

Bicycle Safety Tips

The helmet is the single most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death from bicycle crashes.

- Make it a rule: every time you and your child ride a bike, wear a bicycle helmet that meets the safety standards developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- If your child is reluctant to wear a helmet, try letting him or her choose his own.



Helmet fit is important.

- Make sure the helmet fits and your child knows how to put it on correctly. A helmet should sit on top of the head in a level position, and should not rock forward, backward or side to side. The helmet straps must always be buckled but not too tightly.

Try the Eyes, Ears and Mouth Test:



- **EYES check:** Position the helmet on your head. Look up and you should see the bottom rim of the helmet. The rim should be one to two finger-widths above the eyebrows.
- **EARS check:** Make sure the straps of the helmet form a "V" under your ears when buckled. The strap should be snug but comfortable.
- **MOUTH check:** Open your mouth as wide as you can. Do you feel the helmet hug your head? If not, tighten those straps and make sure the buckle is flat against your skin.

Use different helmets for different activities.

- Children should always wear a helmet for all wheeled sports activities. A properly-fitted **bike helmet** is just as effective when **riding a scooter, roller skating or inline skating**. However, when **skateboarding and long boarding**, make sure your child wears a skateboarding helmet.

Proper equipment fit and maintenance are also important for safety.

- Ensure proper bike fit by bringing the child along when shopping for a bike. Buy a bicycle that is the right size for the child, not one he will grow into. When sitting on the seat, the child's feet should be able to touch the ground.
- Make sure the reflectors are secure, brakes work properly, gears shift smoothly and tires are tightly secured and properly inflated.

Always model and teach proper behavior. Learn the rules of the road, and obey all traffic laws.

- Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, not against. Stay as far to the right as possible.
- Use appropriate hand signals.
- Respect traffic signals, stopping at all stop signs and stop lights.
- Stop and look left, right and left again before entering a street or crossing an intersection. Look back and yield to traffic coming from behind before turning left.



Adult supervision of child cyclists is essential until you are sure a child has good traffic skills and judgment.

- Cycling should be restricted to off-roads (e.g. sidewalks and paths) until age 10.
- Children should be able to demonstrate riding competence and knowledge of the rules of the road before cycling with traffic.

Children should not ride a bicycle when it's dark, in the fog or in other low-visibility conditions.

- If riding at dusk, dawn or in the evening is unavoidable, use a light on the bike and make sure it has reflectors as well.
- Wear clothes and accessories that have retro reflective materials to improve biker visibility to motorists.

