

# Staying Safe in Sports



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Sports are fun, but they can also be dangerous. Many sports require that players wear protective gear, such as helmets, guards, and padding. Football, hockey, baseball, soccer, and auto racing all require players to use protective gear.

In football, players wear helmets and padding. The first football helmets were made of leather and had

no padding. They looked more like hats than helmets. In the 1950s, helmets began to be made of plastic. Shoulder pads became common, too.

Hockey players also wear protective gear. Like football helmets, hockey helmets are made of plastic and have padding that protects players' heads. Goalies wear helmets with cages that protect their face. All hockey players wear shin guards and elbow pads. These, too, are made of plastic, and they protect players' arms and legs.

In baseball, catchers wear helmets that look like goalies' helmets. That's because catchers stand behind

batters, and pitchers can throw baseballs at 90 miles per hour. In addition, batters sometimes let their bat go, and that, too, can hit a catcher. Catchers also wear shin guards to protect their legs and padding to protect their chest. Batters sometimes wear guards to protect their arms, too.

Soccer players have worn shin guards since the 1800s. Not only do shin guards protect players' legs, but players can also hit the ball with their guards. In addition, players wear shoes with cleats, which keep them from sliding on grass.

What kind of protective gear do you think a racing-car driver would wear? Cars can go as fast as 200 miles per hour. To protect themselves if their car crashes or if their engine catches fire, drivers wear helmets and suits that protect them from fire. The suits keep them safe while they get out of the car.

Whatever sport you enjoy, it makes sense to wear protective gear. That way, you stay safe, and you can keep on playing.



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