Use Your Head: Wear a Helmet

Think of a helmet the same way you think of a seat belt. It won’t prevent a crash, but it could save your life if you’re ever in one. Cyclists wearing helmets in a crash have a:

- **69%** reduction in their risk of head injury
- **75%** reduction in their risk of brain injury

According to a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association

Types of Helmets

Bern Style  
Racer Style

Tips

1. **Buy a CPSC-Certified Helmet**
   Before you buy a helmet, look inside for a sticker from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) certifying that the helmet meets all CPSC standards. If a helmet is without the CPSC sticker, don’t use it.

2. **Get the Right Size**
   If the helmet does not cover the top half of your forehead and seems to sit on top of your head, then it’s too small.
   If there’s a gap between the rim of the helmet and your head or it wobbles on your head, it’s too large.

3. **The Helmet Should Sit Level on Your Head:**

Correct Way  
Incorrect Way
EYES
When you look up you should see the helmet’s front rim (not the visor). If you can’t see the front rim, tilt the helmet forward until you can.

EARS
Snap the chin buckle closed. On each side of your head the helmets two straps should meet under your ears to form a ‘V’. If they don’t, move the straps up or down through the junction.

MOUTH
With the chin buckle closed, open your mouth wide. You should feel the helmet pull down on your head. If it doesn’t, take the helmet off and make the chin buckle’s strap shorter by sliding the strap through the buckle.

TIPS FOR PARENTS
- Encourage your children to wear a helmet by setting a good example. Wear a helmet everytime you ride, wherever you ride.
- Begin the helmet habit with the first ride. Think of a helmet as a necessity; just like a seatbelt or a coat in the winter.
- Let your child help pick out a helmet. If they like the helmet, they will be more likely to wear it.
- You can buy a good, CPSC-certified helmet for less than $15.

ON WHAT TO CARRY
- Lock
- Transit fare or cash in case you have a mechanical breakdown and need to jump on the bus or train, or catch a cab.
- Identification and emergency contact information (keep emergency phone numbers listed under ICE—In Case of Emergency—on your cell phone).

www.chicagocompletestreets.org