

Helmets

Helmets are law!! They must be worn when riding your bike. You can easily develop a false sense of security by strapping a helmet onto your head. However, it is essential that your helmet is adjusted to fit your head and that it is positioned correctly, in order for it to be effective.

Before putting on your helmet you should inspect it to ensure there are no cracks in the Styrofoam (Note: the outside colored shell is just for aesthetics). If the Styrofoam (body) has a crack in it or if your helmet has been in a serious crash you should replace it. During a crash your helmet will absorb the impact and split if the impact was hard enough. Bell and Giro have programs where you can take a damaged helmet to a bike store and receive a credit (~\$30) towards a new helmet. As well, if your helmet is more than 5 years old consider buying a new one as materials do break down over time. Remember your head is worth protecting!

Helmets are commonly worn with the straps too loose and the helmet pushed back on the head, so the forehead is not protected. When you put your helmet on it goes on from front to back. The front should be level and positioned just above your eyebrows or in the middle of your forehead. It should not be tilted back above your hairline, so that your poofy hair is out front. Your helmet should be very comfortable because you'll be wearing it a lot. Move your head from side to side to ensure it is snug. On the inside of your helmet there are foamies which you can use to make adjustments, so your helmet is comfortable and snugly on your head. Ensure there are no areas of pain. Adding thinner or thicker foamies may help to do this.

The straps on each side are joined with a buckle and for a "V". The buckle/slip at the bottom of the "V" should be just below your ear lobe or right on the end of your jawbone. The straps of each "V" should be taut to keep the helmet level on your head. It may take quite awhile to make these adjustments, so give yourself plenty of time. Don't try to do it 5 minutes before a ride.

When you do up your helmet you should be able to place no more than two fingers sideways between the chinstrap and your chin. If there is more space than this, you need to tighten it. Ensure it is not too tight. You want to be able to swallow.

As a final test, try to push your helmet back off your head. The front of the helmet should not go past your hairline. If it does, readjust it. Check your helmet for fit periodically because the straps will stretch, buckles will slide and foamies compress.

Remember your head is worth protecting! Take the time to make sure your helmet fits properly.