

Whether they are in a child seat or trailer or riding on their own, bicycles are a wonderful experience for children. So that they can enjoy riding for years to come, the adults around them need to ensure that:



Child seats and trailers are used safely



Children have a helmet and bicycle that is the correct size and fit for them



The child wears an approved helmet every time they ride



The child's bicycle is checked regularly for wear and tear

## Helmets

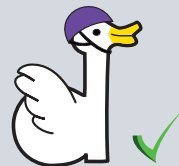
**After helmets were made compulsory head injuries to cyclists fell by around 40%.**

By law everyone who rides a bike, sits on a bike seat or in a bike trailer is required to wear an approved helmet

### Choosing a Helmet:

Involve the child when choosing a helmet. They need to try it on to test that it fits them correctly and that they are happy with its appearance.

- Make sure the helmet meets Australian Standards
- Be wary of second-hand helmets – it can be hard to see any damage caused by previous impacts
- The helmet should:
  - ✓ fit snugly - if it is too big it will not protect the child
  - ✓ not move forward obstructing vision
  - ✓ not move backward exposing the forehead
- Don't forget to replace helmets every 3 years or sooner if subjected to any impact
- Hats (especially ball caps) should not be worn under helmets - They can cause scalping and can block peripheral vision.
- Adjust the head band inside the helmet and the side straps so that the side buckle sits below the earlobe and the straps form a V directly below the earlobe
- The straps should adjust so there is enough room for only two fingers between the chin and the strap



## Bicycles



### Choosing a Bike:

Can the child reach the pedals at their lowest point with the seat on its lowest setting?

Yes/No

With both feet flat on the ground can the child straddle the frame with at least 2cm clearance?

Can the child comfortably reach the handlebars while seated?

Can the child comfortably reach the brake levers?

If the answer to any or all of these questions is no, then the bike is too big for the child.

Take advantage of professional advice available at bicycle retailers – they can help you to determine which bike is right for the child.

### Bicycle Safety Checklist



Check the child's bike regularly that:

**Air** pressure in the tyres is suitable and make sure there is no excessive wear and tear.

**Brakes**, both front and back work and that the child can reach the levers. Check for fraying cables.

**Chain** is oiled and running smoothly. Pedals should spin freely.

**Handlebars** are straight, tight, and aligned with the front fork and tyre

**Bells** should be loud enough for others to hear.

**Lights** work and batteries and globes do not need replacing.

**Seat** is at the right height for good pedalling

## Child seats and trailers



Children should not travel in a bike seat or trailer before they:

- ✓ are 12 months of age
- ✓ can sit upright unattended
- ✓ can hold their head up whilst wearing a helmet

Children must wear an approved helmet every time they ride. If the helmet is too heavy for them or makes them sit uncomfortably they are not ready to travel on a bike, on a bike seat or in a bike trailer.

### Practice

Ride with just the seat or trailer before you ride with the child. You will need to take into account difficulty in stopping and steering with the extra weight of the seat or trailer.

### Stability

Be sure the bike is stable before you put the child in or take them out of the seat or trailer.

### Baby Backpacks and Slings

Never use a baby backpack or sling to carry your child while riding a bike. If you run into something or fall off your bike the child has much further to fall, little protection and may be seriously injured if you fall on them.

## More information

### Kidsafe ACT

[www.kidsafeact.com.au](http://www.kidsafeact.com.au)  
Building 2, Pearce Centre  
Collett Place, Pearce ACT  
Ph: (02) 6290 2244  
ABN 55 756 024 270

See Kidsafe *Teaching Kids to Ride* brochure

**ACT Policing** - 6256 7777 [www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au)

**Canberra Connect** - 13 22 81

**Cycle Education** - [www.cycleducation.com.au](http://www.cycleducation.com.au)

**Department of Territory and Municipal Services** [www.tams.act.gov.au/move/cycling](http://www.tams.act.gov.au/move/cycling)



# Choosing Bikes and Helmets

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