

## Personal Protective Equipment: Head to Toe

**HEAD:** Industrial hard hats or helmets prevent head injuries. **Tip:** Wear your head protection straight, not tilted, with the brim facing forward. Never wear another hat underneath.



**EYES:** Safety glasses, goggles and face shields resist flying debris, splashes, sparks and vapors. Eye gear should be marked ANSI Z87.1.

**EARS:** Earplugs or earmuffs can prevent hearing loss. OSHA designates a noise level of 85 decibels or higher as a hazard, but hearing loss can occur with exposure to constant noise levels slightly below that. **Tip:** If you're exposed to constant noise, even below OSHA's threshold, consider using earplugs or canal caps to prevent hearing loss.

**CHEST:** Chemical aprons, coveralls and specialty clothing mainly guard against hazardous materials. **Tip:** Wash and store this PPE separately from your other clothes.

**LUNGS:** Respirators keep out dust, fumes and gases. Types include half-face, full-face, air-purifying and air-supplying.

**HANDS:** Gloves protect your hands from chemicals, cuts and punctures, and heat and cold. Choose from insulated, rubber, metal mesh, cotton, leather or latex. **Tip:** Safety gloves should cover your hands completely, be close fitting and not constricting.

**FEET:** Safety shoes or boots guard against heavy falling or rolling objects, sharp edges, punctures, chemical burns, wet and slippery surfaces, heat and cold, and electrical hazards. **Tip:** Footwear should be sturdy, fastened securely and fit correctly.



When used in conjunction with machine guards, proper engineering controls and safe work practices, personal protective equipment can save your life.



• Don't Forget Your PPE •

1. Ensure the proper fit

2. Wear the right protection for the job

3. Replace worn or damaged equipment

## Protective Gear Primer

Wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) can help prevent on-the-job injuries and illnesses. Get the maximum benefit.

### 4 PPE principles:

- 1 Verify it.** Make sure your equipment is right for the hazard. **Examples:** Check material safety data sheets to identify the type of gloves needed for working with chemicals; confirm the class of hard hat needed; determine the appropriate goggles or safety glasses and additional protection for eyes and face.
- 2 Fit it.** Ensure your PPE is sized right for you. For example, eye gear may not fit properly if you wear prescription eyeglasses, or have long hair or a beard. Never alter or modify equipment.
- 3 Wear it.** PPE only works when you wear it. Don't take chances.
- 4 Inspect it.** Check for damage before and after wear. **Examples:** cracks, holes and punctures ... worn, torn and twisted straps ... badly scratched lenses. Replace if needed.

Your supervisor or risk manager can help you ensure the proper fit, use and reliability of your PPE. If you are unsure which PPE is needed, ask for help.



**PPE TLC:** Warm, soapy water and air-drying are usually sufficient for cleaning, but follow the manufacturer's instructions. Disinfect equipment when sharing the equipment with other people. Store PPE in a cool, dry place, away from sunlight.

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