

## Fact:

Motorcycle helmets protect the head and brain. Helmets save lives and prevent devastating and debilitating head injuries.

## Fact:

There are absolutely **NO** drawbacks to wearing a helmet.

## Fact:

Wearing a helmet has benefits in addition to protecting your head in the event of a crash.

Countless reputable research studies have consistently revealed findings that overwhelmingly substantiate these facts as verifiable and true. These studies can be found at [www.smarter-usa.org](http://www.smarter-usa.org).

Do you value  
your independence?

Want to protect  
your family  
and  
your future?

Then wear a helmet  
to protect  
your head and brain.

The Skilled Motorcyclist Association can help you be a smarter rider who wears all the gear all the time, including a protective helmet.



[www.smarter-usa.org](http://www.smarter-usa.org)

# Motorcycle Helmets



## Know the Facts

see inside and read more at  
[www.smarter-usa.org](http://www.smarter-usa.org)

# Riding Smart Facts About Helmets

**Fact:**

**Motorcycle helmets protect the head and brain. Helmets save lives and prevent devastating and debilitating head injuries.**

The protective value of motorcycle helmets is documented by 40 years of research. Every reputable safety-research organization in the world supports the use of motorcycle helmets as a way to reduce injury and death. It is irrefutable that helmets protect the head and brain and that when riders wear helmets, injuries and deaths from crashes are significantly reduced.

Many studies have been conducted regarding the efficacy of motorcycle helmets. It is not possible to include all the findings here, but if you are interested in reading more about them, a great place to start is at the Web site of the Skilled Motorcyclist Association—Responsible, Trained & Educated Riders (SMARTER), at [www.smarter-usa.org](http://www.smarter-usa.org).

Begin by clicking on our Resources & Links page and then select the classic and comprehensive “Hurt Report,” listed first under Motorcyclist-Safety Research & Program Implementation. To briefly summarize the report’s conclusions regarding helmet use, Hurt found that

- (1) **using a safety helmet is the single critical factor in the prevention or reduction of head injury;**
- (2) **that the safety helmet is a significantly effective injury countermeasure; and**
- (3) **that helmeted riders and passengers showed significantly lower head and neck injury for all types of injury, at all level of injury severity.**

The document “Motorcycle Helmet Research,” also on this same page, lists much of the research conducted from the early 1980s through 1998, a summary of which was published in *Safe Cycling* (Motorcycle Safety Foundation, Winter 1998, Vol. 20, No. 3). Below that is “A Compilation of Great Web Resources”; and under the same Motorcyclist-Safety Research heading mentioned above, there is a link to an extensively referenced article about helmet effectiveness written by Melissa Neiman, M.D. So if you want to review the research for yourself, we have made it easy for you to locate. You will find it overwhelming.

**Fact:**

**There are absolutely *NO* drawbacks to wearing a helmet.**

While it is common to hear uninformed bikers talk about the drawbacks of wearing a helmet (like helmets cause injuries, reduce peripheral vision, prevent hearing significant traffic noise, or cause heat exhaustion), every one of their claims is false. They are merely myths perpetuated by individuals and organizations who choose to ignore the research or who use these claims to support other agendas.

The comprehensive “Hurt Report” referenced earlier found that safety-helmet use caused no attenuation of critical traffic sounds, no limitation of precrash visual field, and no fatigue or loss of attention. Furthermore, it found that **no element of accident causation was related to helmet use** whatsoever. Anti-helmet groups often cite the “Goldstein study” as support for their cause. This study has been severely criticized for its lack of research integrity. Even so, one of Goldstein’s findings, which is never mentioned by anti-helmet groups, is that “helmets have a statistically significant effect in reducing head injury severity.”

For a detailed review of the myths about helmets and the facts that refute them, see the document “Common Myths and Facts” on our Resources & Links page.

**Fact:**

**Wearing a helmet has benefits in addition to protecting your head in the event of a crash.**

No one wants to be in a crash, and every rider knows that one of the biggest problems encountered while riding is not being seen. Wearing a bright-colored helmet or one with reflective material will help make you more visible to other road users. While riding, your head is the highest point, and a bright-colored helmet is often the first sign of your presence that motorists see. Helmets also make riding more enjoyable by making you more comfortable. They cut down on wind noise roaring by your ears and windblast on your face and in your eyes, and they deflect bugs and other objects from your face and eyes. Finally, **wearing a helmet shows others that you are a responsible rider** and that motorcyclists are responsible people.

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