

Pre-Ride Helmet Check Habit Builder

A compact 30-day template for making helmet checks automatic



PURPOSE

Build one repeatable behavior: before every ride, pause to look at the helmet, position it correctly, and secure the retention system. This habit supports consistent checks; it does not certify the helmet or guarantee protection.

1 Protocol Mission

Rider: _____
Helmet / model: _____
Primary riding activity: _____
Cycle dates: _____ to _____

Minimum Viable Habit

MY 10-SECOND HABIT

After my chosen anchor, I will hold my helmet and complete the three-point READY check: LOOK • POSITION • SECURE.

Step	What I do	Done
LOOK	Scan for obvious shell, liner, strap, buckle, hardware, or recent-impact concerns.	☐
POSITION	Place the helmet in its intended position; confirm it is not unexpectedly loose or painfully tight.	☐
SECURE	Fasten the retention system and confirm the helmet stays centered during gentle head movement.	☐

Completion Rule

- The habit counts only when all three READY steps are completed before riding.
- Wearing the helmet without checking it does not count.
- A non-riding day is recorded as R and does not break the chain.

30-Day Mission

COMMITMENT

I will complete the READY check before every ride for 30 days. I will prioritize consistency over speed, perfection, or a long inspection.

Signature / initials: _____

2 Anchor the Habit

Choose One Reliable Trigger

- Pick up my key.
- Unlock my bicycle or vehicle.
- Put on my riding shoes or gloves.
- Take the helmet from its storage location.

MY ANCHOR FORMULA

After I _____, I will immediately hold my helmet and complete LOOK • POSITION • SECURE.

Anchor test	Yes	No
Does this action happen before nearly every ride?	☐	☐
Is the action easy to notice?	☐	☐
Can I check the helmet immediately afterward?	☐	☐

Backup Anchor

WHEN MY ROUTINE CHANGES

Before the helmet goes on, the READY check begins.

Make the Environment Support the Habit

Setup action	Done
Store the helmet in one consistent, visible location.	☐
Place the key, gloves, or another unavoidable item beside the helmet.	☐
Keep a READY reminder card near the helmet.	☐
Keep manufacturer instructions easy to access.	☐
Use the same READY sequence at every riding location.	☐

Full Pre-Ride Check — Use When Needed

Check	Ready	Problem
Correct helmet selected for the activity	☐	☐
No obvious crack, split, deep damage, or severe deformation	☐	☐
Accessible liner and padding appear complete	☐	☐
Required components and hardware are present	☐	☐
Strap, anchors, and buckle appear serviceable	☐	☐
Helmet sits correctly and remains stable	☐	☐
Required face protection or accessory is secure	☐	☐
No unresolved impact or service concern exists	☐	☐

STOP RULE

When the check reveals a possible safety-critical problem, do not ignore it to preserve the ride or the habit streak.

3 Consistency Matrix — Days 1-15

Codes: X = completed before every ride • P = partial • M = missed • R = no ride • S = stopped after a problem was found

Day	Date	Rode?	Mark	Result	Note
1		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
2		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
3		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
4		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
5		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
6		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
7		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
8		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
9		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
10		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
11		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
12		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
13		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
14		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
15		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	

Quick Totals — First Half

Rides	Complete checks	Partial	Missed	Problems found

RECOVERY RULE
After one missed check, resume at the next ride. Do not allow one miss to become two consecutive misses.

3 Consistency Matrix — Days 16–30

Codes: X = completed before every ride • P = partial • M = missed • R = no ride • S = stopped after a problem was found

Day	Date	Rode?	Mark	Result	Note
16		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
17		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
18		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
19		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
20		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
21		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
22		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
23		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
24		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
25		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
26		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
27		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
28		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
29		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	
30		Yes / No	X / P / M / R / S	Ready / Corrected / Stopped	

Cycle Totals

Total rides	Complete checks	Partial	Missed	Problems found	Stopped rides

Completion rate = Complete checks ÷ Total rides × 100 = _____ %

4 Problem Response and Weekly Debrief

What to Do When the Check Finds a Problem

Finding	Required response
Minor permitted adjustment needed	Correct it, then repeat the relevant READY step.
Required component missing	Do not ride until an approved component is installed.
Damaged strap, buckle, anchor, shell, or liner	Stop using the helmet and follow appropriate guidance.
Compatibility or impact history uncertain	Do not improvise; verify with an authoritative source.
Severe pain, breathing restriction, dizziness, or neurological symptoms	Stop and seek appropriate professional guidance.

Four Weekly Reviews

Week	Rides	Complete checks	Main obstacle	One change for next week
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				

Process Questions

- ☐ Did my anchor occur before nearly every ride? Notes: _____
- ☐ Was the READY check small enough to repeat? Notes: _____
- ☐ What made successful days easy? Notes: _____
- ☐ What almost caused a missed check? Notes: _____
- ☐ Did I respond correctly when a problem appeared? Notes: _____

Missed-Habit Reset

Date	What interrupted the habit?	Did the anchor occur?	Change before next ride

4 End-of-Cycle Analysis

Anchor Effectiveness

Statement	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
I noticed my anchor before riding.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The anchor immediately reminded me to check.	☐	☐	☐	☐
The helmet was visible and available.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I completed the check before distraction began.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Friction Score

Rate each obstacle: 0 = none, 1 = minor, 2 = frequent, 3 = major.

Obstacle	0	1	2	3	Obstacle	0	1	2	3
Rushing	☐	☐	☐	☐	Helmet out of sight	☐	☐	☐	☐
Different locations	☐	☐	☐	☐	Routine too long	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multiple helmets	☐	☐	☐	☐	Poor lighting	☐	☐	☐	☐
Forgetfulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	Social pressure	☐	☐	☐	☐
Unclear response	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐

Core Findings

My biggest obstacle was: _____

The most effective part of my system was: _____

The READY step I skipped most often was: _____

The most important change for the next cycle is: _____

Final Habit Classification

Outcome	Use when
AUTOMATIC	The anchor triggers the check naturally and reminders are rarely needed.
STABLE	The check is reliable, but a visible cue remains helpful.
NEEDS REFINEMENT	The rider understands the check but often forgets, delays, or skips it.
RESTART SMALLER	The routine is too difficult; return to LOOK • POSITION • SECURE only.

My classification: _____

5 Refine the Next Cycle

Select the Main System Problem

Select	Problem	Select	Problem
☐	The anchor was unreliable.	☐	The helmet was not visible.
☐	The routine was too long.	☐	I started riding before remembering.
☐	I rode from several locations.	☐	I used multiple helmets.
☐	I did not know what to inspect.	☐	I did not know how to respond.
☐	The tracker was inconvenient.	☐	Other: _____

System Refinement Plan

Biggest obstacle	Why it happened	New strategy	Refined anchor

Useful Refinements

- Forgotten habit: place the key or gloves beside the helmet and move the cue closer to the ride.
- Routine too long: keep the pre-ride habit to LOOK • POSITION • SECURE; move detailed inspection to a separate maintenance routine.
- Different locations: use the same cue card and the same READY sequence everywhere.
- Multiple helmets: identify each helmet and check the exact helmet chosen for that ride.
- Problem ignored: define stop conditions before the next cycle begins.

Next-Cycle Commitment

REFINED MINIMUM HABIT

Before each ride, I will _____.

REFINED ANCHOR

After I _____, I will immediately _____.

Next cycle start date: _____

Next review date: _____

Success will mean: _____

✓ **READY Reference Card and Completion Record**

LOOK	POSITION	SECURE
• Shell and liner • Strap and buckle • Hardware and components • Recent impact concern	• Correct helmet • Correct orientation • Stable placement • No severe pressure	• Strap routed correctly • Buckle fully closed • Adjustment holds • Helmet stays centered

LOOK. POSITION. SECURE. THEN RIDE.

Completion Record

Measure	Result	Measure	Result
Total rides		Complete checks	
Completion rate		Longest sequence	
Problems found		Stopped rides	
Anchor effectiveness		Final classification	

The most effective part of my system was: _____

The most important next-cycle refinement is: _____

Rider signature / confirmation: _____

Completion date: _____

IMPORTANT LIMITATION

A pre-ride check can help identify obvious readiness concerns, but it cannot reveal every hidden defect, certify the helmet, guarantee future performance, or prevent injury. Reassess the helmet after a significant impact, visible damage, component or fit change, service event, or relevant manufacturer or rule update.

Notes