Bicycling is a great way to get around, exercise outdoors, or just spend time with friends and family. In fact, one of the hottest trends in both the Bay Area and Greater Sacramento Area is hopping on a rental e-bike or scooter for fun, eco-friendly transportation.

Before you hit the pedals, make sure you’re protecting one of your greatest assets: your head! Wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of head injury to bicyclists by as much as 85 percent.

Follow these tips to make sure you get the right helmet:

1. **Safety first!** While you may be attracted to a cool design and color, your first priority is a durable, safety-rated helmet. All helmets manufactured after 1999 are required to be Consumer Product Safety Commission-approved—check before you buy.

2. **Get the right fit.** A helmet should rest comfortably, yet squarely (not tilted back) on your head. Adjustable straps are key, as well as soft pads for comfort. It should fit firmly without being too tight.

3. **Read the owner’s manual.** Since helmet design and construction differs among manufacturers, it’s important to review the instructions to ensure the proper fit.

4. **Consider all the options.** Depending upon the type of riding you’re doing—for example off-road or long-distance—you may want to get a helmet with a visor, extra cooling vents, or other features.

5. **Replace it.** Helmets wear out over time, so most manufacturers recommend replacing every five to 10 years. Of course, if you have a crash and the helmet is damaged, replace it right away.

Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission, Cleveland Clinic