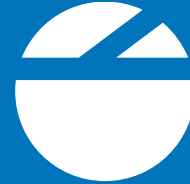


Helmets Matter: Guide on Proper Helmet Use



Do Helmets Prevent Concussion?

No helmet is concussion-proof. However, helmets can help reduce the severity of traumatic brain injuries (TBIs), skull fractures and skin injuries during play. Researchers and helmet producers are continuously collaborating to maximize helmets' protective qualities. CDC helmet safety guidelines recommend several steps for maximum effectiveness.

Make Sure Your Helmet is Certified by a Nationally Recognized Organization



You can find the certification of your helmet by looking at the helmet's label. These certification organizations include:

- National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE)
- Safety Equipment Institute (SEI)
- American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)
- American National Standards Institute (ANSI)
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
- Snell Foundation

Choose a Helmet That Fits Properly and is Right for Your Activity



Each sport has a helmet designed for the impacts that may occur. For example, bicycle helmets are designed to sustain just a single impact or fall. Meanwhile, football or ice hockey helmets can sustain many hits since these sports often involve a lot of contact. Multi-use helmets also exist, but they are only designed for a few minor hits.

Check the manufacturer's website or the helmet packaging for sizing guidelines and instructions. Always try on a helmet to ensure it fits properly before play.

Maintain Your Helmet



Treat your helmet with care and follow standard maintenance practices:

- Do not sit on or lean against the helmet.
- Store the helmet away from direct sunlight and in an environment that is not too hot or cold.
- Do not decorate the helmet or use helmet add-ons before checking the guidelines provided with the helmet or on the manufacturer's website.

Check the helmet manufacture date to keep track of recalls, reconditioning, and recertification recommendations. It is also important to know when to replace your helmet, since certain sports, such as football and hockey, recommend replacing their helmets after a certain point.

What Do I Do if My Helmet Gets Damaged?



If a helmet is damaged, have it replaced or reconditioned (i.e., fixing, cleaning, and sanitizing helmet) by a licensed

[NAERA \(National Athletic Equipment Reconditioning Association\)](#) member as soon as possible. Multi-use helmets MUST be replaced if damaged or involved in a major hit.

Wear Your Helmet Consistently and Correctly



Helmets are only effective if you wear them! Also, if worn improperly, your helmet won't protect you as well as it could. The CDC has guides on how to wear helmets for different sports and activities, which you can find at cdc.gov/heads-up/safety/index.html.

Reference

CDC Heads Up (2025, July 28) *Safety Guidelines: Helmets*. <https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/safety/index.html>

Unsure what type of helmet to recommend or buy?

Researchers at Virginia Tech put together a comprehensive helmet ratings tool that you can use for free.

Find it at:

<https://www.helmet.beam.vt.edu/>



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