



HAIL THE HELMET

Participating in regular physical activity offers a variety of ways for you to compete, have fun, and improve your health and well-being. While engaging in activities, it's important to protect yourself from injury. One way of doing this is to wear a helmet during sports where you could injure your head. Research shows that wearing a helmet reduces the risk of head injury by 85%. Helmets work by absorbing the force of a crash. Ensuring your helmet fits properly and is made for your specific activity helps to prevent head injuries, which can be severe and even cause death.

DIFFERENT SPORT, DIFFERENT HELMET

Since the intensity level of sport may vary, a different helmet should be used based on the activity. For example, bike helmets can be worn for inline skating and scooter riding; however, sports specific helmets should be used for skateboarding, snowboarding, hockey, and many other sports because all helmets are uniquely designed for the activity. Check the inside of your helmet for information on certification and standards, as this also varies by activity. Any helmet that has been damaged or involved in a crash should be replaced for optimal protection. visit www.parachutecanada.org for more information on which helmet for which activity.

Be Safe

It is important that you wear the correct and proper-fitting helmet when you engage in physical activities. When choosing a helmet for yourself or a family member, use the "SAFE" method by following these four steps:

1. **Size:** Measure your head size by wrapping a soft tape measure around your head, just above your eyebrows and ears. Using sizing guidelines provided by the helmet brands, you can then determine what size of helmet would fit you best.
2. **Ask:** After putting the helmet on, ask yourself or family member if it looks like the helmet fits. It should sit centered on your head, and not too far forward or backward. The padding should fit comfortably, with no spaces between the padding and the head. Be sure you are able to see straight forward and from side to side.
3. **Fit:** Once you find a helmet that looks and feels like it fits properly, ensure that it doesn't shift around on your head. This would mean that the fit is not correct. A helpful guide to follow is the 2V1 rule. There should be two finger distances between your helmet and eyebrow, a "V" shape should be formed around the bottom of both ears with the straps, and there should be one finger distance between your chin and the helmet strap.
4. **Evaluate:** Connect the strap and push it under the chin. There should be one finger distance between the chin and the helmet strap to ensure that it is not too tight. You should also be able to open your mouth wide and have the helmet pull closer to the head; if not, the chinstrap needs to be tightened.



DID YOU KNOW?

Bike helmets have expiry dates and should be replaced after five years. Replacement is important because the plastics of the helmet dry out, allowing for cracks, and older helmets may not meet current safety standards. As well, it is important to replace any helmet that has been involved in a crash, even if it does not visibly look damaged.

BIKE HELMETS HAVE EXPIRY DATES AND SHOULD BE REPLACED AFTER FIVE YEARS.

It's The Law

Though many activities recommend a helmet, most provinces and territories in Canada only require cyclists to wear helmets by law. British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland require cyclists of all ages to wear a helmet whenever bicycling. Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario require all cyclists under the age of 18 to wear a helmet while Saskatchewan, Quebec, and the three territories do not have any laws currently in place. The Canadian Paediatric Society is working to ensure that no matter where you live and how old you are, you are required to wear a helmet to protect your head. Other sports aren't regulated as closely as cycling is, however, it is always a good idea to wear a helmet when participating in more risky physical activities. If you are a parent or guardian to children, it's especially important to wear a helmet to lead by example. Your steps to protect your head will influence the behaviour of those looking up to you. Choosing helmets that are appropriate for each sport and wearing them properly can make a dramatic difference in protecting your head in the case of a crash. Keeping yourself and your family from injury should be a top priority. Follow the tips for proper helmet fitting and sizing. Be active, have fun, and be safe!

Key Reference:

[Click here to access the Parachute. *Helmet FAQ.*](#)