



Personal Protective Equipment Training

You've probably heard a lot of excuses for not wearing protective equipment like a hardhat, gloves, and goggles. People say "they're hot and uncomfortable" or "they make it harder to get the job done." Sometimes these things are true. But the inconvenience is a small price to pay for safety. A job injury might disable you for life.

Personal protective equipment is no substitute for other safety precautions. No hardhat is going to save you if a loader dumps its load on you. But if you use the right safety equipment the right way, you can reduce the danger of injury.

Head Protection

High-visibility hard hats are required any time you are on a logging site. What hazards does a hardhat protect you from?

- It protects your head from **falling or flying objects**.
- It cushions the blow if you **hit your head** on something.
- It insulates you from **burns** and **electric shocks** (if it's a non-conductive type).
- It keeps your **hair** from:
 - getting tangled in machinery or equipment
 - getting dust or chemicals on it.

What is the suspension in a hardhat for? How should you adjust it?

- The suspension keeps a **cushion of air** between the outer shell and your head.
 - The cushion of air is important protection. Don't interfere with it. **Never carry anything** (like tools or cigarettes) inside your hardhat while you're wearing it.
 - **Adjust** the suspension so there's 1¼ inches between the top of your head and the shell. (If the manufacturer's directions are different, follow those.)
- Using the hardhat you brought to the meeting, show how to adjust the suspension.

How often should you inspect a hardhat? When should you replace it?

- Inspect the entire hardhat **every day**. **Replace** it immediately if you see damage to the shell, liner, or suspension.
- **Don't decorate** the hardhat. You may not be able to see damage if it has been painted or covered with stickers.
- **Replace** the hardhat if there has been a significant impact, even if you can't see any damage. The impact may have weakened it.
- **Change the suspension** in a hardhat for each new user.

Eye Protection

When do you need eye protection?

- You may need eye protection when there's danger from:
 - flying particles (from saws, drills, etc.) — splashes
 - dust — protruding or projecting parts
 - chemical vapors or fumes — bright light or ultraviolet rays (from welding, etc.)

What types of eye protection are there? How do you know which kind to use?

- Depending on the particular hazard, you may need **safety glasses** with side shields, **goggles**, or a **full face shield**. Consult the company's Safety and health Program, Safety Policy, Material Safety Data Sheets, or Job Safety Analysis to choose the right kind for the job you're doing.

- If you wear goggles, there are several types. With acids and some other chemicals, you may need special **splash resistant goggles**.
- For each job, show the type of eye protection required, and explain where to obtain it:
- **Don't wear contact lenses** on a construction site unless approved by a doctor. If you must wear prescription eyeglasses, obtain ANSI approved safety prescription eyewear with side shields.

Hand Protection

When do you need to wear gloves?

- Gloves can help protect you from:
 - flying particles — electricity
 - cuts — chemicals and radioactive material
 - cold or wet surfaces or environments — burns

Not all gloves are the same. How do you choose the right glove for the job?

- Use **wire mesh gloves** if there's an extreme danger of cuts.
- Use insulated **rubber gloves** (with canvas or leather outer gloves) for electrical work.
- Use **non-flammable gloves** when welding.
- Only special **chemical resistant gloves** (rubber or plastic) will protect you from chemicals. Different types stop different chemicals from getting through to your skin. The package should tell you which chemicals the glove is designed for.
- Chemical resistant gloves break down over time. Then the chemicals start to get through. Don't use them beyond their intended service time (shown on the package).

Foot Protection

ANSI approved steel-toe boots are required to be worn while on a logging site. Under OSHA's logging standard, this is the only type of required safety equipment that is NOT required to be purchased by the employer. OSHA requires that employee-owned safety equipment must be serviceable and meet applicable standards.

Hearing Protection

True or False? Even if your hearing gets bad, all you need is some time off the job and it will come back.

- False! It's true that many construction workers experience **temporary** hearing loss, which clears up if you're off the job for a while. But noise can also cause **permanent** hearing loss. With this kind, you never get back to normal. Even a hearing aid won't help much. That's why it's so important to protect yourself from noise.

Don't you have to work in construction for a long time to get permanent hearing loss?

- Not always. A very loud noise can begin to damage your hearing right away, even if you're only exposed to it for a short time.

So is noise dangerous only if it's very loud?

- No. A moderate level of noise can also cause permanent hearing loss if you're exposed to it day after day for a period of months or years. It can damage your hearing gradually, even if it doesn't seem that loud to you.
- The louder the noise and the longer you are exposed, the greater is the permanent damage to your hearing.

Noise is measured in *decibels (dB)*. A noise above 120 dB is so loud that it causes pain in your ears. OSHA says no worker may be exposed to more than 85 dB, as an average over an 8-hour shift. This is called the *permissible exposure limit (PEL)* for noise. What are some examples of noise on a construction site that might be over 85 dB?

- Heavy trucks (around 100 decibels)
- Power saws (around 110 decibels)
- Riveting on steel (around 130 decibels)

What if you only work around loud noise for a short time—not eight hours a day? What do OSHA regulations say about that?

• OSHA says you can be exposed to noise louder than 85 db if it's just for a short time. The louder the noise, the shorter the time you can work in the area without damaging your hearing.

What are some clues that there might be too much noise on the job?

- As a rule of thumb, the decibel level **could** be above the legal limit if you have to raise your voice to be heard an arm's length away.
- Other signs of too much noise are **temporary hearing loss** or **ringing in the ears**.
- Everyone is different. Some workers will experience hearing loss even if noise is below the legal limit. Since there's no way of telling if you're the one whose hearing will be the first to go, it's best to avoid noise exposure whenever possible.
- If there's any reason to think the noise level may be too high, the company can have the level measured with instruments. This is called **noise monitoring**.

On this job we are in the process of completing noise monitoring. The results of this monitoring will be available as soon as it's completed.

What does OSHA require us to do to protect against noise?

- **Use quieter equipment** when possible—quieter models are available nowadays.
- **Reduce noise exposure** as much as possible by using sound barriers, different work processes, or regular rotation of workers out of noisy areas.
- **Use effective hearing protection** (like ear plugs or ear muffs) when needed.
- **Train** workers on:
 - the hazards of noise
 - ways to prevent hearing loss
 - how to wear ear protectors, change them, and clean them (if applicable).

When do you need to use hearing protection?

- You need it whenever noise levels are above the OSHA limit. But rules on ear protection should be reasonable. Sometimes you need it and sometimes you don't.
- The company is responsible for supplying and maintaining hearing protectors.

Aren't ear plugs uncomfortable? Can't it be dangerous to use them?

- Ear plugs don't have to be uncomfortable. OSHA says that the company should make sure ear protectors fit you and are reasonably comfortable.
- Some workers believe that wearing ear plugs is awkward or even dangerous because you can't hear voices, alarms, and warnings. But:
 - Ear plugs don't block out all sound—you should still be able to hear loud voices or warning noises.
 - Better methods of communication and warning can be used on the site, like louder signals or flashing lights.
 - Some new hearing protectors contain a microphone. It reduces loud noises but lets normal voices and warning sounds through.

What other protective clothing might you need?

- Wear an **apron** or **coveralls** to protect yourself from dust, chemicals, cuts, and burns.
 - High-visibility upper outer garments are required when working at a logging site. These are usually bright orange.
- Saw chaps are required when operating a chainsaw (but not while operating a trim saw).
Read the **Material Safety Data Sheet** (MSDS) for each chemical product you use. MSDSs are available at each job site during your work shift. They'll tell you the ingredients, hazards, and what protective equipment you need.

Who is responsible for supplying protective clothing and equipment?

- The **employer** must supply it (excluding footwear) and train you how to use it, make sure it fits, and maintain it in a safe and sanitary condition. Tell your foreman about any defects you notice.
- All protective clothing and equipment must be a type which is **safety-approved**. Look for a label stating that it meets American National Standards Institute (ANSI) specs.

- Protective gear which **you supply yourself** (like prescription safety glasses) must still comply with OSHA and ANSI requirements.

OSHA REGULATIONS

Most of the safety measures we've talked about are required by OSHA. We have to take these precautions—it's the law. The company has copies of the OSHA regulations on personal protective equipment and occupational noise exposure. If you'd like to know more, see your supervisor.

COMPANY RULES

Besides OSHA regulations, we also have specific company rules regarding personal protective equipment. They are spelled out in our Safety Policy and Safety and Health Program. If you haven't already received a copy of both these programs, see your supervisor and they will make sure you get one of each.

**Certificate of
Personal Protective Equipment Training**

Name: _____ SSN: _____

Trainer: _____ Date: _____