



# CPSC Fact Sheet



## SKATEBOARDING SAFETY

Like other sports activities, skateboarding has risks. Vehicle traffic, trick riding, and excessive speed can lead to collisions, loss of control, and falls. Even experienced riders have been injured and killed.

*Take knowledge to the extreme, and follow these important tips for safer riding:*

- **Wear protective gear when riding—especially a helmet.** Wearing a helmet can mean the difference between life and death. Don't become another statistic.
- **Stay clear of moving vehicles.** Some of the most common and severe skateboarding accidents involve collisions with moving vehicles. Don't ride where you are likely to encounter traffic. Never hitch a ride ("skitch") onto a moving vehicle.
- **Inspect/adjust your board before you ride.** Always check for excessive play (looseness) and any broken or cracked parts. Serious defects should be fixed by a qualified repair shop.
- **Ride during the day.** Avoid riding at dusk and dawn or in other low-light conditions where you cannot see or be seen easily by vehicles.
- **Inspect your riding terrain.** Skateboarders should inspect the area where they will be riding for holes, bumps, rocks, and debris.
- **Never ride alone. Accidents happen.** Ride with friends and bring a phone. Children under 8 years old should be supervised closely.
- **Ride wisely.** Don't ride faster than you can handle. You can lose control of your skateboard at any speed. Never lie down on a skateboard in motion.
- **Don't drink and ride.** Alcohol and drugs reduce your ability to control your skateboard and react to unexpected circumstances, greatly increasing your chances of injury and death.

### What is Speed Wobble?

Speed wobble happens when a skateboard begins to shimmy from side to side unexpectedly. Within seconds, this can lead to a board rocking so violently that the rider is thrown to the ground before having a chance to react.

### Ways to Reduce the Risk of Speed Wobble:

- Ride forward and crouch on your board.
- Longer boards increase stability.
- Boards with wider hangers (wheels that are farther apart) give riders greater control.
- Keep trucks, wheels, nuts, and mounting screws tightened properly to improve stability at higher speeds.

### Always Wear a Helmet

- A helmet should fit snugly with the chin strap fastened because it can come off upon impact if it is too loose.
- The helmet should be level with the head, not tilted back.
- Wear a helmet designed for skateboarding (hard shell with foam interior).

### Other Suggested Protective Gear

- Wrist guards are especially important for reducing the risk of fractures.
- Use knee and elbow pads.
- Wear flat-soled shoes.

