



GOALS

This safety session should teach employees to:

- Understand which hazards require head protection.
- Know how to select, use, and maintain hard hats correctly.

Applicable Regulations: 29 CFR 1910.132, .135



1. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is a barrier between hazards and you.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to identify when workers need PPE as protection and:

- Select PPE that will protect against identified hazards.
- Train employees to know when and how to select, use, and care for the PPE.

2. Hard hat (or safety helmet) design and construction resists blows and absorbs shock.

- The one-piece outer shell protects your head from the blow or penetration.
- The head band and straps between the outer shell and your head absorb the shock of the impact.
- A chin strap keeps the hat on if you fall, get hit, or are in a windy situation.

3. Wear a hard hat when there's risk of head injury.

Hard hats protect your head when you're at risk of:

- Impact and penetration from bumping your head
- Impact and penetration from falling tools or materials when there are workers, machines, conveyor belts, etc. above you
- Impact and/or penetration from objects being carried or swung nearby
- Electrical shock and burn

4. Hard hats are rated by both type and class according to the protection they provide.

- Helmet Type I is designed to provide crown (top) impact protection and is by far the most commonly used type of hard hat.
- Helmet Type II is designed to provide protection against both top and side impacts.
- Class E stands for Electrical, and these helmets are tested to 20,000 volts (V) to reduce the danger of high voltage. These helmets were formerly Class B.
- Class G stands for General, and this class is only tested to 2,200V, so these helmets offer only minimal electrical protection. (Formerly Class A).
- Class C stands for Conductive, and this class is not intended to provide protection from electrical conductors. The helmets are not tested for electrical resistance.
- Observe that a Class E helmet meets the requirements of Class G and Class C.



5. Make sure a hard hat fits correctly.

Get a comfortable fit and adjust the headband so the hat itself doesn't touch your head.

- Wear a hard hat liner, not a hard hat over a hat, if it's cold.
 - You can't get a good fit when a hard hat is worn over a hat.

6. Inspect hard hats to maintain their protective ability.

- Inspect your hat daily for cracks or dents.
- Replace:
 - A headband that's stretched or worn
 - The whole hat if the shell is cracked, broken, or punctured
 - The whole hat if it has taken a heavy blow, even if it doesn't show damage

7. Care for hard hats properly.

- Avoid scraping or banging the hat; don't toss it around.
- Clean the hat at least once a month
 - Dip it in hot soapy water, then scrub, rinse, and dry it.
 - Take out the removable sweatband and wash it periodically.
- Store the hat in a safe cool place.
 - Avoid leaving it in the sun (e.g., on the back deck of a car), which will make it deteriorate.



DISCUSSION POINTS:

Use your facility's hard hats for demonstrations during this session.



CONCLUSION:

- Choose and use hard hats correctly to protect your head.
- Use the correct class of hard hat to protect against impact, penetration, and electricity. Inspect and care for it properly to assure that it keeps its protective qualities.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Hard Facts on Hard Hats quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their ability to choose and use hard hats correctly and whether they need to review this important topic again soon.