

Electric City HOG Chapter Newsletter #4769

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Do motorcycle helmets expire?

Generally, helmets made with thermoplastic or polycarbonate tend to last in full working order for about 5 years with normal use. Some helmets can last up to 9 years, but it's important to monitor wear and tear on the inside.

How to know if a helmet is DOT-approved?

Helmets that meet FMVSS 218 must have a sticker on the outside back of the helmet with the letters "DOT," certifying that the helmet meets or exceeds FMVSS 218.

Is ECE or DOT better?

Both the DOT and ECE standards have their strengths and weaknesses. While the DOT standard is a good starting point for minimum helmet performance, the ECE standard offers a higher level of protection and ongoing testing to ensure that helmets remain safe to use over time.

Things to consider when choosing a helmet:

SIZE

Measure your head using a cloth tape starting just above your eyebrows and circling around the thickest point at the rear of your head. Compare this measurement with a helmet size chart. A correctly sized helmet should be a little tight, providing even pressure around your head without uncomfortable pressure points. The helmet should not move when you shake your head.

SHAPE

Helmets come in different shape styles—round oval, intermediate oval (the most common), and long oval. Determine your head shape before buying a helmet. Focus on your head shape, not the shape of your face.

WEIGHT

Helmets meeting the federal standard generally weigh about 3 pounds. It's important to note that each motorcycle helmet type has its pros and cons. The right helmet for your needs depends on the type of riding you'll be doing, your protection requirements, and your style.

Types of motorcycle helmets:

- Full-Face helmet
- Flip-Up helmet (Modular helmet)
- Open Face helmet (3/4 helmet)
- Half Face helmet (Beanie helmet)