PPE: check protection before work

Start with the task, not a generic equipment list

What hazards remain after the other controls are in place? Confirm the protection the employer selected for this task. One item does not protect against every hazard.

1. Match protection to the hazard and worker

Review the employer's selection and manufacturer instructions. Confirm what PPE is needed, when to wear it, how it should fit and its limitations. Check that the combination works together. If the task, exposure or equipment changes, stop and ask for a review before continuing.

2. Check condition and fit

Check for damage, contamination, missing parts and other reasons not to use the equipment under its instructions. Do not use defective or damaged PPE. Report it and get suitable replacement protection before the work. Do not improvise a modification to make it fit.

3. Demonstrate proper use

Have the worker show how to put on, adjust, wear and remove the selected PPE. Ask about limitations, care, storage and when to replace or discard it. Under general-industry OSHA 1910.132(f), affected workers must demonstrate understanding and proper use before work requiring the covered PPE. A discussion or attendance signature alone does not establish that requirement has been met.

4. Know this discussion's limits

General-industry 1910.132(d) and (f) cover specified PPE rules. They do not replace separate respiratory-protection or electrical-protective-equipment requirements. Construction has its own rules, including 1926.95. This is not a respirator program, fit test, electrical-protection procedure or fall-protection course.

Ask the crew

- What hazard does each selected item protect us from today?
- Does it fit and work with the other equipment we must wear?
- What damage means stop using it? Where do we get replacements?

Make it specific to this job

Task / hazard / selected PPE: _____

Fit or condition issue / action before work: _____

Person responsible: _____

Sources and limits

General industry: OSHA 1910.132. Construction: OSHA 1926.95. Check the rules for the work and selected equipment. Links are clickable. Reviewed November 3, 2026.

General safety information only. This aid does not replace required training, a workplace hazard assessment, employer procedures or manufacturer instructions. Attendance is not proof of competence.

Category resources: ToolboxTalk.com PPE resources. Separate attendance sheet: toolboxtalk.com/toolbox-talk-template/