

Hand protection on the jobsite

Wearing gloves is essential for protecting your hands from a wide range of hazards commonly found on construction sites. Gloves not only help prevent immediate injuries like cuts, punctures, and abrasions, but also reduce the risk of long-term health issues caused by repeated exposure to chemicals, vibration, or extreme temperatures. Proper hand protection maintains your ability to work safely and efficiently, reduces the likelihood of time off due to injury, and supports overall jobsite safety.

OSHA requires employers to provide and ensure the use of appropriate hand protection. Employees are responsible for understanding when gloves are needed and wearing the correct glove for the task.

Common hand hazards on construction sites

- Sharp edges (metal, glass, tools)
- Splinters and rough materials (wood, rebar)
- Chemicals (solvents, adhesives, sealants)
- Heat and cold exposure
- Vibrations from power tools
- Pinch points and crush hazards

Types of gloves

Glove type	Use case
Leather gloves	General construction; handling rough materials; protection from abrasions
Cut-resistant gloves	Handling sharp tools, sheet metal, and glass
Chemical-resistant gloves	Working with solvents, adhesives, and cleaning agents (check recommendations from chemical manufacturers)
Rubber or nitrile gloves	Protection from oils, greases, and some chemicals
Impact-resistant gloves	Using power tools, demolition, and heavy material handling
Insulated gloves	Cold weather work and handling hot materials
Anti-vibration gloves	Operating jackhammers, grinders, and other vibrating tools
Disposable gloves	Short-term protection from contaminants or light chemical exposure

Hand protection on the jobsite

Best practices for hand protection

- Inspect gloves before use and look for tears, holes, and signs of wear
- Replace damaged gloves immediately and never tape or patch gloves
- Remove gloves safely to avoid skin contact with contaminated surfaces
- Wash hands after glove use, especially when handling chemicals
- Store gloves properly to keep them clean and dry to extend their life
- Never wear gloves around rotating equipment as they can get caught in the machinery and cause serious injury

Discussion questions

- What tasks today require hand protection?
- Are you using the right glove for the job?
- Do you know where to get replacement gloves if yours are worn or damaged?

Key takeaways

Your hands are one of your most valuable tools, essential for almost every task you perform, both on the jobsite and off. It is crucial to protect them by choosing the right glove for the specific hazards you encounter. Always inspect your gloves before use, replace them if they are damaged, and follow best practices to keep your hands safe.

OSHA Standard Reference: 29 CFR 1926.95(a) – Personal Protective Equipment

Related standard: 29 CFR 1926.28(a) – Personal Protective Equipment for Specific Hazards

The information and recommendations contained in this material have been obtained from sources believed to be reliable. However, SECURA accepts no legal responsibility for the accuracy, sufficiency, or completeness of such information. Additional safety and health procedures may be required under particular circumstances. Please talk with your SECURA Risk Management Consultant for more information.

