

# How to Correctly Wear A Bicycle Helmet & Why it's Important

Based on what we've seen on the bike paths around this country, some bicyclists still haven't gotten the word. You've seen it too -- helmets perched on the backs of heads like beanies; chin straps dangling like socks with stretched out elastic. Helmets fit so loosely they could easily be spun around like tops. Helmets tilted to one side or the other for that "rakish" look. And yes, even helmets worn backwards. The tragedy is that people expect these helmets to protect them when they fall. That's what a helmet is supposed to do. That's why they bought one. Truth is, many won't get that protection. In fact, they aren't even giving the helmet a chance to do the job it was designed for. These folks probably didn't even bother to read the instructions that came with the helmet.



So, we'll keep repeating this story until everyone wears the helmet correctly. We're in the safety business. Protecting people is what we do. But just designing, building, and selling the best helmets in the world isn't enough. We have to make sure our customers use our helmets the way we intended. So here it is... again.

## Overall

Helmets must fit snugly. The straps must be properly positioned. And the chin strap must be firmly buckled and snug up against the throat.

## Fit

If your baseball cap fits loosely, the worst that can happen is the wind blows it off. If your helmet fits loosely it might not be there when you need it the most. Think of the consequences. If your ball cap blows off, your hair is messed up. If your helmet comes off, your LIFE could be messed up. Isn't it worth spending a few minutes to make sure you have a good fit??

### A helmet fits correctly when:

1. It sits squarely on the head with the front of the helmet low on the brow to protect the forehead;
2. The padding exerts firm, uniform pressure all around the head so that the skin on the forehead moves as the helmet is rotated from left to right and from front to back.

## Adjust

Adjusting the harness system so it keeps the helmet in place is as important as a snug fit. A good fit helps keep the helmet in place, but if the harness isn't correctly adjusted, it's still possible that the helmet can be knocked out of place or can come off.

### The harness is correctly adjusted when:

1. The helmet sits squarely on the head with the front low on the brow to protect the forehead;
2. The front and rear straps form a "Y" just below and forward of the ears; and
3. All straps are so adjusted that there is no slack in the system when the chin strap is fastened.

It's pointless to adjust the straps with the helmet tipped back on the head. Even if you can successfully form the "Y" just below and forward of the ears, and even if there is no slack when the chin strap is fastened, helmets worn on the back of the head stand a much greater chance of coming off in an accident. Not only that, but tipping the helmet back totally exposes the forehead to impact. A helmet cannot protect what it does not cover.

## Fasten

Unless the chin strap is solidly buckled and tight up against the throat, it's unreasonable to expect the helmet to stay on during an accident. A snug fit and properly adjusted straps alone just won't do it.

1. Connect the buckle according to the instructions provided with your helmet;
2. Once connected, pull on the strap until it is tightly up against your throat. Always wear the chin strap as tight against your throat as you can stand to wear it.

*Now you know. So just do it -- and pass it on.*

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# A PERFECT FIT... FOR LIFE!!!

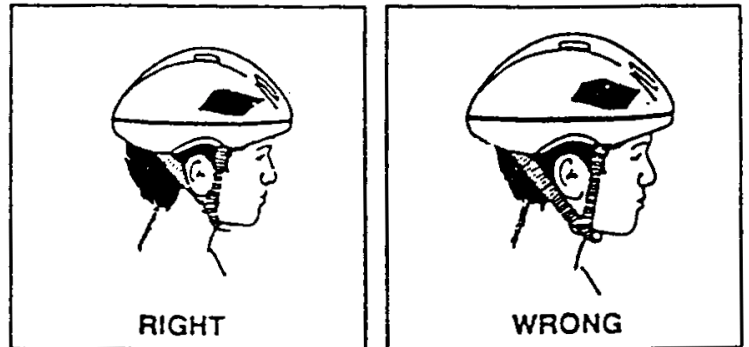
Your helmet cannot protect what it does not cover. If your helmet does not fit snugly on your head, or if it tips back (leaving your forehead exposed), it can slide or fall off in a crash - - and you are twice as likely to suffer a head injury (compared to wearing a properly fitting helmet).



Below are diagrams showing improper and proper fits for helmets. It is important to have the helmet fitted, adjusted and fastened appropriately. We like to call it -- Snug, Level and Low --

## **SNUG**

Choose a helmet that fits snugly all around your head and use the inside pads to adjust for fit and comfort. Your front and rear straps should form a "Y," just below each ear. Your straps should be pulled until tightly but comfortably up against your skin (able to slide a finger under the strap).

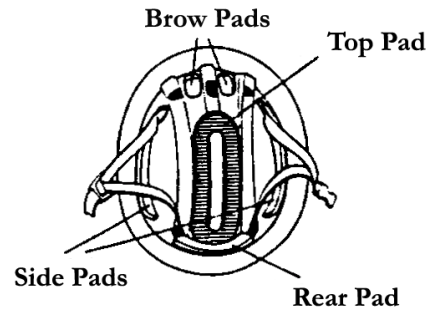


## **LEVEL**

Your helmet should be level, not tilted forward or backward or more on one side or the other. Take a look in the mirror or ask a friend or family member to check that it is level.

## **LOW**

Your helmet should sit squarely on your head with the front of the helmet low on the forehead, just above your eyebrows.



## **NOW FOR THE TEST**

Check your helmet and fit by looking in a mirror. Gently rotate the helmet on your head, front to back & side to side, noticing the skin in your brow area. If the fit is comfortable, and the skin moves with the helmet, you have a proper fit.

