 963-0307
Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
(800) 252-8776

Maryland SAFEKIDS
(410) 787-5893

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