Safety Talk

Head protection on the jobsite

Head injuries can be life-altering or fatal. On construction sites, workers are exposed to falling objects, electrical hazards, and low-clearance areas. Hard hats are a critical line of defense and are required by OSHA whenever there is a risk of head injury.

Even a seemingly minor blow to the head can result in serious consequences such as traumatic brain injury, concussion, or permanent disability. Construction sites are dynamic environments where hazards can arise unexpectedly. Tools, materials, or debris may fall from overhead work, and workers can accidentally strike their heads against fixed objects like beams or pipes.

The presence of exposed live wires and energized equipment increase the risk of electrical shock or burns, while the movement of machinery and vehicles adds to potential dangers.

Common head hazards on construction sites

- Falling tools or materials from scaffolds, ladders, or overhead work
- Striking fixed objects like beams, pipes, or equipment
- Electrical contact with exposed wires or energized equipment
- Flying debris from power tools or demolition
- Slips, trips, and falls

Types of protection

Hard hats are engineered to absorb and dissipate the force of an impact, significantly reducing the severity of injuries. However, the right hard hat must be chosen based on the hazards present on your jobsite. Wearing the incorrect classification of hard hat will increase your risk of injury.

Type or class	Use case
Type I	Protects against top impact only (e.g. falling objects)
Type II	Protects against top and lateral impact (e.g. side blows and falls)
Class G (General)	Impact protection and limited electrical protection (up to 2,200 volts)
Class E (Electrical)	Impact protection and high-voltage protection (up to 20,000 volts)
Class C (Conductive)	Impact protection only; no electrical protection; often used for ventilation and comfort

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Best practices for head protection

- Inspect protection daily to look for cracks, dents, or signs of wear
- Replace damaged protection immediately
- Wear head protection correctly (brim forward, snug fit, and suspension adjusted properly)
- Never drill holes, paint, or apply stickers that could weaken the shell
- Replace after impact, even if no visible damage is present
- Choose the right head protection for the task
- Store out of direct sunlight and extreme heat when not in use

Discussion questions

- What tasks today could expose you to head injury?
- Are you wearing the correct type and class of hard hat for your work?
- Do you know how to inspect and adjust your hard hat properly?

Key takeaways

Your hard hat is your first line of defense against serious injury. Failing to wear head protection can result in devastating injuries, lost work time, expensive medical bills, and most importantly, a tragic impact on your life. It's crucial for everyone on the jobsite to understand the hazards present, select the right type and class hard hat, and wear it properly in hazardous areas. Protecting your head is one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent a life-altering injury.

OSHA Standard Reference: 29 CFR 1926.100 - Head Protection
Related Standard: ANSI Z89.1 - Industrial Head Protection

Head protection on the jobsite

Trainer name: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Start time: _____ End time: _____

Trainees

Printed name	Signature

I hereby certify that I presented and these people recieved the head protection on the jobsite training.

Trainer (Signature) _____

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