



## Buying a helmet

### Why wear a helmet?

It is very important to wear a safety helmet whenever you ride your bike, a horse or pony, a quad bike or anything else! Helmets save lives!

Around 100,000 children and young people under 16 are admitted to hospital each year as a result of falling off their bike. Sadly, 1,300 of them die or are seriously injured.

Cycle helmets have been proven to significantly reduce the chances of head injury. Cycle helmets reduce the damage to your head when you hit a hard surface. A helmet absorbs the movement energy of the impact so that your skull doesn't have to! A helmet is almost like having a second protective skull. In Mike's case, wearing a helmet would have prevented him from fracturing his skull and damaging his brain. Cycle helmets are proven to be effective in saving lives!

### Top tips on buying a cycle helmet

- Always look for a 'Safety Standard Approved' helmet. It should say somewhere on the box that it meets certain standards in order to be safe to wear. Look for the following: a 'CE' mark which shows it has been approved by the EC as safe to use. Other things to watch out for are the BS Kitemark (BS6863), or the ANSI (ANSI Z 90.4), AS (AS 2063) or SNELL Foundation stickers. These show that they are high quality helmets and very safe to use.
- Helmets need not be expensive. Just ensure that any of the above marks are clearly displayed on the box or on the helmet itself. You can buy a good helmet from as little as £6.99 to up to about £90.00. They come in all sorts of shapes and colours and you can even buy special helmets for cycling sports.
- There are 3 types of helmet: hard-shell (usually moulded from plastic); micro-shell (with a thin outer layer of plastic); and no-shell (light with a soft surface). That all sounds very complicated so just ask the shop assistant to tell you the difference and they may be able to recommend a helmet that is best suited to you.
- Always buy the smallest size that gives a snug fit. When you have strapped on your helmet, check that it does not move on your head. Helmets should not move backwards and forwards or from side to side. A loose fitting helmet is as unsafe as not wearing a helmet at all!





- Finally, check that it is comfortable and doesn't restrict your hearing and vision. You don't want to be distracted by your helmet! Look for a helmet with ventilation slots to keep your head cool.

## Other sport

You can buy helmets for other sports too, like horse riding, for example. Always check if there is special safety gear for your favourite sport and make sure you wear it!

## Remember!

Your cycle helmet is there to act as a second skull. If you ever drop or severely scratch your helmet you should get it replaced. This is because dropping it may cause damage to the structure of the helmet. It might then shatter when you have an accident. The helmet wouldn't work then and you would still be in danger of seriously hurting your head.

## Already hurt your head?

If you have already hurt your head it is even more important that you wear a cycle helmet. This is because your brain is already recovering. Hurting your head again could result in something called Second Impact Syndrome.

Always take good care of your brain – wear a helmet.

