Bicycling, Rules for Helmets

Cannot live with them? Learn to, because you cannot bike safely without them. Properly wearing a helmet, when cycling, is your best means of protection against injury.

Putting on a bike helmet is not, as they say, rocket science. But you need to know the right way to wear a helmet and what kind of helmet to buy.

WEAR A HELMET

- A helmet is your last line of defense in an accident; never ride without one.
- Helmets can reduce serious head injuries by 85% in a crash.

ALWAYS WEAR A PROPERLY FITTING HELMET

- A helmet will not protect you if it does not fit properly.
- Make sure that the helmet fits on top of the head, not tipped back.
- Always wear a helmet while riding a bike, no matter how short the trip.
- After a crash or any impact that affects your helmet, replace it immediately.

SHELL AND PADS

- Find the smallest helmet shell size that fits over your head.
- Helmet pads should not be used to make a helmet fit your head that is otherwise too big.
- Leave about two-fingers width between your eyebrows and the front brim of the helmet.

STRAPS

- The straps should be joined just under each ear at the jawbone.
- The buckle should be snug with your mouth completely open.
- Periodically check your strap adjustment. Improper fit can make a helmet useless.

VENTILATION

- In general, the more vents the better. Improper ventilation can cause overheating.
- Helmets with good ventilation can actually be cooler than riding with no helmet at all.
- More vents usually mean a higher priced helmet. Buy one that you will want to wear.

COLORS

- Helmets come in all different colors and models. Buy a highly visible color.
- Shell color does not affect the temperature; black shell will not be hotter in the sun.
- Pick a color that encourages you to wear it.

This information is courtesy of the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency. **The laws may be different in your state. Be sure to know what they are and to respect them**.

Document Released: 12/20/2004 Document Re-Released: 10/15/2010
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