

Motorbike Helmets – Buyers Guide

Whether you are buying your first motorbike or scooter or reliving the good old days and getting back on a bike again, you will be looking for a new helmet and protective clothing.

A motorbike helmet is the only piece of motorcycle clothing kit that there is a legal requirement to wear whilst riding a motorbike.



So, what helmet do you buy?

What you should also be asking yourself is: -

- Is the helmet genuine or fake?
- Will it protect me from head injuries if I have an accident?
- What is my budget?
- Where will I buy it from, online or retail premises?
- Do I buy a new or second-hand helmet?



You may have spent a lot of money on the purchase of your bike and getting it on the road, which could mean looking at ways of getting a cheaper helmet and protective clothing. The internet is full of websites and social media opportunities, to pick up cheap or second-hand motorcycle helmets.

A helmet is the most important part of your kit so getting it right is invaluable. A brain injury is permanent – a genuine helmet is designed and tested to minimise the risk of head injury.

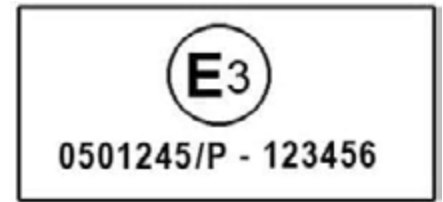
There are many counterfeit and poor-quality cheap helmets available online, these can give a rider a false sense of protection and will reduce the level of protection from head injuries. Fakes can also be difficult to identify.

Buyers Beware

Following the Buyers guide below will help you do all you can to check the helmet you buy is genuine and meets the required standards of safety.

Buyers Guide – what to look for

- Make sure your new helmet is genuine and compliant by being labelled UN ECE 22.5 or 22.6 or BS 6658:1985 and carries the BSI Kitemark
- Does it have a label with an E + number in a circle? This shows the helmet has been certified to the UN ECE standard. The number represents the country that certified it



- Online Checks: -
 - Check where the seller is based – if not in the UK will you be able to get a refund for a fake or damaged helmet if the seller is based overseas?
 - How do they want payment?
 - If you find a branded helmet on an unknown website at a far lower cost than the manufacturers, then this should trigger alarm bells – do some more research into the seller and any negative reviews.
 - Check the returns and delivery policy to make sure of your consumer rights
- For more advice go to [NCW leaflet_ENGLISH \(2\).pdf \(citizensadvice.org.uk\)](#)

- Physical Checks: -
Examine the helmet, labelling and packaging for the following: -

- Check the chin strap for a white stitched label displaying an E + a number, and a serial number or the BSI Kitemark & BS 6658:1985
- Stickers that haven't been applied properly
- Not in its original box
- Lack of booklets/labels and tags
- Poor quality paintwork
- Scratches on visor/helmet
- The weight of the helmet



Remember: **Try before you buy** where you can – a helmet that doesn't fit is not going to offer the best protection from brain injuries – [follow this fitting guide to make sure you get the helmet with the best fit](#)

SHARP is the Safety Helmet Assessment and Rating Programme. You can use the [SHARP rating system](#) to help you make an informed choice on choosing **the right motorcycle crash helmet**.



Myth Busters

Myth: Any helmet is better than no helmet!

- **Fact:** a fake or low-quality helmet can give a rider a false sense of protection and reduces the level of protection of head injury

Myth: Helmets being sold on well-known online websites must be ok and safe to be sold?

- **Fact:** Not everything sold online is genuine and compliant to relevant product safety standards and regulations

Fake helmets will not protect you - see these links including a video of a counterfeit helmet being tested:

[Fake crash helmet article](#)

[itv news article](#)

And finally,.....if it seems too good to be true, it probably is!

Disadvantages of a used helmet

There are quite a few downsides to buying a used motorcycle helmet, the most important ones are: -

- Age – Helmets do have an expiration date dependent upon the material it is made from.
- Material wear and tear – reducing impact absorption.
- Helmets are deemed as disposable products – they are designed for one incident of impact. A helmet should not be used again after an accident or impact from a fall. Dispose of any helmet after impact.
- Helmets don't always show evidence of impact or if the inner or outer shells have been damaged. A damaged helmet will not provide the same level of impact absorption from a second impact from an accident or fall.
- You will not know the history of a second-hand helmet and what it has gone through.
- Internal linings will have shaped to the first owners head, it will therefore not fit or reshape to your head properly, reducing level of protection.

