

Six easy steps to fit a bicycle helmet

It's not enough to simply buy a bicycle helmet — it should be properly fitted, adjusted, and worn each time you ride.

Helmets come in various sizes, just like hats. Sizes can vary between manufacturers. To properly fit a bicycle helmet, follow these helmet fitting instructions.

Step 1 Size

Measure your head for approximate size. Try the helmet on to ensure it fits snugly. While it is sitting flat on top of your head, make sure the helmet doesn't rock side to side. Sizing pads come with new helmets; use the pads to securely fit to your head. Mix or match the sizing pads for the greatest comfort. In your child's helmet, remove the padding when your child's head grows. If the helmet has a universal fit ring instead of sizing pads, adjust the ring size to fit the head.

Step 2 Position

The helmet should sit level on your head and low on your forehead — one or two finger-widths above your eyebrow.

Step 3 Buckles

Center the left buckle under the chin. On most helmets, the straps can be pulled from the back of the helmet to lengthen or shorten the chin straps. This task is easier if you take the helmet off to make these adjustments.

Step 4 Side Straps

Adjust the slider on both straps to form a "V" shape under, and slightly in front of, the ears. Lock the slider if possible.

Step 5 Chin Strap

Buckle your chin strap. Tighten the strap until it is snug, so that no more than one or two fingers fit under the strap.

Step 6 Final Fitting

A. Does your helmet fit right? Open your mouth wide... big yawn! The helmet should pull down on the head. If not, refer back to step 5 and tighten the chin strap.

B. Does your helmet rock back more than two fingers above the eyebrows? If so, unbuckle, shorten the front strap by moving the slider forward. Buckle, retighten the chin strap, and test again.

C. Does your helmet rock forward into your eyes? If so, unbuckle, tighten the back strap by moving the slider back toward the ear. Buckle, retighten the chin strap, and test again.