

**Bike Helmet Fitting Tips and Guidelines**  
**Riley Hospital for Children**  
**Community Education and Child Advocacy Department**

**Bicycle helmet size is based on head size, not age! Please see instructions below on how to properly measure head size.**

**TO MEASURE:**

- 1. Use measuring tape strip.**
- 2. Start measuring tape strip above the eyebrow and wrap around head until the two sides of the tape meet.**
- 3. Write down on a piece of paper the distance around the head in inches. Use this measurement to identify the appropriate helmet size, which typically is listed in "inches" on the bike helmet box**

**According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a person's head measurement determines hat size which in turn helps you select the size of helmet needed for your child. Please see the table below:**

<b>Head Circumference (measured in inches)</b>	<b>Hat Size</b>	<b>Bike Helmet Size (approximate)</b>
20 ½ "	6 ½	Toddler
20 ¾ "	6 5/8	Small
21 ¼ "	6 ¾	Medium
21 5/8"	6 7/8	Medium
22"	7	Medium
22 3/8"	7 1/8	Medium
22 ¾"	7 ¼	Large
25 7/8	8 ¼	Bell King Head Helmet

**\*\*\*Please note that the sizes listed above are approximate.**

**TO FIT:**

**EACH TIME A CHILD PUTS ON A HELMET:**

- 1. Place helmet on head so the front of the helmet is level with the ground. Helmet should rest just above the eyebrows.**
- 2. Straps should form a "V" around ears. Place fingers around ears to check.**
- 3. Secure buckle so no more than 1 finger fits between the strap and face—the strap should be snug.**
- 4. Place the helmet on the child's head and buckle and tighten the chinstrap.**
- 5. Gently lift the back of the helmet up. The helmet should not move up and forward. If the helmet moves:**
  - a. Tighten the back strap.**
  - b. Make sure the chinstrap is snug (no more than 1 finger should fit between the strap and the chin).**
  - c. Adjust the padding thickness and/or position—especially in the front.**

6. Put a hand on each side of the helmet and rock from side to side. Have the child shake his/her head "no" as hard as possible. The helmet should not move from side to side. If the helmet moves:
  - a. Check the padding thickness on the sides.
  - b. Make sure the strap is evenly adjusted.
7. Have the child open his/her lower jaw as wide as possible without moving his/her head. The top of the helmet should pull down. If the helmet does not pull down when the child opens his/her mouth:
  - a. Tighten the chinstrap.
  - b. Make sure the front and back strap junction (the "V") lies under each ear.
8. Check to see where the front edge of the helmet covers the child's forehead. The front edge of the helmet should not be more than two or three fingers' width above his/her brow. If the helmet does not cover the child's forehead properly:
  - a. Position the helmet no more than two or three fingers' width above the brow.
  - b. Tighten any loose straps.
  - c. Make strap adjustments so the helmet stays over the forehead.

**NOTE:**

If a helmet has been through a serious fall or collision, replace the helmet to ensure proper future protection.

Bicycle helmets also provide protection for sports like rollerblading, scooters, or roller skating. Wrist guards, knee pads, and elbow pads are also recommended for these activities. Bicycle helmets should not be used for skateboarding or aggressive skaters. There are helmets available that offer more protection for these sports than do standard bicycle helmets.

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