Buying a Bike Helmet

1. Buy a helmet that has been tested and meets the uniform safety standard issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), or one or more of the voluntary bicycle helmet standards like ASTM, Snell or ANSI. You can tell this by looking for a label or sticker that says the helmet meets the standard.

2. Select a brand and size that fits well prior to any adjustments. Adjustable sizing pads are often included to help ensure a better fit. Buy one that’s comfortable and attractive. You’ll be more likely to wear it.

3. Buy a helmet that fits your child now, not a helmet to “grow into.”

4. Replace any helmet that has been involved in a crash!

FACT:
A bicycle helmet reduces the risk of serious head and brain injury by 85-88%.

But it’s not enough to simply buy and wear one - you need to make sure it fits properly.

Developed by
U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

NTSA
People Saving People
http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov
Prepared by
Redding Police Department

Permission to reprint with credit is hereby granted.
### Fitting A Bike Helmet

**Position**
Put the helmet on your head so it sits evenly between the ears and rests low on your forehead - It should only be about 1-2 finger widths above your eyebrow.

**Pads**
Put foam pads inside the helmet so it feels comfortable but really snug. Usually the helmet includes more than one size of foam pads that can be velcroed inside the helmet for a better fit.

**Straps**
Tighten the chin strap as snugly as possible. Adjust the junction of front and back straps just under the ears and secure back strap without putting pressure on the front strap.

If all of this sounds confusing, follow the simple 5-Step Helmet Fit Test at right.

**A Good Helmet Fit** is as important as wearing one... but it takes time. Allow as much as a half hour to get a proper helmet fit. If fitting your child, don’t try to “rush” it as they are trying to go outside to ride. Do it while they’re relaxed and you have plenty of time. Then secure the adjustments so the helmet is ready for the next...

---

### Five-Step Helmet Fit Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>With one hand, gently lift the front of the helmet up and back.</td>
<td>Helmet moves back to uncover the forehead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>With one hand, gently lift the back of the helmet up and forward.</td>
<td>Helmet moves forward to cover the eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Put a hand on each side of the helmet and rock from side to side. Shake your head “no” as hard as possible.</td>
<td>Helmet slips from side to side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Open your mouth (lower jaw) as wide as possible, without moving your head. The top of your helmet should pull down.</td>
<td>Helmet does not pull down when opening your mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Check to see if the front edge of helmet covers your forehead. The front edge of the helmet should not be more than 1 to 2 finger-widths from your eyebrows.</td>
<td>Helmet does not cover the forehead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have someone else test your helmet fit by doing the 5-Step Test outlined above. Hold your head still during the test. Your helmet should pass each of the 5 steps.