

Know What to Look For:



**THIS IS
BOGUS**

**Don't Let the Shiny
Shell Fool You**

Motorcycle riders and passengers need to wear helmets that meet federal standards and that conform to Washington law RCW 46.37.530(3). Studies across the country show *that wearing an approved helmet can prevent fatal or serious injuries*. Please be sure to

RIDE SAFELY

by wearing a helmet that meets the standards identified in this brochure.

BE LEGIT

**IT'S YOUR HEAD,
WE THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW**

Brought to you by:



WASHINGTON
Traffic Safety
COMMISSION



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
LICENSING

For more information on helmets visit:
www.wsp.wa.gov

**IS YOUR GEAR
LEGIT?**



**BOGUS
HELMETS**

Common MYTHS About Legal Helmets

“IT BLOCKS MY VISION”

A properly fitting helmet will not block central or peripheral vision. Most reputable motorcycle gear shops have some kind of training for their sales people on helmet fit, usually provided by a manufacturer’s rep.

“IT BLOCKS MY HEARING”

A properly fitting full or 3/4 helmet will help block the excessive wind noise that can lead to irreversible hearing loss, without blocking the sounds a motorcyclist needs to hear such as horns and sirens.

You are more likely to die in a motorcycle collision if you are wearing a bogus helmet than if you don't wear a helmet at all.

— Peek-Asa et al., 1999, Accident Analysis & Prevention



LEGIT vs. BOGUS

The Difference is Obvious

Legal Helmets meet the requirements outlined by DOT FMVSS 218

A legitimate helmet meeting the federal safety standards has an inner lining of firm energy-absorbing material, usually one inch thick. It's this energy-absorbing material that makes the biggest life-saving difference.



A legitimate helmet will have a chinstrap that is thick and well riveted

Bogus helmets usually have a flimsy strap and may have rivets that protrude inside the helmet.

Bogus helmets are characterized by very small coverage of the head, and a thin, less energy-absorbing lining.

A SHOPPING GUIDE

What to Look for in a Helmet



SHELL. A legitimate helmet meeting the federal safety standard has an inner foam lining, usually about one inch thick, and will feel heavier than a bogus helmet. Bogus helmets are little more than a shell with a thin lining.

CHINSTRAP. A legitimate helmet will have a chinstrap that is thick and well riveted. Bogus helmets usually have a flimsy strap and may have rivets that protrude inside the helmet (creating yet another hazard).

INSIDE LABELING. A legitimate helmet will have a label permanently affixed on the inside. This label is required to provide the following information:

- Manufacturer Name
- Helmet Model
- Size
- Month and Year of Manufacture
- Construction Materials



DOT LABEL. The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) doesn't make helmets, but it sets the standards which manufacturers must follow. A legitimate helmet will be marked on the outside with a permanent, legible label indicating it has been made to DOT specifications. Be careful though, some bogus helmets might have a fake DOT sticker (like the one pictured above).



To read the law see the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 49 CFR 571.218