



Important information

Helmets and mouth guards in Gaelic games are strictly regulated to protect players from severe head, facial, and dental injuries. Proper safety standards ensure that all equipment meets rigorous testing criteria, and players must strictly adhere to these guidelines to maintain coverage under the relevant Insurance Schemes.

Helmets Safety Standard (I.S. 355)

All players at every level of Hurling and Camogie are required to wear a helmet with a facial guard in both training and competitive matches.

The Standard: Helmets and faceguards must be certified to the **National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) I.S. 355 standard**.

- **The "System" Rule:** A helmet must be purchased with the faceguard already added at the point of manufacture. You should not buy a helmet without a faceguard and attach one later, as doing so invalidates the safety rating.
- **Modifications:** Do not remove bars, drill holes, or alter the manufacturer's structure in any way.
- **Testing Guidelines:** Ensure your helmet fits snugly and does not lift when pushed from the back. It must pass the "shake test" without slipping and provide safe clearance from the nose and lips. Always verify the helmet has a valid CE mark.

Mouth Guards (Gum Shields)

While hurling helmets are strictly for full head and facial protection, mouth guards are also essential for preventing dento-alveolar (dental) injuries.

- **Gaelic Football vs. Hurling:** The GAA mandates the use of mouth guards in **all Gaelic football games and practice sessions**. While mouth guards are not strictly compulsory in Hurling under official rules, their use is highly recommended by medical and scientific committees to reduce the risk of dental damage during this fast-paced contact sport.
- **Fitting and Types:** Mouth guards can be either off-the-shelf, boil-and-bite, or custom-fitted by a dentist. Custom-fitted guards are generally the most comfortable, allowing for easier breathing and speech.
- **Insurance:** It is the player's responsibility to use compliant equipment. Failure to wear a mouth guard in Gaelic football means players are not covered under the GAA Injury Benefit Fund.