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## Why You Should Not Buy A Used Motorcycle Helmet

By Low Jeremy

A motorcycle helmet is one of those essentials that will help save your life should you have an accident while riding your bike. This will protect your head from a damaging and even potentially fatal head injury. Motorcycle helmets are so important that state lawmakers have even included a directive in the state laws that orders all people riding the motorcycle to wear helmets.

Some people though do not understand the importance of this accessory. In fact, some people do not even like wearing it because it is too heavy and too suffocating. Others find it a killjoy to not be able to feel the wind on their faces when riding a motorbike.

Motorcycle helmets are not really that expensive but they are also not cheap. Some who are not that well-informed will probably save all their money for the motorcycle leaving a really small budget for safety gears like the helmet. Some even buy used helmets instead of new ones. This, however, is one practice that should not be encouraged.

Using used helmets is extremely dangerous and impractical. Used helmets are actually worthless and what is more you cannot really tell whether they are damaged or not. You won't even be able to tell if they are relatively new ones or not. This is because the helmet is made from a hard outer shell that envelops a layer of expanded polystyrene. You will never be able to tell if the expanded polystyrene is already compressed or not unless you cut the outer shell. An already compressed polystyrene layer will not protect you from an accident.

Another thing that you should consider is the fact that polystyrene becomes brittle as it ages. This is the reason why old helmets should be exchanged for new ones in a couple of years as it may not be able to absorb much of the impact when an accident does happen. The polystyrene layer is also easily damaged by the sun and by chemicals such as gas vapors.

Motor bikers who always place their helmet near the gas tank will also unknowingly damage the lining of the helmet. It is also not a good idea to always let the helmet sit under the heat of the sun. If you can, try to park your motorbike in areas that are shaded. Pointed objects may also compromise the lifespan of the helmet by piercing through the polystyrene layer inside.

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### **Motorcycle Helmets: The Statistics**

**By Andrew Dillan**

When you go for a ride on your motorcycle, you're out to have fun. And hey, you've never had a crash before, so why would it happen now? Here are the government statistics about motorcycle helmets.

A brief history of the Law

In 1967, the US federal government said that it would take away funding from any state that didn't have a helmet law. By 1975, 47 states had complied with the federal government. However, in 1976, they repealed the law, ruling it unconstitutional. Most states softened their helmet laws.

Kentucky and Louisiana

In the late 1990s, Kentucky and Louisiana repealed their helmet laws. While the helmet laws were in effect, nearly 100% of the people wore their helmets. When the laws came off the books, it fell to only half of people wearing helmets. The rate of fatalities per number of registered motorcycles rose 37% in Kentucky, and it rose a staggering 74% in Louisiana.

Don't mess with Texas

Similarly to Kentucky and Louisiana, Texas took its helmet law off the books in 1997 for riders 21 or older who have insurance or training. Helmet use dropped from 96% to 66%, and motorcycle related deaths went up 1/3rd. This means that the death rates corresponds almost directly to the proportion of people who do not wear helmets.

Florida's Example

Florida repealed its helmet law in 2000. From 1997–1999 (three years while the law was in place) 515 motorcycle riders were killed in crashes; 48 of those deaths were people not wearing helmets. From 2001–2003 (three years after the law was created) there were 933 motorcycle riders killed in crashes; 566 of these were not wearing their helmet.

What we can learn from this is that more people die when helmet use becomes optional. There were roughly 400 deaths in each three year period of people who wear helmets. However, the rate of people who died not wearing helmets went up more than 10 times. This is not coincidental.

Helmet Law Defense League

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The Helmet Law Defense League is a group of people who lobby against laws requiring the use of helmets. They claim that it anti-constitutional to force people to wear helmets. They also argue that the word "helmet" is too vague.

### Bells and Whistles

Even if you don't choose to wear a motorcycle helmet for safety reasons, there are other reasons. The face guard allows you to see more clearly and prevents damage to your eyes when you go at high

speeds. It also offers ear protection. Some helmets can be equipped with intercoms so you can communicate with your friends while you're on your bike.

### The Source

The mortality rate statistics are taken directly from The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. The figures can be accessed through their annual reports, and some are available on their websites.

For information on how to get a loan to purchase a motorcycle or other vehicle, visit

[http://www.theguideto-carloans.com/motorcycle\\_loans/](http://www.theguideto-carloans.com/motorcycle_loans/)



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