

TOOLBOX TALK

Eye protection toolbox talk

About six minutes · PPE at Work Regulations 1992

SITE

DATE

GIVEN BY

WHY IT MATTERS

HSE's first aid guidance puts it plainly: all eye injuries are potentially serious. A fleck of metal from a grinder, a chip of concrete from a breaker, a splash of cement or a drop of acid can cost an eye, or leave someone unable to drive or work at height again.

Most eye injuries on site happen to people who had eye protection with them. It was on the hard hat, in a pocket, misted up, or taken off for a quick cut. The job only took a minute. This talk is about wearing the right eye protection for the whole job, and knowing what to do in the first seconds if something does get in.

HSE, Basic advice on first aid at work (INDG347)

THE POINTS TO MAKE

- ☐ **What goes into eyes on site**
Grinding and cutting throw hot particles at high speed. Drilling and chasing throw dust and chips, worst of all overhead. Hammering, breaking out and nail guns throw fragments. Wind blows dust across the site. Cement, lime, solvents, acids and cleaning chemicals splash. Welding and cutting give off light that burns the eye. Every job on this site that does one of these needs eye protection.
- ☐ **Glasses, goggles or a shield**
Safety glasses stop flying particles from the front and sides, but dust and splashes get round them. Goggles seal around the eyes for dust, splash and fine particles. A face shield or visor protects the whole face from heavier impact and splash, and is worn over glasses or goggles for grinding and cutting. Welding needs a filter of the right shade. Choose for the job, not for comfort.
- ☐ **Read the markings**
Proper eye protection is marked to the standard it meets, BS EN 166, with letters showing what it is tested for. The impact mark is F, B or A, with A the strongest. Other marks show protection against liquids, dust and molten metal. Unmarked sunglasses or reading glasses are not eye protection. If you need prescription lenses, ask for prescription safety glasses or goggles that fit over them.
- ☐ **Wear it for the whole job**
HSE says that if the risk assessment shows PPE is needed for a task, it is always used, even for jobs that only take a few minutes. A quick cut with the glasses on top of the hard hat is exactly when a fleck finds an eye. Keep eye protection on while the dust settles, and when someone near you is cutting or grinding.
- ☐ **Fit with the rest of your kit**
Eye protection has to fit and has to work with everything else you wear. Glasses can break the seal of a dust mask, and goggles can push ear defenders off. If they do not work together, say so and the kit will be changed. Anti-mist coatings and vented goggles help with fogging. Taking eye protection off because it fogs is not the answer.
- ☐ **Look after it**
Clean lenses with the wipes or cleaner provided, not a dusty sleeve, which scratches them. Store them in a case or a clean place, not loose in a tool bag. Scratched, cracked or pitted lenses do not protect and make you more likely to take them off, so report them and get a new pair. Your employer provides eye protection free of charge.
- ☐ **If something gets in**
Do not rub it. For dust or a loose particle, wash the eye out with clean water or sterile eyewash from a sealed container. Never try to remove anything stuck in the eye; cover it with a pad and go to hospital. For chemicals, flush the eye with water for at least 10 minutes, holding the eyelids open, then go to hospital. Report every eye injury.

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TOOLBOX TALK, CONTINUED

Eye protection toolbox talk: do, do not, and the questions

DO

- Wear the eye protection the job needs from the first cut to the last.
- Use goggles for dust and splash, and a face shield over them for grinding and cutting.
- Check it fits and works with your mask, hard hat and ear defenders.
- Keep lenses clean and get scratched or damaged eye protection replaced.
- Know where the eyewash is before you start, and check it is in date.
- Wash out an eye with clean water straight away and report the injury.

DO NOT

- Do not push eye protection up onto your hard hat for a quick job.
- Do not rely on safety glasses against dust, cement or chemical splash.
- Do not use sunglasses or ordinary glasses as eye protection.
- Do not rub an eye with something in it, or try to remove anything stuck in it.
- Do not cut or grind next to someone who is not wearing eye protection.

ASK THE TEAM

- ? Which jobs on this site this week could put something in an eye?
- ? Is the eye protection you have right for what you are doing today?
- ? Does your eye protection mist up or clash with your mask? What would help?
- ? Where is the nearest eyewash, and is it in date?
- ? What would you do if a splash of cement went in your eye right now?

TO CLOSE

Nobody plans to lose an eye. It happens in the second the glasses were off, the goggles were on the hard hat, or the job was too quick to bother. You only get two eyes and no second chance with either. So match the eye protection to the job, wear it for the whole job, keep it clean and get it replaced when it is scratched. And if something does get in, wash it out straight away and tell us. We will get you to hospital.

Record it. Who gave the talk, where, when, who was there and what was raised. The last page is the record.

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Eye protection toolbox talk: given and understood

Each person signs on the day to say they were present and understood the talk. Anyone who joins the team later is given the talk before starting, and signs here.

SITE	DATE	TIME	GIVEN BY
NAME	COMPANY	TRADE OR ROLE	SIGNATURE

QUESTIONS RAISED, AND THE ANSWERS GIVEN	ACTIONS AGREED, WHO AND BY WHEN	
TALK GIVEN BY (SIGNATURE)	POSITION	DATE

MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999, REGULATION 10: INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES